

JULY 2017

SGN SCOOPS

MAGAZINE



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Clayton and Scott Inman | Chad McCloskey of the Ball Brothers

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OUR MISSION

SGNScoops exists to promote the gospel by unveiling what is intriguing and real about Southern Gospel and Christian Country music. With integrity, we aspire to strengthen Christians, highlight people who are fulfilling a call to minister and emphasize the music that inspires audiences and glorifies God.

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PUBLISHER'S POINT

by Rob Patz

Are you free?

When I ask you that question, what do you really think?

“Of course I’m free,” I’m sure comes to mind.

I live in a country where freedom is celebrated, so of course, I’m free. That is true to a certain extent. We’re all free, but in reality, we cause our own restraint, our own lack of freedom.

I love the scripture in Galatians that reads, “For you have been called to live in freedom. Use your freedom to serve one another in love.” (Galatians 5:13 NLT)

Sometimes, we take freedom for granted – freedom of speech, freedom to travel, freedom to worship – and not until there is a point in life that freedom is taken away do we realize how much we should cherish it.

Recently, my mom fell and broke her femur bone in her leg. If you know my mom you know that her freedom to be able to do what she wants, when she wants, is one of the things she cherishes most. Unfortunately, during this period of recovery, she has not been able to have that freedom. So, the freedom she cherishes has been taken away and makes her desire for that freedom even greater. I want to thank each and every one of you for taking the time to pray for my mom. Her recovery is going amazingly well, with the doctors saying she is the perfect example of healing, and at some point, mom will regain her freedom that she has lost at this moment.

How many of us live our life in a way that we have closed ourselves in, taking away our own freedom, or whether through hurt or circumstances like our job, we’ve allowed our freedom to disappear? How many of us have allowed our freedom in Christ to disappear? That is probably the most worrisome of all.

I remember hearing my dad saying we are more than conquerors. Now, if we’re living a life that does not speak that, then we are missing out in the freedom that Christ has given us. He wants us to be bold, and if you look at the scriptures, when we are bold with the freedom that we have in Christ, we then can serve others in love.

How many times have you been at a point in your life where your own hurt, discouragement, feelings of regret, and depression have left you with walls that have become a trap to you and are not allowing you to live in the freedom that is through Christ Jesus? When you are in that position, you can’t help others.

I know personally there have been times in my life where I have been so caught up in the circumstances of my life that I was of no value to anyone else. I had built those walls of hurt, disappointment, and depression around me, and they had me trapped. They had become so harmful to me that I could not, or was not, able to help others. That’s what the Scripture



is talking about, being bold enough in our faith to be able to have freedom from things in our life to share the joy of Christ.

Since I was a kid, every morning my father would say, "This is the day that the Lord hath made. I will rejoice and be glad in it." If you begin to rejoice in your life no matter the circumstances, it will bring a new level of freedom.

Anyone will tell you that freedom is not free ... there is a cost. If you serve, or have served, in the military and sacrificed time away from your family, I want to tell you how much I appreciate what you have done in service for your country.

Freedom as a Christian is similar to being in the military. We live a life where we have to decide whether we are going to serve Christ and lay aside our personal feelings and experiences to serve Him. Freedom in Christ doesn't come for free. It comes at the price of obedience.*

I challenge you this month, the month of freedom here in the United States, to live life to the fullest and live life with the freedom from Jesus that overtakes you and shines through you to those in your community.

I want to invite you to be with us in Vernon, Ala., at the Vernon Alabama Gospel Music Weekend from Sept. 8-9. I would also love to see you at the Creekside Gospel Music Convention in Pigeon Forge, Tenn., from Oct. 30 through Nov. 2 for four great days of Gospel Music with more than 50 fantastic artists.

Have a great month of freedom.





“Can You Handle The Truth?”

Real. Worship. Music.

By David Staton

Any teenager will tell you that there is nothing more embarrassing for them than to see their parents trying to be as cool and current as they are. When they see someone as young as 30 trying to act, talk, and dress like a teenager, they roll their eyes and think, “how pathetic.” Those parents who think they can hang with the ever-changing trends with their kids are only fooling themselves. When it comes to music in most of our churches today, I think it is past time that we address something that may just bring a little reality to Sunday morning.

I’m going to point out some things to you that you may not want to hear, but it is an absolute, undeniable truth. That’s why we call my column, “Can You Handle the Truth.” According to a fairly recent survey conducted by Lifeway, two thirds of kids between the ages of 18 and 22 will drop out of church at some point. There are several reasons that are speculated as to why, but I would like to address a huge elephant in the room that almost seems too obvious to ignore, yet we do. Let’s talk about the music and trends that have filled the majority of our churches.

No one wants to address music, because at some point, we have to admit that we are wrong and we need to make some changes. It all started when someone had a brilliant marketing plan by labeling a style of music as worship music.

It almost sounds blasphemous to say that you don’t like worship music. If you don’t like worship music, then you must not like worship. And that, ladies and gentlemen, that is where the church has fallen prey to a music industry that has convinced their target audience that somehow this music, regardless of any sign of anointing, lack of depth or

lack of musicality, must be an essential part of our worship services. After all, it is “worship” music. We have failed to realize that worship is a lifestyle, not a music style.

The main thing I hear so many pastors, youth pastors, and parents say is, “but that is the kind of music that our kids like, so we have to do it to keep them and attract more kids.” Really? Well, the stats don’t lie. It isn’t working. Have you checked your kid’s iPad or phone and looked at their playlist? For the overwhelming majority, it is not filled with worship music. They are listening to Justin Timberlake, Tori Kelly, Adam Levine, and other secular artists whose music in





no way sounds like what we sit through on Sunday morning.

Listen, I'm not condemning an entire musical genre. There are some songs that come out of that genre that are good, well-written, and anointed, but not nearly enough for us to feel like if we don't cover at least one of the top 10 songs on K-Love, then somehow we haven't experienced real worship.

I told someone once that there was worship long before any of these worship artists got their record deals. Remember when I told you how kids feel when they see their parents or anyone over 30 trying to be cool? Well watching their parents do the 1974 Freebird sway back and forth on Sunday morning definitely does not make them like it any more. In their minds, any chance of this music being cool just flew out the stained glass window.

I recently had a meeting with a very good praise and worship singer/songwriter. She played me several songs, many of which were very good. On one song that we talked about writing together, I suggested bringing in some scriptural references of past accounts that would strongly support the title of the song. She told me that she wanted to keep the song as a prayer so it would be a worship song. I shared with her many scriptures where God told His people to remember what He had done. Why? Because it strengthens our faith and prepares us to sing to God and thank Him for His faithfulness, love and power.

She told me that what I shared with her totally opened up her perspective on writing. There is nothing wrong with those songs that are directed to God. However, as much as they are needed, we also need those songs that make us remember and make us look forward.

Let me give you a very real example of what I'm talking about. If your pastor got up every Sunday morning and prayed for 20 or 30 minutes, having a conversation directed only to God, the congregation may be impressed with his prayer. However, that congregation will spiritually starve if nothing is directed and ministered to them. If we are going to call our music a ministry, why does the same logic not

apply?

We have to stop limiting our worship to songs that we sing on Sunday morning, and realize that how we think, the decisions we make, how we pray, and renewing our mind through scripture Monday through Saturday is more important than our Sunday morning music. If we don't know how to use our hands to lift each other up and be the hands of Jesus to our neighbor, do you think God is impressed when we raise them on Sunday morning?

Is the answer to drop the new music and only do songs based on the copyright date? Absolutely not. What I am saying is that we need to pay attention to the content and the message of the music. A music minister who is called, talented and anointed can make that message musically relevant. The emphasis is anointing. If you don't like the style of a particular song, that's a minor issue. If you don't recognize and appreciate the anointing and message, that's a far more serious issue.

I'm telling you this in hopes that we can get back to something with some depth that will help our kids want to stay and truly minister to the entire church. The church is starving for something that goes deeper and lasts longer than the life of a song that is trending. I'm telling you this in hopes that we can trade shallow lyrics, skinny jeans and out-of-tune guitars for something better.

Real. Worship. Music.





Clayton and Scott Inman

A Triumphant tandem

Father/son duo is in 15th year alongside each other on stage

By Craig Harris

Clayton Inman was your typical baseball dad. He was president of the Sevier County (Tenn.) High School baseball program's booster club. His son was a left-handed first baseman who appeared to be destined to play at the collegiate level. However, a detour altered that path.

Now, the Inmans have been playing on the same team for the past 15 years. "It's been awesome," Clayton emphasizes. "I wouldn't trade it for anything."

However, for that to happen, Scotty Inman had to don a different type of uniform ... trading his jersey and cleats for a coat and tie.

"Growing up, his love for this music was always there," Clayton points out. "He was a pretty talented athlete. I never pushed him to do this."

At 16 years old, Scotty's focus shifted. "I went to a youth camp and basically gave into my call to ministry," Scotty explains. "Most people go (into ministry) as a pastor. For me, it was more of a music thing."

"That helped me to get over my nerves. God definitely softened my want-to and made it more a passion. I

always loved music."

Prior to that, Scotty didn't sing at all. "When he came back from that youth trip, he told the guy – the youth counselor – there (at First Baptist Church of Sevierville) he had a desire to sing," Clayton remembers. "He came home and said, 'Dad, I want to sing. Could you help me learn a song?'"

"We were sitting in the bedroom, and he put a cassette in the cassette player. It was 'Temporary Home.' What was going through my head was that he already had the it factor. Learning what to do would come later. Some people sing good, but there's this it factor that some people don't have. I thought, 'yeah, he could do this the rest of his life.'"

Monday nights was youth night at their home church, and Scotty's debut quickly came there. "I was nervous, but I was excited too," Scotty recalls. "I was singing in front of bunch of people who know you. That's scary. I get nervous singing at weddings and at church on Sunday morning or a funeral. I can sing in front of 20,000 people, but singing in front of (familiar faces) is another story."

There was just one catch ... Clayton wasn't invited to attend. "He was going to sing at youth night, but he didn't want me there ... and I didn't want to make him nervous," Clayton says.



Clayton didn't live up to his end of the bargain though, although he tried to remain inconspicuous among the crowd. "I think he knew I was there," Clayton admits. "He did great, and they went crazy."

Scotty adds, "I was hooked. The response was much greater than the song or the singing deserved."

Scotty quit playing baseball after his junior season and actually joined Poet Voices in 2001 at the age of 17.

Clayton began singing in the late 1970s as a teenager with his three brothers – Greg, Keith and Phil – when they performed as the Inman Quartet in the West Tennessee area, joined the Singing Americans for four years in the 1980s, spent four years with the Kingdom Heirs and had an eight-year stint with Won By One.

With Poet Voices disbanding at the end of 2002, Clayton and Scotty had plans to join forces as Clayton looked to form a new trio. "Looking back, had we began our group, it would have been a tough road," Clayton points out.

Coincidentally, Triumphant's founding members – bass singer Eric Bennett and tenor David Sutton – were looking for the two parts that the Inmans could fill in December of 2002. Clayton previously sang with Bennett while with the Kingdom Heirs and also alongside Sutton for one month after Sutton joined the group.

"They asked us to join the group two or three times, and we said no," Scotty remembers. The reason they chose to decline was because of the money that Clayton had already invested into the new venture – funds that had been sunk into sound equipment, studio recording time, etc.

"They were auditioning the next day," Clayton says. "Scotty said, 'Hey do you ever wonder what it would be like to sing with them?' My wife (Michelle) said, 'If it's where you're supposed to be, I don't think we'll miss that money.'"

"I called a pastor friend of mine who I trusted dearly. I said, 'We know our plans. We know what we'd like to do.' But actually, God directs us. He said, 'Aren't you going to be singing with your son either way?' After that, I called Eric, and we auditioned the next day."



The original foursome stepped on stage in January of 2003 and remains intact. "Honestly, this is our 15th year of doing this, and it's been the easiest 15 years of all-time," Scotty points out. "It's definitely a God thing. Everybody in the group ... we were friends before this."

Clayton adds, "We're almost passive. Fifteen years later, we are all sitting in the lounge of the bus drinking coffee. It's like when you're married ... you can sit across from your spouse in comfort, in the easiness. We're so comfortable around each other."

From the start, the group's rapidly-increasing appeal came as a surprise.

"I didn't realize the group we were going to be in was going to be as popular (as it has been)," Scotty admits.



“I didn’t see us being a group that people acted like they enjoyed as much as they do. We were just like, ‘man, sweet gig.’”

The group started off singing in the Louise Mandrell Theater in Pigeon Forge, Tenn., which eventually became the Miracle Theater. Theater life lasted for five years, and then, the quartet ventured out on the road full-time.

“They’re great to work with, even more so than they maybe even should be at times,” Scotty says of his group mates. “We all do our thing.

“Of the four, I’m probably the most outspoken. I have ideas. I’m always thinking. Sometimes, it gets me in trouble, and sometimes, it pays off greatly. At the end of the day, it’s whatever (works best). They know I have the best interest of the group (in mind) when I’m doing something.”

Clayton adds, “He’s opinionated. He knows what he loves, and he knows what he likes about it. I think it’s why he makes a great songwriter. There’s a talent there, but there’s a passion there as well. I think I get on his nerves, because I’m just too passive.”

However, that passive nature has obviously paid dividends in Clayton’s longevity in the industry.

“April was 34 years in Gospel Music,” Clayton shares. “I’ve enjoyed the journey. I’ve learned a lot of stuff. To me it’s just like any other business. In anything you do, there’s a growing phase. During that phase of growing, you have the choice of quitting or seeing it through. I could have easily quit during the Won By One days. The passion for the music was so good that I stuck it out and stuck it out.

“When this group formed, it was like, ‘this is why I stayed.’ Fifteen years later, I still feel the same way I felt back in 2003. You work so hard at something. It’s like the picture you see of a guy chiseling at the diamonds. He gets to that last little bit and quits.”

Scotty – who is also an award-winning songwriter who recently celebrated his 35th birthday – has similar feelings. “I take pride in being an original and knowing that anything that has come of this is of God’s hand,” Scotty explains. “I’ve seen it from the bottom up. I take pride in that. I think we all do.

“I’m a Triumphant member. That’s who I am. That’s what I do.”

Scotty co-wrote five of the 11 songs on the award-winning quartet’s April release, “Thankful.” The project was produced by StowTown Records co-founder Wayne Haun, who also wrote three songs with Scotty on the project (with Joel Lindsey collaborating along with Haun and Scotty on two of those cuts).

The group’s first single released to radio – “Chain Breaker” (written by Jonathan Smith, Mia Fieldes and Zach Williams) – has quickly climbed up the charts.

“We’re pumped about the new album,” Scotty emphasizes. “I’m more thrilled with each album.”

The father/son tandem remains thrilled to still be sing-



but I hope it's a long time (away).

"I was proud of Scotty long before he was singing. The fact that he is singing with me is the icing on the cake. It's who he has become. You can tell a lot about a guy about how his family acts toward him, and his wife and kids adore him."

Scotty adds, "Had he not been in my life doing this, what are the chances of a young guy being around it enough (to sing Southern Gospel Music for a living)? I love music, but there's no promise that I would have grown up with a passion for this music. He's definitely the major reason why I do it today."

ing alongside each other as well. "I hope it's this way for a while," Clayton says. "Inevitably, if I sing long enough, I won't be able to sing with him at some point,

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WISDOM FROM WELLS

by Dusty Wells

Finding Peace

Don't you, at times, wish there was a wonderful magic pill or a quick fix remedy for finding peace? Oh, come on, sure you do. I know I certainly do at times. In fact, as of late, I wish there was a daily dose to take. But a

quick reality check takes over, and I realize there is nothing that can bring about that sweet peace that we all crave, want and need at times, except Jesus.

Now, even as I write that out, I really do feel a little

tinge of peace. I have been walking on this journey long enough to know, and I believe the truth of that statement. I've experienced it, and I've lived it out loud. I am sure many of you have as well. Take a glance back and remember how faithful He has been to you in those darkest of times. Doesn't that bring about a refreshing peace? He has never left us. He really hasn't.

I know there are so many of you who are reading this that are going through your own times of difficulty, conflict and struggles of all kinds. I am sure you have a hurting heart, a mind full of questions and insecurity, worry that keeps you awake at night and all kinds of other thoughts. Honestly, I am there and have been there as well many times before. It's just a part of our life my friends, and I sure wish I had an easy answer for you, but I don't.

But here is what I do have deep inside this heart of



mine ... it's the truth of knowing that His peace for us will be always at the right time. If we can only slow down, take time to pray and listen for it. Of course, many times we have to pray, pray, pray, and then pray some more ... and listen, listen, listen, and then listen some more.



Jesus says that He will give us a peace that passes understanding, and He assures us throughout His Word that He came to bring us peace. So, we know He wants to share peace with us. He wants us to live in that

peace, but He also wants us to understand the importance of seeking His peace. He loves to hear from us, and His greatest desire is for us to walk in peace. In this life and the journey we are on, there will be all kinds of struggles and stuff we have to deal with. Nothing can take that away nor make it easy with the exception of finally just coming to that place of asking for peace. There's no easy answer, no quick fix, just simply asking Him to give you peace and then embracing it to the best of your ability.

I have found for myself that peace is there. I just have to grab hold of it. I have to sing that old song, "Peace, peace wonderful peace, coming down from the Father above" over and over again. His peace is with us. His peace will never leave us nor forsake us. We just have to make sure we put that assurance of His peace at the front of our mind in all we are dealing with.

Let me assure you dear ones, if I can at least strive to do that, then you can too.

Finding peace ... simply striving to seek it out and listening close for His voice.

I'm praying peace for you right now. It's there.



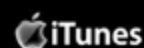
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Tribute Quartet



By Charlie Griffin

A gift and a testimony; artists on a mission

Southern Gospel Music is known as quartet music for its traditional four-men-and-a-piano set-up. Over the last few years, Southern Gospel has evolved into a popular form of music across the United States and overseas. There are only a few groups who live up to this customary Southern Gospel description.

The word tribute, when used as a noun, is defined by



Dictionary.com as “a gift, testimonial, compliment, or the like, given as due or in acknowledgment of gratitude or esteem” (<http://www.dictionary.com/browse/tribute>, June 20, 2017). That is the perfect description of this group. When you meet the Tribute Quartet, you will understand how four voices and a piano can truly excite and energize your day on the radio or in person.

They are a tribute to Southern Gospel Music, and their testimony and music is a gift to share.

Preparing the Gift

In 2005, the Wilburns (led by the husband/wife tandem of Jackie and Elaine Wilburn) decided to retire. However, a couple of the Wilburn group members were looking to sing on. And sing they did. In a short time, Wilburn members Gary Casto and Josh Singletary were enjoying presenting gospel music. Yet, Casto and Singletary had a vision of a quartet that was focused on music and ministry.



The veteran singers began a new vision without a name



in December of 2006. Now, the group had signed to record with BSA World Records. Time had come to name the new group, but no one name had caught their attention.

“Glen Bates of BSA World Records made the suggestion of Tribute,” Singletary recalls. “There were no other names. That’s the one that was suggested. We all thought about it and loved it, so we stuck with it.”



From the first Tribute Quartet outing, the enthusiasm and energy caught the attention of Gospel Music lovers, young and old alike. Over the following months, the word began to spread about this new, young group that was energizing churches and concert stages in the Gospel Music world.

By 2008, Tribute Quartet began to receive some industry awards and a variety award nominations as well. In short, the Tribute Quartet was making its mark in brief time.

Winds of Change

The year 2008 also brought the first change for Tribute

Quartet and filling the vacant tenor position was Brian Alvey. In 2009, the group signed with Crossroads Music, joining their stable of recording artists. Excitement Tribute-style greeted fans.

After singing with Tribute Quartet for two years, Alvey left the group in June 2010 for a marketing and promotions career. After a short stint with the Voices of Lee, 18-year old Riley Harrison Clark replaced Alvey. In early 2011, Dennis Dugger decided to come off the road. The new Tribute bass singer came as a former law enforcement officer, Anthony Davis.

As we all know, life goes on, and so did the Tribute Quartet. In 2014, Tribute Quartet signed a recording agreement with Daywind Records, moving this aspect of the ministry closer to the Nashville, Tenn., home base.

Polishing the Testimony

The current line-up has allowed the group to evolve. Producer Wayne Haun has worked with the group to refine their sound. Riley Harrison Clark is a fan favorite with his big ballads and interpretation of songs. Josh Singletary is known for being an anchor, providing stability and incomparable musical talent. His crooner sound has set him apart from other baritones in this genre, and you can always count on him for a good time. Gary Casto adds to the group with his unique sound and writing, and Anthony Davis has come a long way to becoming one of the best bass singers in the industry.

Tribute Quartet has made many appearances at the

National Quartet Convention, Silver Dollar City, Dollywood, and on television networks such as Fox News, DayStar and the Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN). Their tours are from coast to coast and border to border. They have never met a stranger along the way, and their journey is truly getting better every day.

Members on a Mission

“I was around 16 years old when I discovered that a genre of this music existed,” Singletary shares. “I was still interested in many types of vocations, but Gospel Music continued to grow in me. I guess it was soon after I discovered the music that I found interest in the profession of it.

“I joined The Wilburns as pianist in March of 2001. I’ll never forget and will always be grateful to Jackie and Elaine Wilburn for that opportunity. My first day on the job with the Wilburns was a Gaither Homecoming taping in Indianapolis, Ind. It was quite the first day for being so green.”

Faith is important to Singletary.

“I was six years old and curious about the baptism I witnessed that day,” Singletary remembers. “My father proceeded to share the Gospel with me, and I trusted Jesus that evening. Even though I was very young, I distinctly remember how my thoughts began to change, how my outlook began to change.”

In today’s world that experience still speaks volumes to the Gospel Music believer.

But as you talk with Singletary, you find out that family is near and dear to his heart.

“Again, there is so much that is important to me,” Singletary explains. “If I were to start listing everything important to me, this would turn into a novel. However, contrary to my profession, I’ve always been a homebody. Even as a teenager, I wasn’t one to be out all of the time. My home is very important to me. I have found that coming home to my house with my beautiful wife is by far the thing I most look forward to.

“My wife’s name is Kahlie (pronounced Callie). We met years ago, and she always jokes about how annoying I was ... but, I prevailed. We became very close friends and in 2013, I asked her to marry me. (On) Dec. 21 of the same year, we were married. Other than still

getting butterflies in my stomach, my first thought when I see her is, ‘Let’s go to the house and chill.’ Due to our schedules, we don’t get much time to ourselves. So, being my favorite place to be, that’s my first thought. I don’t take anything in my life for granted. My family, friends, ministry, and everything else is a provision that I am blessed with.”

Casto is creating a name for himself with his penned lyrics. His vocal styling will warm the hearts of those in concert attendance. His love of Gospel Music, his faith and love of life shine, and you can see it.

Casto has loved Gospel Music for most of his life.



“I realized I wanted to sing at an early age when I attended my first concert at my home church,” Casto points out. “The artists that day were the Calvarymen Quartet with Squire Parsons. That was in West Virginia.”

Over the years, Casto had the privilege to travel with several groups, including New Revelation Quartet, the Southmen, the Harvesters, Monument Quartet, the Wilburns and now Tribute Quartet.

“I believe I can say that each group will always hold a special place in my heart for different reasons,” Casto notes. “Being with each group has given me experience to be able to be where I am today.”

Being brought up in a Christian home and community, Casto characterizes his faith this way.

“I will never forget that day (of salvation),” Casto says. “It was on a Friday night at 10 minutes after seven at the age of 13 at an old-fashion revival at my home church. The spirit of the Lord was tugging at my heart,

and I couldn't wait to get to the altar.

"There is a song we recorded several years ago, 'That's Why I Love Him So,' which speaks about the Lord's faithfulness. I can truly say this road I've traveled for many years hasn't always been easy, but I can say that the Lord has always faithful and walked right beside of me on this journey. I'm blessed with a family who has supported me all these years in ministry and has encouraged me to always serve the Lord and to follow my heart and dreams. I say this a lot ... I sing what I love, and I love what I sing – Gospel Music. This gives me the opportunity to tell the world about Jesus. I've had the opportunity to travel to many countries, but I pray the Lord allows me more opportunities to reach more folks in other parts of the world."



Clark was a teenager when he was exposed to Gospel Music.

"I have actually not been around Southern Gospel my whole life," Clark points out. "I was first truly introduced to this kind of music when I was around 13 at the Steve Hurst School of Music. Groups such as the Talleys, the Mark Trammell Trio at that time, the Pfeifers, and Tribute Quartet – to name a few – attended the school my first year there. My dream wasn't necessarily to sing in a group but to sing wherever I could. It just so happens the first opportunity that God orchestrated was with Tribute. That was seven years ago, and I was 18 years old."

Tribute is the only group that Clark has sung with professionally.

A common thing with Tribute Quartet members is faith and family. Clark is no different.

"I grew up in a Christian home, always involved in church," Clark shares. "I started helping in children's church when I was very young, and as I got older, I had more responsibilities within in the youth as well as on the adult praise team. Long story short ... I knew it all. I knew who God was, what He was about, what He was capable of, what He did and even that He did it for me. However, it wasn't until just a couple years ago that I actually accepted all of that for myself, resulting in me falling on my face in a Publix grocery store parking lot in Florida and giving my all to Him."

Clark has a growing family.

"My family – my wife Megan and two kiddos, Colbin and Charlee – are my world," Clark says. "They keep me going and give me something to look forward to every week I get off the road. The look on their faces when I walk in the door is indescribable."

"I am blessed. That's my first thought when I see my wife Megan Rae Clark. We met at a summer school for music. As a matter of fact, it was the Steve Hurst School of Music that I had mentioned previously. We got married on the 4th of May in 2013. She has been my best friend much longer than she has been my wife. I couldn't do life without her. She keeps me on track and focused on what's ahead while remaining entirely devoted to the present. She is the greatest mother to our kids and wife to me. Again, I am blessed."

"Also, my voice, God has been gracious to give me the voice He has. I realized a long time ago it isn't something to take lightly so I do my best to keep studying and honing my craft as much as I can."

Davis' story is even a bit more different than his cohorts. He didn't grow up around Gospel Music.

"I grew up Church of Christ, and so Southern Gospel Music was a genre foreign to me," Davis explains. "I did not hear my first Southern Gospel song until I was a junior in high school, but (I) knew instantly that my love for singing and the voice could be showcased through this avenue. I did not realize until several years later, after starting my law enforcement career, that there was an industry in which people sang this music on a professional level as a chosen career. Somewhere around 20, I decided I wanted to explore the idea of singing."

Prior to joining Tribute, Davis traveled with a regional group from Kentucky.

Like the other group members, faith comes center stage for Davis.

“I was saved in a small, country church, my home church, when I was 12 years old,” Davis shares.

A Dottie Rambo hit is one of his favorite songs.

“‘Too Much to Gain to Lose’ is one of my favorites, not because I sing it, but because Ms. Dottie was definitely inspired to write that song if for no other reason than I would one day hear it,” Davis says. “Life, with all of its difficulty and challenge, is just a small price to pay for eternity, for those who fight the good fight and keep the faith. Certainly Heaven will surely be worth it all.

“My hope is to remind people that in this broken, sick, lost, and dying world that they are not alone, that there is a God who knows exactly where they are and what they are going through, who loves them so much that He gave His only son for them. Traveling from place to place, (I am) singing and sharing what I believe is the greatest love story ever shown, through song.” The mission of this award-winning group is simple when you talk to them. They want to “make a difference.”

“We want everything we do to have a positive impact on the world, not only the world around us but the entire planet,” Singletary emphasizes. “I believe if you put all you have into something, understanding it is God’s will for you to do so, the outcome of whatever efforts you put forth are endless. God has given us a tool that can be responded to in many different ways by all people that hear it. Our hope is to get it to the folks that know nothing about the Savior we sing about.”


The Tribute vision is simple ... to “stay focused, sharpen our craft as best we can and pray that we are prepared to walk through whatever doors open before us.”

More information on Tribute Quartet – which is booked through the Harper Agency – can be found at www.TributeQuartet.com.

Photos courtesy of Tribute Quartet and Craig Harris.

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Day By Day

Unity

By Selena Day

Unity. The quality of being united into one. An undivided or unbroken completeness or totality with nothing wanting. (<https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/unity>, June 22, 2017)

This season in our lives is very full. Our daughter is getting married in August. Chuck will be celebrating 50 years in Gospel Music this year. Our ministry is getting busier, and I begin teaching in Asheville, N.C., at a Christian leadership school in October. I am so thankful for this season in our lives.

Recently, my heart was so full watching our family honor our daughter with gifts and love at a bridal shower as she prepares to wed her sweet man. My nephew shared a memory he had of our girls when they were little. I watched their reaction as they giggled remembering the moment. It took me back, and sitting there before me was not the beautiful, accomplished women they have become but those two little girls imagining fanciful dreams of living in a meadow, where the trees and animals were their friends.

We are a weird family. We don't have normal experiences. Most of you that have traveled in the ministry can empathize with what I am saying. When our daughters were younger, before we began homeschooling, sometimes we would be in Mississippi or Pennsylvania the night before and would drive all night to make sure they didn't miss school. Our daughters would share with their classmates stories of where they had been, and those classmates wouldn't believe them.

How sad this made me when I heard this story years later, and I knew that the person they chose as a life partner would have to be a special person. Due to this, I have prayed for years for the men our daughters would one day marry. I have prayed for God's hand to lead them. I have prayed for their hearts to be open to God's voice, and I have prayed that God would prepare them to become a part of our family.

When our daughter introduced us to this man with whom she was falling in love, we uncertainly took the first steps into making room for him in our lives. It has been a wonderful experience falling in love with him as well. Since we do not have sons of our own, it has been an added bonus for us.



I am reminded of the verse that reads, "Let me give you a new command: Love one another. In the same way, I loved you, you love one another. This is how everyone will recognize that you are my disciples – when they see the love you have for each

other." John 13:34-35 MSG.

Chuck and I will be celebrating our 29th anniversary this year, and the one thing I have learned over those 29 years is that love is a choice and not always a feeling. In my more immature moments in life, I have thought, "I love Chuck, but I'm just not in love with him anymore."



Thankfully, I have always sought the Lord during those moments, and He has always guided me to choose to love my husband even when the emotion wasn't there.

A great lesson I have learned through life is

that people are always watching you. No matter who you are, you are a message to others, and I personally believe that marriage is so important because it is the epitome of our relationship with God. We choose to become the bride, the wife, of Christ, and with that relationship, we enter into a kingdom family. With the words we pledge – for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health, in the good times and in the bad times – we choose a covenant relationship with our spouse.

Covenant says, "Where you go, I go. Who you love, I love. Your people are my people."

Covenant is governed by love, while a contract is governed by set rules. I don't refuse to have an affair with another besides my husband, because I know that the result of that affair is divorce. Divorce may be the result, but I don't have an affair because I love him and do not want to hurt him. That is the difference between contractual relationship and covenantal relationship.

Many relationships in our culture have become contractual and not covenantal. A contractual relationship can be broken and amended.

This is not any condemnation for any that have divorced. I just want to show you a picture of how much Christ your bridegroom loves you. We in the American church and as a nation seem to be at a precarious juncture. July is the month we celebrate our birth as a nation, and while we are looking back to the season when our country became one, let us look to our future and ask Papa God how we can love those that are different than ourselves.

In June, we watched as our differences caused a man to open fire on some of our senators. As leaders in the Christian world, we should be the first to choose to love. Being right in what we believe has become more important than hearing what another believes. It has taken away our empathy for others.

Over the past six months, we have all watched on social media as people argued or discussed their side of whatever agenda has been popular at the moment. Just as in my marriage, those times when I didn't feel as if I felt the love for my husband, I choose to stay in a covenantal relationship with him. We must take a stand on this Independence Day and say, "America is my country, and Americans are my family. I choose America, and I choose to love it. I may not feel that love, and I may disagree with everything they stand for. But love can and will cover a multitude of times of missing the mark."

So this Independence Day, I declare my freedom from hatred, anger and anything that will keep me from sharing true love.

Selena Day is a motivational speaker and is available to speak at your conference or event. You may contact her at selenaday@me.com, at www.queenliving.org or at facebook.com/queenismsbyselenaday.

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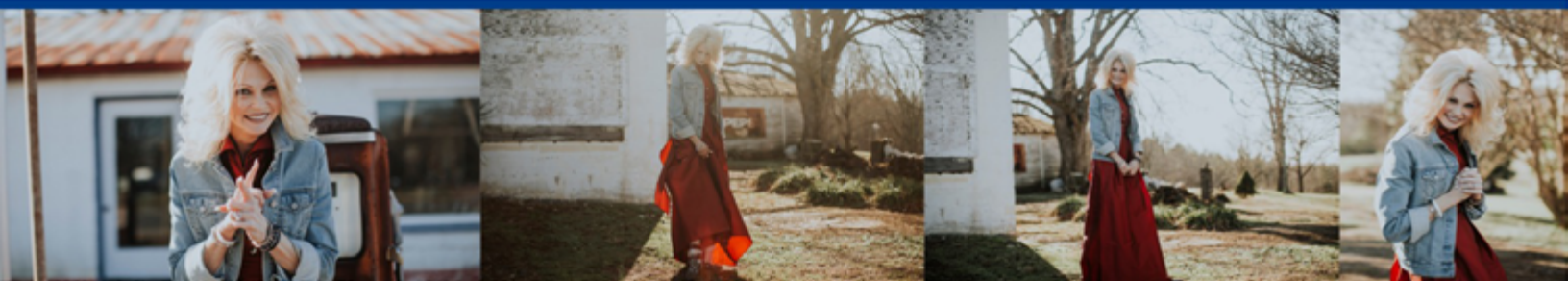
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Three Bridges: Still Marching On



By Jimmy Reno

In 2002, following the release of its debut album – “Soldiers” – Three Bridges was taking Southern Gospel Music by storm. The blend of traditional Southern Gospel and Black Gospel the group used to create their sound gave it a uniqueness that fans loved.

But change is an inevitable part of life, and the Southern Gospel industry is no exception. So, in 2010, change once again found Three Bridges, and the group was in search of a new lead singer and then a tenor as well.

“When you are searching for a lead singer and a tenor singer at the same time, it’s quite a process,” group manager and baritone singer Elliott McCoy recalls. “I had men helping me fill my dates until such a time as I could find permanent singers.

“I had met Shannon (Smith) and Jeremie (Hudson) while they were with the Imperials, and I knew they both had left that group and took positions as ministers of music in two different churches. I did not want to hire anybody in an existing group. I wanted someone that was looking for a job. I found out both Shannon and Jeremie had left their church jobs, so I asked them to consider taking the positions. I told them to take their time and pray about it, and if needed, go on a trip with us to see if they would fit in the group personality

wise. My goal was to hire the very best Christian men that I could find, the very best vocalists with the right personalities, men that would want to stay in the group for years down the road. God has answered my prayers with two of the very best ever in Gospel Music.”

McCoy has always had very specific plans for the ministry of Three Bridges, and the additions of Hudson and Smith allowed the group to expound on their ministry in new areas.

“My goal for Three Bridges is to have a very professional approach with our music that is appealing to a very broad audience and at the same time have the ability to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with those we sing to,” McCoy explains. “Shannon and Jeremie are two of the finest vocalists to ever come into Gospel Music and they both are licensed and ordained ministers of the Gospel. It is very unique to be able to perform at a level that has broad audience appeal but also to have men with the ability to share the Gospel of Christ.”

Smith’s path to lead singer of Three Bridges was a natural one.

“I was raised in a pastor’s home,” Smith shares. “My mother always directed the music, so I was heavily involved in church music from a very early age. I sang



my first solo in church at age five. I began taking voice lessons at age 14 and continued studying voice for the next 12 years, eventually studying vocal performance at the University of South Carolina. I got married and had kids, so my music career was on the back burner for awhile, though I continued to be very active in church music ministry.

“In the late (1990s), my wife and I decided that I really needed to pursue my dream of singing professionally, so we began to order our lives in that direction. Eventually, we moved to Nashville for the opportunities provided there, and I was privileged to be the lead singer for the Imperials for six years.”

Smith realized early on this was the path God was leading him.

“I think I’ve always known it,” Smith notes. “It just took me a while to embrace it. I’ve always known that



I was put on this planet to declare God’s glory and to inspire others through the beauty of music.”

Many people fail to discern the struggles associated with traveling on the road and the stress and pressures it can create for those left at home, but Smith clearly understood what is involved after having been with the Imperials.

“I was unsure about coming back to life on the road,” Smith admits. “I really only thought I would be here about three years or so, but now I’ve been here for more than seven years. Overall, it has been a wonderful experience and better than I ever thought it could be. Counting our time together in The Imperials, Jeremie and I have been singing together for 13 years now, and he is truly one of my best friends in the world. Elliott is full of joy, and he’s been great to work with. We’ve had a great support system around us as well.



“My primary goal for the group is to always be ready to share the love and goodness of God with people and to encourage and inspire them to share that with others. Of course, I want us to make the best music we possibly can.”

At the end of his tenure with the Imperials in 2008, Hudson considered himself retired – for all practical purposes – from life on the road. However, God had other plans.

“After retiring from the Imperials in 2008, I really didn’t think I would return to the road,” Hudson explains. “While serving as an interim, I received a call from Three Bridges. My spirit jumped inside of me when Elliott called. So in May of 2010, I was named Three Bridges’ tenor. There were several small moun-

tains in the way to my coming back on the road, but God has made those mountains a flat surface. A few more things fell into place, and away we went.



“The road always is fulfilling as well as full of challenges. It’s not unlike any other job or ministry really. However, I work with some of the greatest guys ever. We are supported by some of the most awesome people ever. I get to meet, sing (with) and know some of the most amazing people ever. And I sing about God. Wow.”

Much like Smith, Hudson knew from early on his path was to share the gospel.

“(It was) at age eight,” Hudson says. “And, yes, I knew from a very young age that God wanted me to sing and teach the Gospel. I used to sing while mowing the yard. People would stop and ask my dad if we had a radio on our lawn mower.”

Hudson is enjoying the journey with Three Bridges.



“We have a lot of fun,” Hudson points out. “There is a lot of laughing, a lot of eating. Our concerts are full of excitement for sure, (with) some tears and laughter but again, excitement, without a doubt.”

One of the things all of the guys are really enthusiastic about is the release of their hymns project, “Hymns and Classics Renewed.”

“I am very excited about our current project,” McCoy says. “In our 16 years as Three Bridges, this is the very first hymns project. Some of the songs on it are ‘The Old Rugged Cross,’ ‘The Love of God,’ and the old Dottie Rambo classic, ‘I Go to the Rock.’ We also did ‘Rise Again.’ Forty years ago, it was song of the year in Gospel Music, and boy, what an exciting message and a powerful song.



“We also included the classic Three Bridges song, “Dear Captain” on our hymns and classics project as a bonus track. We recorded this song on our first recording back in 2001.”

McCoy explains how the signature song found its way to Three Bridges.

“July 4, 2001, I was singing in my home church choir and praise and worship team, and I heard a song from a young lady by the name of Chelley Sterbin,” McCoy recalls. “It was called ‘Dear Captain.’ I asked her where she got that song, and she informed me that her mom and stepdad wrote it. We took that song and started recording it in August.

“Then, (on) Sept. 11, 2001, a horrible tragedy happened in America. The nation began to say, ‘We need to pray for our president.’ Three Bridges had just recorded the

song, 'Dear Captain' with the message of praying for the president, who is the captain of this great nation. That song launched the group and our career, and the rest is history as they say."



The entire project has cuts that will touch the hearts of Three Bridges' audiences.

"Having grown up in the church, I have always been a lover of hymns and the great Gospel songs," Smith explains. "These songs have encouraged me and challenged me over and over again, and I never tire of singing them. I pray that as people listen and sing along, they would be reminded of how good God has been to them and how faithful He will always be."

Hudson adds, "These songs seem to be the backbone of Christian music. They have all touched me at some point in my life. It was a privilege to get to record and sing them."

The miles of travel continue on for the award-winning group.

"The current lineup of Three Bridges may be the most exciting and dynamic lineup that we have ever had in our 16 years of full-time traveling," McCoy points out.

There are certainly a lot of Southern Gospel fans who would agree.



HOPE TO THE HILL

By Nathan Kistler



As I write to you today, I have just finished my day in Washington (D.C.), which was dramatically changed by the shooting at the Congressional baseball game Republican practice. As this event was traumatic and horrific, God has moved through it still. I am constantly reminded that “all things work together for good to those who love God.” All things are for His glory, and through it all, He is good.



In these moments, we are reminded of the humanity that we all share. Outside of politics and all the differences we may have, we are human beings that God loves with a love that no one could ever comprehend. What are we called to do? We are called to love as He loves.

This month brings us great ministry opportunities in Hope To The Hill, some of which I cannot share in this

public forum, but I can tell you that God is moving in Washington in ways we could never imagine. Every day, God has brought opportunity to share the Gospel and to encourage our leading officials in the work that they do representing us.

We will never understand how difficult the job is for our elected officials in Washington. The pressure is immense and the reward is not always great for them. We need to continue to pray for each of our elected officials.

I want to issue this challenge to those of you who read this. Find out who your Congressman and two Senators are, and call or e-mail their offices once a week to let them know you are praying for them and that you appreciate what they do. You will never know how much





this will mean to them that people are praying.

We are to be the light of Christ shining for the world to see. Let us continue being that light.

We need your prayers and financial support in the days ahead for the work we are doing here and would love for you to visit our website to find out how you can be involved. I appreciate your prayers for us and I pray for you even now.

Your missionary in Washington,
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TOP 40

CHRISTIAN COUNTRY SONGS

1. Angels By Another Name - Steve Bridgmon
2. That's What Jesus Would Do - Justin Todd Herod
3. Well Worn - Lisa Daggs
4. We are Broken - HighRoad
5. That's What It's All About - Butch Tinker
6. Quicksand - Austin Zimmer
7. Still Standing - Jonathan Dale
8. I'm There - Buddy Jewel
9. God Bless America Again - Sherry Damron
10. Wingin' It - Bruce Hedrick
11. He Can't Stop Loving You - Christian Davis
12. He's Coming Back - Debbie Bennett
13. Follow Your Heart Home - Brent Harrison
14. Looking Back - Ava Kasich
15. Beautiful Messes - Hillary Scott
16. Shoot For The Moon - Amy McCallister
17. Never Let Me Down - Arenos
18. Red - Ryan Watkins
19. Why Can't Christians Share the Love of Christ -
Shellem Cline
20. Showin' My Roots - Taylon Hope
21. Can't You See - Tommy Brandt II
22. Old School - Jim Sheldon

23. If This is All There Is - Arkin Terrell
24. Back To God - Reba McEntire
25. You are Welcome Here - Bev McCann
26. Drinking and Praying - Erica Lee Sunshine
27. My Favorite Singer - Kenny Gardner
28. Bible Revival - The Wards
29. Church Without Jesus - Billy Dawson
30. I Love You - Chuck Day
31. One Wave at A Time - Cash Creek
32. We're Not Gonna Walk, We're Gonna Run - Debbie Seagraves
33. Mustard Seed Faith - Chuck Hancock
34. Don't You Think Its Time - Karen Harris
35. What's A Valley - Kali Rose
36. Heaven Above - Kevin Rowe and The Prodigal Sons
37. Ordinary Joe - Tony Bates
38. Lay It Down - Kenneth Cole Trio
39. Taking Me Home - McKay Project
40. Jesus Take A Hold - Charlie Griffin

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By Lorraine Walker

The 2017 edition of the Creekside Gospel Music Convention is shaping up to be an exciting event with great music, seminars and showcases for all who enjoy Gospel Music. Creekside runs from Oct. 30 through Nov. 2 at the Smoky Mountain Convention Center in Pigeon Forge, Tenn. Tickets are free but must be reserved at www.creeksidegospelmusic-convention.com. Rooms at the Convention hotel, the Ramada Inn, are disappearing quickly, so those planning to attend should make their reservations now. Call and reserve your hotel room at 360-933-0741.

Who is coming to Creekside

Creekside will welcome more than 35 Gospel Music artists, including the Sneed Family, Mark209, Eagle's Wings, the Williamsons, the Hyssongs, Jason Runnels, Hope's Journey, the Shireys, Day 3, the Drummond Family, the Connells, Pine Ridge Boys, the Chordsmen, the Berry Brothers and Steve Bridgmon in addition to Gospel Music Today and many more.

Special guests this year include the return of our friends, Dr.



Jerry Goff and his wife Jan, who will be at Creekside for the entire convention. Goff will present this year's honoree – Triumphant Quartet's Eric Bennett – with a Life Achievement Award from SGNScoops Magazine in a special service on Monday, Oct. 30.

Other guests include the Nelons, one of our spotlight artists for 2017. You won't want to miss the award-winning music of this family group.

"It is a joy for The Nelons to be at Creekside this year," Kelly Nelon Clark says. "We have been friends with (event organizer) Rob Patz for many years and can't wait to see him and all of you there."

Motivational speaker David Ring brings his presentation of resilience and hope during the evening concerts on Monday, Oct. 30, and Wednesday, Nov. 1.

Bass vocalist Pat Barker – who has been a part of the Mark Trammell Quartet and Second Half Quartet – will be there to lead the Pat Barker University, offering training from vocal coaching to stage presence. The PBU is available to artists and attendees for a nominal cost on a first-come, first-served basis. Please call Patz at 360-933-0741 or Vonda Easley at 256-310-7892 to reserve your seat today. The fee is \$25 per person.

Red Back Revival returns to Creekside

The Board Of Directors of Creekside Gospel Music Convention have once again invited Charlie Sexton – along with his co-hosts, Troy and Tammy Burns – to present the ever-popular Red Back Revival segment on Thursday evening of the event. All of the artists at Creekside will gather on the stage to form a mass choir, singing out this time-honored songbook. Make your plans to join them for a power-packed



evening of fun fellowship and high-energy music coupled with anointed lyrics.

The 2017 Diamond Awards

Voting for the 2017 Diamond Awards top 10 is now open on the SGNscoops web site. Visit sgnscoops.com to select your favorites from the top 10 nominees. Fans, friends, artists and industry personnel are all invited to vote and to encourage their supporters to vote as well. To vote, visit www.sgn-scoops.com/2017-diamond-awards.

The 2017 Diamond Awards will be held on Oct. 31 during the Creekside Gospel Music Convention. Dr. Jerry and Jan Goff will serve as the guest hosts. The awards ceremony is a unique evening of recognizing the best in Gospel Music.



And there is more

The Convention will begin on Monday with an open-air event and breakfast. Veterans will be honored with a free meal that morning. Showcases are held daily, and midnight prayer follows each evening concert. There will be a special breakfast with the Pine Ridge Boys on Wednesday and more events to be announced.



VIP Bracelets

We want you to be a Creekside Very Important Person. For only \$25, a VIP bracelet will be your entry into the preferred seating at each event, and you will also receive a Creekside gift bag and be the special guest at select backstage happenings. Purchase your VIP bracelet today from Easley by calling 256-310-7892 or by e-mailing at vonda@sgnscoops.com.

How you can be a part of Creekside

Do you have some free time either before the event or during that week? We are always looking for volunteers to help spread the news on social media, be an extra hand during the event, and also praying that this will be more than just an event. Pray for all attending that God will turn this week into an incredible experience for all. If you can become involved, contact Easley by e-mailing at vonda@sgnscoops.com.

Creekside Gospel Music Convention 2017 tickets can be reserved by visiting creeksidegospelmusicconvention.com. Accommodation specials at the Ramada Inn can also be obtained by calling 360-933-0741. For more information on tickets, lodging and special VIP tickets, contact Patz at 360-933-0741.



YOUNGER PERSPECTIVE

Chad McCloskey

BY ERIN STEVENS

A word from Erin...

Today, we turn our attention to one of the most underrated and incredibly talented young men in our industry. Chad McCloskey masterfully fills the baritone position for the Ball Brothers. Aside from the strong vocal abilities the Lord has blessed him with, what matters most is his soft-spoken manner and tender spirit, which is noticeable the moment you meet him. Whether you've been a faithful Ball Brothers fan for years, or if you're newer to their music, this is your chance to get to know Chad a little better.

Erin: Being born in Wisconsin and growing up in Michigan, what did those early days look like once you discovered your love of singing?

Chad: I come from a very musical family. My dad was the music director at our church, and my mom was heavily involved with various musical outlets such as choir, ensembles, and church specials. Growing up, I was fairly shy musically. I wasn't particularly fond of the idea of standing up in front of people for anything, let alone to sing. As I got older, I was given somewhat of an ultimatum when it came to music. It was either sing or nothing, so I chose to sing. Once I got over my apprehension of crowds and my incessant fear of critique, I grew to love singing and jumped at the chance to sing whenever an opportunity presented itself. Fast forward 20 years, I now sing for a living, and I love what I do.

Erin: How did you and your wife Sarah meet?

Chad: I've actually known Sarah since I was around 10 years old. Her family, while in evangelism, used to come to our church and sing, and my family would occasionally take them out to eat while they were in town. We lost contact over the years, but in 2006, (we) reconnected at the church her dad was pastoring when my family went into evangelism.

Erin: An early congratulations on the newest addition to your family coming soon. How do you personally juggle

being a gospel singer, a husband, and a father to Brooklyn and Mason?

Chad: Thank you. We are excited about the new addition. When it comes to juggling family and work, I find it prudent to keep the two separate. When I'm at home, I always try to focus on my family's needs above anything else. We have dinner around the table every night and try, if we can, to do an activity together any chance we get. When I'm traveling, I try to focus on the task at hand to ensure I do my job accurately and efficiently, but at the end of the day, I always call home to check in on everyone. Fortunately, with the development in technology, staying in touch with my family while I'm away is pretty easy.

Erin: What are some new and exciting happenings the fans can be expecting from the Ball Brothers for the last half of this year?

Chad: We are currently working on a couple different projects. We have been in the studio working on a new Christmas album. We're hoping to have it finished and out this year. We are also getting ideas together for some music videos we are hoping to shoot later in the year.

Erin: With the group's incredible internet success, how has it impacted your ministry and opened new doors of opportunity?

Chad: The impact from our online success has been substantial at the very least. With





the change in the market, almost anything can be accessed online, so we see it as beneficial to cater to that outlet more. Since the views on our Facebook videos have skyrocketed over the last few years, we've seen immense growth in our fan base, as well as concert dates. God has truly blessed our ministry and we are so humbled by everything He has done for our group.

Erin: The jazzy, Michael Bublé-influenced tones to your voice are obvious to the listener. Besides him, who else are some of your top musical influences, and who would you normally be listening to?

Chad: I have a pretty wide range of music that I enjoy. I grew up listening to the Gaither Vocal Band, so they are an absolute must in my musical lineup. But I love groups from Journey to MercyMe to the Mullins. Some of the more singular influences would include Marshall Hall, Stevie Wonder, David Phelps, Michael Bublé, Frank Sinatra, and Bryan Duncan.

Erin: What's the strangest thing a fan has ever said to you?

Chad: Where to start? While I was dating my wife, I had a man approach me after a concert asking if I would be interested in his daughter. After I told him I was already dating someone, he quickly took the defense and came behind the product table, got in my face and very angrily asked why I thought his daughter was ugly. I just slowly backed into



the crowd in a desperate attempt to get away. Who does that?

Erin: Favorite food on the road/favorite food at home?

Chad: Mexican food. It's a favorite at home and on the road.

Erin: Is there a particular song you sing night after

night on stage that has a profound, personal impact on your heart?

Chad: The song "It's About the Cross" is a definite favorite of mine. The message of the song to me is too penetrating to ignore. It's an unbelievable and humbling thought that a sinless, perfect Jesus willingly laid down His life for mine.



Erin: It's true that music speaks when words fall short. But after all the songs have been sung, how would you encourage that listener

out there who has come to the end of their rope?

Chad: I know this sounds cliché – and we hear it all the time – but the most comforting thing to me when I'm at my weakest is prayer. We may not have all the answers, but God does. One passage in the Bible that stands out to me on this particular topic is Isaiah 40:29-31 ... "He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might, He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall. But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles. They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint."

Closing thoughts from Erin...

Our strength doesn't come from our own efforts. It comes from Christ. When we're on the mountaintop, we sometimes forget to give Him the thanks that He deserves. But it's in our weakest moments that we remember that we are nothing without Christ. He is the breath in our lungs and the fire in our souls. May we not fall prey to forgetting that all glory and honor are due His mighty name. Isaiah 40:29-31 was an excellent reminder Chad gave us. I appreciate his heart, and I'm thankful we have men like him still singing the gospel and spreading the good news for all to hear.

And that's my take on it.

Until next month, Scoops fans.

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Who would you like to see Erin interview next?



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Barkley's Business

Finding Refreshment

By Roger Barkley Jr.

We all look for a refreshing from time to time. As warmer weather approaches, we can be sure we will see reports of dry and dusty droughts of water. The account of a parched, cracked earth will make headlines in the coming weeks. Just as the blazing heat can wreak havoc on a body and dry out the essential nutrients, the world too can take its toll on your spiritual body.

How then, and where then, shall we drink to quench this thirst that seems to be across this land? It's a thirstiness for something that can satisfy a longing in the depth of one's very soul.

I have shared before with some about the natural occurring springs on the farm of my childhood. On those hot summer days of hauling hay, chopping tobacco patches or merely just playing as a child, I can still remember that on the hottest, muggiest July and August Kentucky days, the water which flowed from those springs was ice cold.

The spring seemed to be an eternal fountain with an endless supply of refreshing. When we were sweating,

toiling, and working as hard as we possibly could, just the comfort in knowing the fountain of refreshing was right around the corner from me would keep me going for a few more minutes.

As we'd gather around the side of that old hill where the spring flowed clear, we would choose that spot as a natural picnic area, break room, board room, and all-around meeting place where all the world's problems would be solved over fresh cool water and whatever had been packed for our power lunch that morning. No matter the blistering heat, the cool water was there to rejuvenate us.

It was always a pleasure to show someone new to the spring. There were two springs that proceeded out of the same hill and the same outlet. One was the cool, clear, great-tasting water. The other was bitter sulphur water. If you have never experienced the taste and smell of sulphur water, I encourage you to drive by a sewage plant and inhale deeply, and you will come close.

Both water streams looked the same. Both were clear. But when you can have the best, why would you settle



for less? If you knew the difference, why would want something that can leave a sour taste and smell in everything you do?

Paul writes that he strived toward the mark in Philipians 3:14, and even he ended up doing the things he tried not to do and tried not to do the things he ended up doing anyway (Romans 7). But it did not stop him from striving to get to his destination and perhaps being the best and most successful evangelist ever recorded throughout history. That was because of his choice be-

tween the springs.

Even though Paul was “religious” over the first part of his life, he was religiously wrong in his thought and heart process. Once he met the correct and refreshing Spring, he no longer had that sour taste in his mouth. He no longer had that stench about him of death. He had the refreshing Spirit in him that no man could take away. No matter what he had to go through, no matter what the world put in his way, no matter what tragedy struck, no matter what government official tried to end his life, he knew his true refreshing was inside him, and a boost was right around the corner. It was all because he chose the right side of the stream.

Ask yourself as you drink today ... are you drinking from the right stream? How full is your glass? Where are you getting it filled? Is your cup dirty? How long has it been since you talked to the One who controls the flow of the stream? The one question that gets most people in trouble in churches today is ... have you paid the water bill?



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This chart was compiled from a list of reporting stations. Each month we will be adding more stations.

1	The Hyssongs	Let The Hallelujahs Ring
2	Wilburn and Wilburn	Living Proof
3	Karen Peck and New River	I Choose Christ
4	Tim Livingston	Headed For Higher Ground
5	The Browders	Put It Into God's Hands
6	The Whisnants	Joy In The House
7	The Bowling Family	Praise God He's Alive
8	The Kingdom Heirs	Never Made A Promise
9	Joseph Habedank	Here He Comes
10	The Triumphant Quartet	Chain Breaker
11	The Steeles	Meet Me There
12	Dean	You Can't Tell Me I'm Dying
13	HighRoad	We Are Broken
14	The Williamsons	I've Got To Tell Somebody
15	Josh and Ashley Franks	It's The Blood
16	Brian Free and Assurance	He Will Carry You
17	The Kingsmen	They Don't Know (What The Lord Can Do)
18	The Isaacs	Rocks
19	The Guardians	Packin' Up
20	Jason Davidson	He Came Searching For Me
21	The Wisecarvers	It Was Jesus
22	The Tribute Quartet	God Of The Storms
23	The Collingsworth Family	Gotta Get To Jesus
24	Lauren Talley	I Hear A Song
25	The Perrys	Cry No More
26	The LeFevre Quartet	He Was There
27	The Old Time Preachers Quartet	Waving This World Goodbye
28	Amber Nelon Thompson	Give It To Jesus

29	The Freemans	It Still Takes The Blood
30	Shellem Cline	Why Can't Christians Share The Love Of Christ
31	The Nelons	When Grandpa Sang Amazing Grace
32	11th Hour	Ain't No Bones
33	The Pruitts	Jesus Built This Church On Love
34	The Hoppers	Life Is Good
35	Jeff and Sheri Easter	More Then Enough
36	Gordon Mote	Power In The Blood
37	The Erwins	He's Still Alive
38	Doug Anderson	Little White Church House
39	The Mylon Hayes Family	It's Not A Problem For The Answer
40	River's Edge	Let The River Run
41	Faith's Journey	Independence Day
42	The Lore Family	Because Of Grace
43	Zane and Donna King	Beautiful Ever After
44	Jim McComas	His Favorite Child Of All
45	Greater Vision	Still
46	The Pine Ridge Boys	There Is A Fountain
47	John Whisnant	Had It Not Been
48	The Bates Family	Ready Or Not
49	Jonathan Dale	I'm Still Standing
50	Bless'd Ministries	Come To The Cross
51	The Terry Collins Family	Jesus Make A Way
52	The Page Trio	Perfect Redeemer
53	Battle Cry	I'm Amazed
54	Legacy Five	In The Hands Of A Carpenter
55	Sunday Drive	I Thank You



56	Surrendered	You Don't Know The Half Of It
57	Dallas Rogers	Chasin'
58	The Down East Boys	The Song Of The Ransomed
59	The Bowling Sisters	He Sees What We Don't
60	Mark Bishop	That's When It's Time To Pray
61	The Carolina Boys Quartet	Treasures In Heaven
62	Reborn	Don't That Sound Like Heaven'
63	Christian Davis	He Can't Stop Loving You
64	The Rick Webb Trio	Jesus Speaking Peace
65	Debra Perry and Jaidyn's Call	It's Time To Walk On Water
66	Great Day	Journey On
67	The Ball Brothers	Mercy Tree
68	The Pine Ridge Boys	I've Got A New Song
69	The Anchormen	I'm Gonna Run
70	Greg Loggins and Revival	Put Your Hand In The Hand
71	Ricky Atkinson	The Harvest
72	Caleb's Crossing	I Promise You
73	The Spiritual Voices	Love That Led To Grace
74	Eagle's Wings	Greater Than The Grave
75	Adam Crabb	Sometimes God Allows
76	Pat Barker	Ain't God Good
77	The Sharps	Endless Day
78	Michael Combs	That Same Hand
79	The Soul'd Out Quartet	Holy Spirit Come
80	Exodus	God Of Always And Never
81	The Drummond Family	Water In The Wilderness
82	Hazel Stanley	Through The Good And The Bad
83	Cana's Voice	Heavenly Father
84	The Jim Brady Trio	God Is With Me
85	Ivan Parker	Walk My Way
86	The Villines Trio	Elijah
87	Chronicle	Where Did The Wind Go
88	Rejeana Leath and New Grace	Thank God For My Christian Home
89	The Jay Stone Singers	Example/At The Cross
90	Sounds Of Victory	A Know So Kind Of Feeling
91	The Diplomats	Let Your Light Shine
92	The Gibsons	No Wonder
93	Messiah's Call	Hope For The Day



Houston's Southern Gospel Station

94	Daniel's Purpose	Jesus Loved Us To Death
95	The Parsons Redeemed	Everything Is Going To Be Alright
96	The Browns	Aim Higher
97	The Millers	Take A Moment And Live
98	Canton Junction	When He Was On The Cross
99	Purpose	Trust Him
100	Sons Of The Father	I'm Ready



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Featuring

Heart 2 Heart Ministries

By Sarah Murray

Heart 2 Heart Ministries is a Southern Gospel group that has been around for almost 20 years. The group itself has faced a lot of changes throughout the years, but one thing has remained constant. That is their faith.

In any ministry, you must obtain a deep-rooted faith, especially to withhold you when times get tough. Heart 2 Heart experienced this faith challenge first hand. A few weeks ago, Heart 2 Heart was faced with news that would ultimately shake them and begin an emotional battle. They would be faced with two choices – give up or keep pressing ahead. Because of their faith and the love of their Savior, their journey continues.

A few weeks ago, Heart 2 Heart's soprano singer Rhonda House received a call that her mother, Ernestine "Ernie" Bingham, had fallen and broken her hip. After going into surgery, House's mother was placed in a rehab facility. A week went by, and her mother continued to be in pain. The family was told her surgery had not been successful in keeping her hip in place.

After losing her dad at the young age of 21, House had built such a close relationship with her mother that she knew she needed to be right by her side. House's mother went downhill very quickly. The doctors eventually explained that her body was beginning to shut

down and that they would do everything they could to keep her comfortable.

That very night, House sent a text to the other two members of the group, David and Deana Kiser, asking them to pray for her husband Jimmy. House had received a message stating that Jimmy, who was currently working out of town in Maryland, had become very sick and was taken to a nearby hospital.

As the night went on, things took a turn for the worse for Jimmy. In a short period of time, he was placed on life support. The group was taken aback as Jimmy was a huge supporter of Heart 2 Heart and meant so much to each of its members. Jimmy was seven-and-a-half hours away from them all, and Rhonda was truly devastated.

David called Rhonda and told her to get her daughter Chelsea and make their way to the Charlotte airport and get to Jimmy.

"At that point, we knew we would do whatever we could to get her to her husband," David said.

Rhonda and her daughter arrived in Virginia, where Jimmy had been transported and stayed with him for the following week. As the days went by, many groups

– including The Whisnants – reached out and became such inspirations to Rhonda, her family, and to Heart 2 Heart. The group was scheduled to sing on Saturday at the Bessemer City Days event. David knew that Rhonda was where she needed to be, and the group began making arrangements to fill her part. David was surprised when he received a call from Rhonda on that Friday stating that she needed to come sing.



“I’ll never forget it,” David recalls. “She said, ‘David, I heard a sermon one time titled, ‘when you don’t know what to do, do what you know to do.’ I plan on making this my motto.’”

“Rhonda went on to say, ‘I need to come sing. That’s what I know to do, and that’s what I’m called to do.’”

As Rhonda drove back home, the group boldly stood together and did what they were called to do. They quickly realized that they could give up with everything going on around them, or they could use it for God’s glory.



“If you truly have a relationship with the Lord, He has given you a song,” David points out.

There are four distinct ways Heart 2 Heart deals with the things of life in their ministry - worship, praise,

pray, and sing.

“We know we can worship Him through the trial, praise



Him through it, pray about it, and sing about it,” David explains.

With this strong faith, Heart 2 Heart quickly realized why they hadn’t released their song, “He is There,” from their “Rejoice” project just yet. It was all about God’s timing and the meaning He would place behind it to minister to people.



Rhonda sings the lead on this song, but she never dreamed she would be living the words, such as the line of the first verse that says “you got the news today, that you didn’t want to hear.”

Within the next few days Rhonda faced the worst news. As they took the stage again, Rhonda was told things had worsened for Jimmy and that he wouldn’t make it. That night the church they were to sing at was packed. As an emotional service unwound, the women of the church gathered around Rhonda to pray and seek God’s will for her and for Jimmy.

Early Monday morning around 4:30 a.m., Rhonda was

by her mother's side as she passed away. As most of the arrangements were made, Rhonda made plans to return to Jimmy after her mother's funeral on Wednesday. Around 11 p.m. on Monday night, Rhonda received a call that Jimmy had also passed away.



Rhonda was now faced with planning two funerals for two people she loved more than anything. Heart 2 Heart Ministries faced a loss to their ministry of two of their biggest supporters. People continued to reach out to all of them.



An inspiring service was planned and held for both loved ones, including a service dedicated to Jimmy's eight years of service to the Marine Corps. The group knew what both of these beloved supporters would want them to do in the days, weeks, and years to come – to sing for the King's glory.

All of the group members of Heart 2 Heart have all dealt with death and losses in their years of ministry. David said he could remember losing his dad in 2012 and the group supporting him through his time of loss. Deana remembers losing both her parents and her older



brother while singing with the group. Each member knew this would be a part of their testimony and that God would use this if they would allow Him to.

Within the next week, they took the stage again at a local church, using this earthly loss for Heaven's gain as they were able to see six souls saved while sharing this new platform for Christ.

"Our group decided a long time ago that nothing can stop us from getting the message out," David says. "I saw that in Rhonda during this trial. Our group may not be exactly where the industry would have us be, but we are confident we are where God wants us to be. That's what it's all about."



Heart 2 Heart continues to serve God and His people – with their singing, their faith, and their testimonies. Losing anyone is hard, but dealing with a loss such as this would make it easy for anyone to give up or lose their will to keep going. However, when your heart is



as well as performing in the Power Hour for the National Quartet Convention this year. They will also be celebrating their 20th year singing and minis-

focused on Christ and His calling on your life, you'll know you can pray through the trial at hand and that He will use it for His glory.

Heart 2 Heart has a full year ahead as it prepares for its first appearance in Dollywood's 2017 Harvest Fest,

tering together as they plan their annual homecoming celebration at Gastonia (N.C.) First Assembly, with the Crabb Family joining them in January 2018.

"Be genuine, share Jesus, and love people," David says of the group's continued message and purpose.



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DJ SPOTLIGHT

Greg Dodson



By Vonda Easley

Just outside of Nashville, in the small town of Cookeville, Tenn., is a radio station that's making a name for itself. The man behind the mic is Greg Dodson, a radio programmer and DJ with a heart of gold. SGNScoops recently sat down with Greg outside the Texas Troubadour Theatre in Nashville to ask him a few questions about his station that's making more than just radio waves.

Vonda Easley: Tell me some exciting things happening with Camp Meeting Radio.

Greg Dodson: One of the things that is exciting is the addition of the Beautifully Broken Show to weekly programming. Also, Camp Meeting Radio has recently become a member of the Country Gospel Broadcasters Association. This is a group of stations, programmers, and DJs united together for the purpose of promoting the message of Jesus Christ through the Country Gospel format.

Easley: You seem to be on the cutting edge of technology in your studio. Tell us how the concept of live streaming has helped the ministry of Camp Meeting Radio.

Dodson: Live streaming has been an invaluable tool that integrates our live evening show that is syndicated in over seven markets to reach a broader audience through the use of social media.

Easley: The future of Christian Country Music seems bright. Tell us why you think Christian Country music is seeing a resurgence of interest.

Dodson: I believe the (bright) future of Christian Country Music is due to ongoing efforts of expanding the genre through the addition of new, quality artists. The

example of this can be seen through the ICMA (Inspirational Country Music Association) Talent Showdown. I think that seeing the well-established artists' willingness to reach out to the new artists coming up and mentor them as they are growing is very beneficial to the future. From a radio standpoint, that's what the ICMA Talent Showdown is really all about. Also, the ongoing efforts of media outlets such as Christian Country News doing such a great job of continually promoting the genre and events associated with Christian Country Music.



Easley: Tell our readers about Greg Dodson and how you got started in radio.

Dodson: When I got started in radio, I felt the Lord guiding me down this path. After watching my mentor – Steve Warren, a former station owner, current syndicated show host and gospel recording artist of 25 years – I knew this was what the Lord wanted for me. Another influence in my radio career is Marty Smith of Heaven's Country. Marty has been an invaluable teacher as I've gone down this road.

Easley: Wow. Congratulations. Two ICGMA (International Country Gospel Music Association) Award Nominations, one for Radio Personality of the Year and one for Camp Meeting Radio for Radio Station of the Year. Greg, tell us what this means to you.

Dodson: I will start with how humbling this is just to be nominated and is an absolute dream come true. This is the highest honor of my career in radio seeing my name on a ballot with names like Marty Smith, Tommy Smith, Alan Holder, Ricky Russ, and Royel Clark. These men are the gold standard in Christian Country Broadcasting. Being named among them is the highest honor. These men have been a great source of help and encouragement to me, as well as the other nominees listed.

Thanks to Greg Dodson for being a part of the DJ Spotlight this month. For more on Campmeeting Radio, please visit www.campmeetingradio.com. The Inspirational Country Music Association Talent Showdown consists of several talent contests being hosted across the United States to find great Christian Country talent. To find more about this contest, visit inspirational-country-music-talent-showdown.com. The International Country Gospel Music Association holds its annual Christian Country awards convention from July 27-29 in West Plains, Mo., at the West Plains Civic Center. Find out more about the ICGMA on Facebook at www.facebook.com/icgma/.

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Gerald Crabb

A Man of Many Talents

By Debbie Seagraves

Gerald Crabb was born in the small rural town of Rosine, Ky. As a young boy, Crabb was passionate about music and was always in church. His mom taught him how to pray and made sure he attended services. He sang for the first time in public at age five, at a church in Louisville, Ky. By age 11, Crabb was playing the guitar and then preaching by age 17.

When Crabb was just nine years old, George Esterly – a blind man from Louisville – came to his house and brought his SG Gibson red guitar and taught Crabb how to play it. He loved it so much that he never looked back. It wasn't long before Crabb was singing on a television program called "Country Music Jubilee" on Saturday nights.

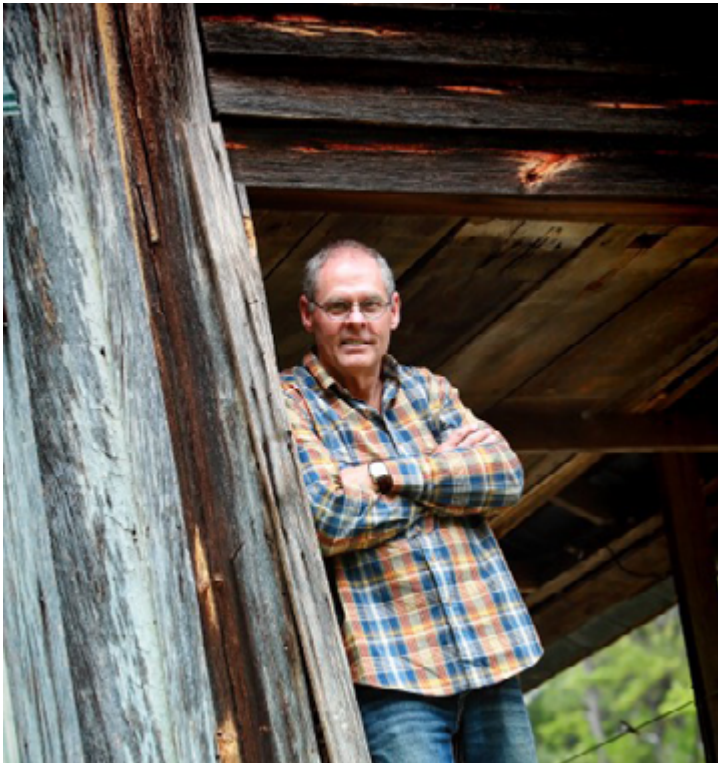
Over the years, God has blessed Crabb with a thriving ministry and a compelling career in music as a singer, songwriter, publisher, and producer. He says he is a man that has been blessed, and he has no problem telling others just how blessed he is. God took a simple, ordinary man from the backwoods of Kentucky and used him to touch the hearts of millions of people

around the world. He is a living testimony of how God can take your circumstances and use them for His glory. And if God can do that for him, He can certainly do it for others.

In 1994, he founded the internationally-known group, the Crabb Family, and led it to a whirlwind success, achieving many No. 1 songs, awards and opportunities to sing on platforms across the United States and abroad. He says he is so proud of all his children and grandchildren and all they have accomplished in their lives for the Lord.

Crabb has appeared in churches, on Gaither Homecoming videos, on the Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN), on the 700 Club, and on Country Music Television (CMT). He has also performed at Carnegie Hall, the Grand Ole Opry, the Ryman Auditorium, the Red Rocks Amphitheatre, and the Brooklyn Tabernacle.

This prolific writer has penned more than 475 songs, with 24 resulting in No. 1 positions on radio charts. From January 1998 until December 2006, one or



more of his songs held the No. 1 position on the national Southern Gospel chart for 37 months out of a 107-month period.

In 2011, Crabb was awarded song of the year for “Sometimes I Cry,” recorded by Jason Crabb, and songwriter of the year at the 42nd annual Dove Awards. He has won a total of six Dove Awards and has also won songwriter and publisher of the year awards with BMI and two performance awards with Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI), which are the awards every songwriter wants to win because they are based totally on merit and not voted upon.

Many of the songs performed by the Crabb Family were written by Crabb, including “He Came Looking for Me,” “Please Come Down To Me,” “Please Forgive Me,” and “Don’t That Make You Wanna Go.” He says he is probably best known for “Through the Fire,” which was featured on the album “Glory Train” by Randy Travis. This project won in the best Southern, Country, or Bluegrass Gospel Album category in the 51st Grammy Awards. It was also featured on the 52nd annual Grammy Award winning album, “Jason Crabb” by Jason Crabb. He has received numerous Dove Awards over the years as well as several Diamond Awards, winning Dottie Rambo Songwriter of the Year several times as well as The J. D. Sumner Living Legend Award.

Not just a singer, songwriter and preacher, Crabb has

also released a book of personal and powerful testimonies of how God has used the song “Through the Fire” to change lives. He says Bill Gaither once advised him to never do a concert without the song in the lineup.

Despite all of the accolades, Crabb believes that his greatest gift comes from seeing a soul get saved. That is what he truly lives for. He loves to sing and write, but preaching the word is where he finds the most enjoyment and fulfillment.

Although his ministry takes him across the nation, Crabb prefers to live in a small town and makes his home in Ripley, Miss., with his wife Debi. He says that his wife is God’s greatest reward in his life.

“She loves me, stands beside me, and I thank God for her,” Crabb points out. “There is no way that I could do what I do without Debi’s love and support, and another thing that is so awesome is that people really love her too.”

Two years ago, something happened that changed Crabb’s life forever. He had been preaching a revival and became ill. He drove all the way home from the revival and ate supper, then he drove to a hospital in Tupelo, Miss.



After drawing blood, the doctor informed him that he had indeed had a heart attack. The main artery to his heart was 85 percent blocked, as well as two other arteries. He went on to have triple-bypass surgery and states he is blessed to be alive.

“You don’t stare death in the face and it not change you,” Crabb says. “You change your priorities. I truly want to hear God say you have been faithful in a few



things and well done.”

One of the life lessons he says he has learned came through reading Revelation 4:11 and seeing that verse in a new light.

“We are created for God’s pleasure, but we go through life pleasuring ourselves,” Crabb explains. “When we get to that place, we don’t treat people like we should, and we don’t treat God right. We develop an all-about-me mentality and what we want. I have hurt a lot of people because I was selfish. I made a commitment from that day forward to please God. If we do that, I believe we won’t have to worry about anything else. I have become a new person since reading this and learned one of my greatest life lessons.”

Crabb’s motivation to see souls saved and lives changed keeps him busy performing, writing, preaching and producing. He ministers at numerous concerts, events, camp meetings and revivals throughout the year and occasionally mentors upcoming artists by offering songwriting and music business workshops. If he is ever in your area, drop by and see him. You won’t be disappointed. He truly is a man of many talents and an amazing artist.

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Randall Reviews It - July 2017

by Randall Hamm

Welcome to July and a whole new slate of new reviews. This month, we feature a group who just attained their very first No. 1 song, a group with their first national release and a Country Gospel artist who is releasing his best album yet. This month we feature the Hyssongs, Judith Montgomery and Family, and Kirby Stailey. Remember, if you like the reviews, get the CD wherever you get good gospel music.

Please send your latest releases for review to Randall Hamm, c/o Q-100 WFLQ-FM, P.O. Box 100, French Lick, IN 47432.



Hyssongs

"Still Moving Mountains"

Producer: Shane Roark

2017 Chapel Valley

Songs: "I Happen To Know" (Rodney Griffin, Scott Inman, BMI); "He Still Moves Mountains For Me" (Shane Roark, BMI); "God Has Always Been Good" (Val Dacus, BMI); "I Tell Them Jesus" (Shane Roark, MBI); "Behind The Scenes" (Rebecca J. Peck, Kenna West, BMI); "God I Need A Miracle" (Amber Maxwell, Thomas Peck, BMI); "Step Out Of The Boat" (Amber Maxwell, BMI); "Sweet Beulah Land" (Squire Parsons, BMI); "I've Seen Enough" (Karen Gillespie, Matthew Lawson, BMI); "Sheltered In The Arms Of God" (Jimmie Davis, Dottie Rambo, BMI); "Help Me Not To Fall" (Shane Roark, BMI)

The Hyssongs, comprised of the husband/wife tandem of Del and Susan Hyssong, and their son Richard Hyssong, have released what is their best project to date. I have known this family since 2007, since my

first visit to Christmas in the Smokies. And according to Richard, I was one of the first DJs to play their music, when they were as yet almost unknowns in the industry.

As I have played their material over the years, I have watched their family grow in the industry, and I have watched Richard's family grow in size, from almost a newlywed in 2007 to a loving family with two children today.

With their latest project – “Still Moving Mountains” – I see an almost constant theme of faith ... that God will move mountains, hold our hand and be with us when we step out of the safety net, and answer our prayer when we're needing a miracle.

One of the strongest songs is “I Tell Them Jesus.” According to Richard, it's what he tells folks regarding how he gets through trials. People always ask him, “How do you get through a daughter being diagnosed with a number of tumors and the many trials that you face or have faced over the years?” Richard says simply, “I tell them Jesus.” He's the answer, the only answer and the answer that solves any problem. I must stop to say that this song from the pen of Shane Roark is quite possibly the best he has written and may be a Dove-nominated song next year. This will be the Hyssongs' followup to their current single “Let The Hallelujahs Ring.”

“He Still Moves Mountains for Me,” is hopefully another possible single release, a song of faith of an ever-present Savior. If we just call upon His name and trust, He will move those mountains for us. One of my favorites on the CD, “Step Out of the Boat,” is a song that states, “are we so comfortable, that we don't step out of our comfort zone?” We can, you know. Christ is there. He'll be there and hold our hand. May we as Christians never get so comfortable, that we never “Step Out of the Boat.”

“God Has Always Been Good,” and “Help Me Not to Fall” also continue that theme of faith on the CD. Then, the Hyssongs reach back into the classic catalog of Gospel and bring us their versions of “Beulah Land” and “Sheltered in the Arms of God.”

Overall, this CD is the the best of the Hyssongs recording career. Del, Susan and Richard – along with help from the Chapel Valley musicians and Roark –

have crafted a project that will stand the test of time. Get a copy of “Still Moving Mountains” at <http://www.thehyssongs.com/shop/> or wherever you get good Gospel music.

By the way, congratulations to the Hyssongs on having the No. 1 song “Let The Hallelujahs Ring” off of their “Faith and Family” project. It is the Hyssongs' first ever No. 1 and also Chapel Valley's very first No. 1 as a company.

Strongest Songs: “I Tell Them Jesus,” “He Still Moves Mountains,” “Step Out of The Boat”



Kirby Stailey
“Unashamed”

Producer: Shane Roark
2017 Chapel Valley/Mercy Road

Songs: “Unashamed;” “That Day Will Come;” “Eyes Upon The Cross;” “You're Not Forgotten;” “Stand By My God;” “Same Old Life;” “God Sent You;” “It's All Good;” “Live A Life;” “I Ain't That Tough.” All songs written by Kirby Stailey, SESAC.

Kirby Stailey is back with his second release for Mercy Road to follow up his debut release, 2014's “Sowin' Seeds.” Once again Shane Roark is at the helm, and Stailey has written all 10 tracks of the project. Stailey has been singing for a number of years around my area, and he did very well with his first national release.

Stailey is known for his brand of Gospel that is on the country side, but he is very well received on the Southern Gospel side as well. The CD kicks off with “Unashamed.” The song says, “By Your love and by

living water, I was saved, and I will praise His holy name unashamed.”

Song two says “That Day Will Come,” one day, and we must remember this is our temporary home. The third track should be a hit at Gospel radio if released as a single, a song entitled “Keep Your Eyes on the Cross.” Spritely fiddle work and a dobro add oomph to well-written lyrics. Always keep your eyes upon the cross.

“You’re Not Forgotten,” slows the pace down with a song of a loved one at a grave side remembering and letting them know they are not forgotten. “Stand By My God” says to lean on His Word and choose things that He says over this world. Things of this world will wilt away and fall, but His Word will stand. “Same Old Life” ... I wouldn’t trade it for anything in this world. It may be humdrum, but what a great life I have.

Great Christian love song in “God Sent You.” In a life that was a cold and lonely, and wondering if I would ever find love, “God Sent You.” Friends, “It’s All Good,” yes it is. I could complain, but I praise you like I should because “It’s All Good.”

Remembering an old friend is the message in “Live a Life.” What will they remember most when I’m gone? “Live a Life” as a testimony of why He came. Lord help me “Live a Life.”

The CD closes with a tender ballad of letting go of a child and them spreading their wings. In the second verse, the song describes letting a daughter go down that aisle. When it comes to love and when it comes down to my children, “I Ain’t That Tough.”

Stailey has put together his best album yet. Stailey is an undiscovered treasure on the Gospel scene that will soon be discovered by folks outside Southern Indiana. Don’t just take my word that Stailey is good. Discover for yourself.

To get a copy of Stailey’s “Unashamed” CD, go to www.facebook.com/Kirby-Stailey-190112564344950/ and message him. The album will soon be on iTunes, and you can visit itunes.apple.com/us/artist/kirby-stailey/id556982805.

Strongest Songs: “Eyes Upon The Cross,” “Same Old Life,” “I Ain’t That Tough”



Judith Montgomery and Family

“Thank God”

Producer: Shane Roark

2017 Chapel Valley/Church House

Songs: “That’s God” (Michael Jason Frost BMI); “Rubble Cry” (Megan Montgomery BMI); “Thank God” (Judith Montgomery (Judith Montgomery BMI); “Because He Lives” (Gloria Gaither-William J Gaither); “It’s 11:59” (Jeff Treece-Steve Jones-Dana Sigmon-Glen Ashworth ASCAP); “For The Grace Of God” (Judith Montgomery BMI); “There Is A Remedy” (Annie McRae); “Bloodline” (Betty Kirk Gurganus BMI); “I’ll Fly Away” (Albert E Brumley); “Anyway” (Brad Warren-Brett Warren-Martina McBride)

Judith Montgomery and Family – based out of Shoals, Ind., located in southwestern Indiana – has released her first national project titled “Thank God.” The family is comprised of Judith and her children – Megan and Graham. In this project, the Montgomerys have stepped out of their comfort zone and brought some great originals along with some well-sung standards.

“That’s God,” a hit for the Frosts, is sung convincingly. Yes, when those miracles happen, brother “That’s God.” The first original on “Thank God,” is written by Megan and titled “Rubble Cry.” This I hope will be released as a single. The group has never sounded better, and Megan is starting to come into her own as a songwriter.

“Thank God” is the title cut and another original from Judith, a great song thanking God for all the blessings in her life. “Because He Lives” and “I’ll Fly Away” were recorded because of requests from fans, and are well sung. Kudos to the Chapel Valley session players for giving a unique arrangement to “I’ll Fly Away.”

"It's 11:59" is a song that was written by funny man Jeff Treece. Graham is finally coming into his own, and he absolutely owns this song. The time is short, and the Lord's coming is nigh. It's 11:59 ... are you ready?

"For the Grace of God," the last original on the project, was also written by Judith. If not for the grace of God, she could have taken a different path, and I'm so glad she didn't. The song is convincingly sung and beautifully done.

"There Is a Remedy," a beautiful tune originally recorded by the McRaes. It features Megan, Graham and Judith on the verses and the family on the chorus. For every sin-sick soul, there is a remedy, and His name is Jesus Christ. "Bloodline" and "Anyway" round out this project.

If you're looking for a new artist or family to discover in Gospel Music, may I recommend Judith Montgomery and Family. Visit the Montgomery Family at www.facebook.com/judithmontgomeryministries/ and get a copy of "Thank God" at herejudithmontgomeryministries.weebly.com/store.html or wherever you get good Gospel music

Strongest Songs: "Rubble Cry," "Thank God," "For the Grace of God"





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Chris Hester

Reaching up from depression to touch Heaven

By Lorraine Walker



Many fans of Gospel Music will say that there are many vocalists in the industry that are as good as, or better than, artists in the secular music scene. One of these vocalists that proves that point is Chris Hester. Distinctly country vocals with a bit of low-down inflection along with an honest delivery give this Dove-nominated Gospel artist a hint of familiarity even to those who are first-time Hester hearers. While he may still be new to some, he's been singing professionally for 17 years. His latest release to radio is "Miracle in Reach" from his album simply entitled "Reach."

As one of the first millennial artists, Hester didn't release an album initially but waited until he knew the time was right. An amazing moment happened in 2003

that confirmed his decision.

"Kimberly, my wife, was teaching at that time," begins Hester. "She had taken on a special-needs student in her classroom where the parent also attended to assist daily in the classroom. The child, Reba, was very special. Her mother Kathe was as well. Kimberly invited them to attend our church.

"I sang that morning just before the sermon. Reba, who had always been nonverbal and unable to walk, began to kick and move with the music as I sang that morning. Her mother Kathe was touched by seeing her daughter's response to Southern Gospel Music, and after the service asked if we could have dinner. While sitting down



at dinner, a card and check was written to my ministry requesting I cut my first album with hopes that it would touch souls and lives across the country.”

“The first song released to radio from that album in early 2005 went on to be a top 80 song and nominated for Country Recorded Song of the Year on the Dove ballot. In 2006, the second single was nominated for a Dove in the first round as well.”

Hester experienced the thrill of being recognized for his talents.

“Awards or nominations are not what it is about, but those things sometimes send artists encouragement to continue to focus on being the best they can be for our Savior,” he explains.

Encouragement in any form is helpful to a vocalist trying to make a living singing the Gospel.

“Being an artist is challenging,” Hester says. “You often feel like you are only as good as your last single. When a song is doing well, you are normally up. When a song isn’t doing well, you can get depressed quickly, as we are human and often feel the urge to need the approval of our peers and supporters.

Hester doesn’t use the word depressed lightly. He knows what it is to be so much in the depths of real

clinical depression that it has been his cross to bear since 1995. He is not alone. In 2014, the Anxiety and Depression Association of America said that 6.7 percent of Americans had experienced at least one major depressive episode in the last year (<https://www.adaa.org/understanding-anxiety/depression>, June 26, 2017).

Staying busy is one way Hester has battled this mental health illness. More than just a case of the blues, clinical depression lasts more than two weeks and interferes with daily activities. In Hester’s case, it sent him plunging into darkness.

“In 1993, I found myself on my way to work on the side of the road in tears,” Hester shares. “I didn’t know why I felt so sad. I had been saved years before and knew Christ was there for me. I would pray and feel somewhat better, but still struggled with the feeling of spiraling down a deep dark hole. I sought medical advice and was placed on an antidepressant.

“From that point on, for over 10 years, they tried different (medications), which would eventually stop working. It wasn’t until I embraced my calling in 2003 that (I seemed to improve) without any medical treatment. Being in the center of God’s will was the turning point for me. I still have days that can be tough, as we all do, but find that prayer and meditation is always healing.”

Hester’s loved ones reacted the way many without knowledge of mental health issues likely would.



“People I’d known for years would say things like, ‘you’ve just got to be delivered,’ ‘there must be something wrong with you,’ or ‘you just aren’t giving it all to God,’” Hester recalls. “We would pray, and yet time after time, I still would fall into that deep dark hole.

“Here is what I personally discovered. You have to guard yourself daily and make yourself accountable to spending time in God’s word. You also have to be really careful in whom

you have communication with and who you hang out with. Embrace the fact that the Lord only has us here for a short amount of time, and every moment we have on earth we have to make the best of it and focus on glorifying Him in all we do, rather than ourselves or our peers and fans/friends.”



Often mental health issues are treated with a three-pronged approach: emotionally (psychotherapy), physically (drugs) and spiritually (pastoral therapy). Hester sought all of these and found prayer, diet and exercise to be most beneficial.

“I do the prayer thing well, but diet and exercise is always a daily challenge,” he points out. “It certainly keeps me humble. It also makes me look for those who are searching for help in their darkness and inspires me to sing, write, and relate with those who are hurting. I guess you could say it keeps things real. There are days I still want to go off the grid and have learned there is no harm in that.”

Hester says his difficulties are reflected in his music, and this is how he reaches out to others who are hurting.

“I certainly hope the songs that go to radio are a tool that help reach out to others that might be finding life a challenge in whatever they may be going through, and the message of our hope in Jesus Christ, my Savior will uplift souls and give them encouragement to keep fighting the good fight of faith,” Hester says.

Messages and emails that Hester receives from people who say that his songs have changed things in their lives let him know that God is using him to help others.

Hester’s message to others struggling with depression is, “Never give up. Never stop believing that Christ has something for you to do for Him. Start by counting your smallest blessings. Develop a focus on gratitude. I recently was so inspired by my producer, Kevin Ward, in a social media post he made about gratitude. It is so important to be grateful. Daily, I thank God for each one of you who have been so supportive.”

For those with loved ones battling any mental health issue, Hester has some advice to offer.

“Never stop praying for them and find something in them that you love, and let them know randomly how proud you are of them,” Hester points out. “The energy we put in encouraging others is so important. I may not have ever recorded one album without that positive energy that came from a handicapped girl in a wheelchair whose parents believed in me as an artist, despite my depression, and made my debut album happen, my focus redirected, and my ability to fight major depression issues with something positive.”

One of the positive things that Hester is accomplishing is a new recording.

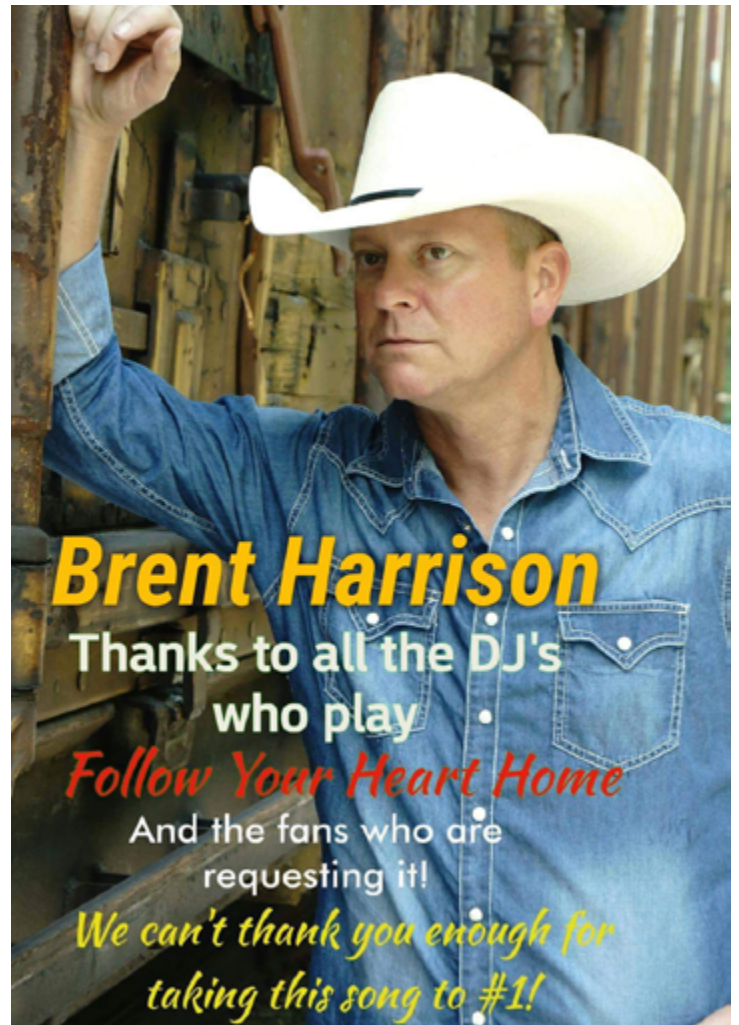
“The first single from it will go to radio (in the) fall 2017,” Hester says. “The full release of the EP will be available first part of 2018. This album includes songs written by only today’s No. 1 songwriters. The new single is explicitly about many of the things this interview focused on. It’s entitled ‘Help Me Touch Heaven.’

“I now host a syndicated weekly radio program called ‘Gospel Music Now,’ with Christopher Reed as co-host. It is broadcast around the world and is on over 55 stations nationwide, as well as iTunes Podcast, and has kept me really super busy keeping up with what’s going on now in Gospel Music, and taking the focus off of my depression struggles. An idle mind is the devil’s



playground. Volunteering and working to help others is probably the best medicine. You can never outgive the Lord. I often wonder what I'd be doing if I didn't struggle with depression. I try to make what the devil meant for harm into what God can use for the good."

Photo Shoot images by Glenn Sweitzer. Other images courtesy of Chris Hester.



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By Leslie McKay

Vernon Alabama's Gospel Music Weekend Update

September means football to many folks, especially in Alabama, but to the folks in Vernon, it also means Vernon Alabama's Gospel Music Weekend 2017. This is the weekend that more than 20 gospel artists from all over the country – soloists, duos, trios, quartets, family groups, musicians, and even a comedian – will gather to present two free evening concerts featuring some of the best artists in Christian music.

“Last year's event was just fun,” says Dennis McKay of M.A.C. Records. “I think the event is the best-kept secret in Gospel Music, but we want folks to know about this secret and want them

to come to Vernon, Ala., on Sept. 8-9. We want them to experience the music, worship, and fellowship that makes this such a great event.”



Some of the artists appearing include: the Coffmans, Hope's Journey, Ava Kasich, the McKay Project, Pastor Pudge, Purpose, Debbie Sea-graves, Chronicle, Day 3, the Connells, the Drummond Family, and many more.



Vernon Alabama's Gospel Music Weekend will be held at the Vernon City Auditorium. There will be a free concert starting at 6 p.m. on Friday and at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday. There will be a songwriter's seminar on Saturday, Sept. 9, at 10 a.m. led by Dr. Jeff Steele. Steele is a writer, author, pastor, conference speaker, the owner and founder of the award-winning group the Steeles, and the owner of his own publishing company. He has



written or co-written 17 No. 1 songs in Gospel Music. If you are a beginning songwriter or a seasoned songwriter, this seminar is for you. Steele will talk about songwriting, how to get your songs published, and how royalties work. The fee for the songwriting seminar is \$25 per person. Go to www.squareup.com/store/mckay-project under the events tab to register.

Through social media, folks have seen the fun had at Vernon Alabama's Gospel Music Weekend, and they say, "Hey, I want to come to Vernon." However, they always follow it up with, "Where is Vernon?" It is a wonderful town with southern charm and a down-home feeling of community that is just part of the South. It is the kind of town where everyone is your neighbor, steeped in history, and is something straight out of a movie from the early 1900s. You will find historical bed and breakfasts in the area and a number of restaurants with great food.

The Vernon City Complex houses city hall (the mayor's office), the police department, a small museum with a collection of historical items, a small art department, the city library, a genealogy department with family history dating back to the 1700s, and a restored auditorium with a stage where this event will be held. The complex is warm and comfortable, which also describes the support from the community. Event organizers work closely with mayor Glenn Crawford and the events committee for the City of Vernon, and their support and enthusiasm is much appreciated. They always make everyone feel welcome.

"We are excited about Vernon Alabama's Gospel Music Weekend," Crawford says. "It is a great event for our

community, and we are thankful for what it means to the city. We are happy to welcome all the artists and visitors to Vernon for this weekend of fun. If you like Gospel Music, we hope to see you in September."

If you are looking for lodgings, we recommend Willow Bend, a bed and breakfast just six miles outside Vernon. Call Dot Howard at 205-695-6743 for reservations. For accommodations and/or to park your RV, check out the Tin Top Inn and RV Park in Fayette, Ala.

To register for the songwriter's seminar or for more information on Vernon Alabama's Gospel Music Weekend 2017, contact M.A.C. Records by calling 662-312-4146 or 662-889-2829, or by e-mailing info@macrecords.net. You can also contact SGNScoops by calling 360-933-0741.



Find out more information on the event by visiting www.facebook.com/macnightofworship.

Sources:

WCBI.Com: <http://www.wcbi.com/video-vernon-city-complex-project/>

Ancestry.com: <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~kithandkin2000/vernonedmondhistoryofvernonal.htm>

Barb Carruth: <https://walabamahistory.com/west-alabama-counties/lamar/lamar-county-alabama-history/>;
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What Will You Choose?



A Brief Look at Master's Promise

By Justin Gilmore

Choices are made daily by everyone. Some are simple, such as what to eat or what to watch on television. There are some that are simple, but extremely important. One such choice is to follow Jesus Christ. This decision was made by the young ladies of Master's Promise, and their lives were forever changed.

This dynamic trio – which is relatively new to the mainstream Southern Gospel community – is comprised of sisters Hannah (age 19) and Rachel Sancricca (21) and their long-time friend, Katelyn Montgomery (21). The three women joined forces in 2010 and decided to carry on the tradition set by their family's groups, The Dobbs Family and The Master's Quartet.

Rachel recalls the early days.

“For Hannah and myself, we grew up with Southern Gospel,” Rachel says. “Our grandparents and uncles traveled full-time for years as a family group called the Dobbs Family, singing songs like ‘Blood Washed Band’ and ‘Consider The Lilies,’ so naturally, classic Southern Gospel has been a part of our heritage since we were

children.”

Rooted in the classics, the sisters were destined to carry on the legacy of their family. This was made more evident when they met Montgomery.

“In 2010, we became next-door neighbors with Katelyn Montgomery and her family, and as we were 12, 14, and 15 years old at the time,” Rachel points out. “Singing around the karaoke machine was just something that organically happened.

“Katelyn had never heard of Southern Gospel, but after she trusted Christ, she quickly fell in love with it. We began singing regularly in our home church, practicing every single day and staying up long hours learning and developing the harmony that has become our staple today. After an experimental summer of visiting a few different churches with our music, God began to reveal to us a deeper calling.”

Accepting the call, the women made it official with a fitting name.

“We decided on the name Master’s Promise, after mine and Hannah’s grandfather’s group from years ago – The Master’s Quartet – as a choice to carry on the legacy of serving the Lord in our family,” Rachel explains. “In May of 2013, we released our first album, entitled ‘Not Alone.’”



Master’s Promise has a fresh, unique vocal style that – compared to other more contemporary female or mixed trios – is actually a result of male vocal influences.

“We have been affected by so many inspiring artists over the years, but to name a few, some of our top influences have been the Booth Brothers, the Kingdom Heirs, and Tribute Quartet,” Rachel points out. “Today, we are most commonly compared to groups like Point of Grace or the Martins, which is always so funny to us because we got our start singing strictly male music. We often share the story of how when we first started singing, we set out to be the female Booth Brothers, right down to singing everything in their original key. Can you imagine?”

“Next time you are at a Master’s Promise concert and hear one of us reach down and hit an unusually impressive low note for a female, thank the Booth Brothers.”

Though those influences are evident, the group maintains a unique style and sound that truly sets them apart from other Southern Gospel artists. The three voices blend together beautifully and form memorable harmonies. These harmonies are front and center on the group’s latest recording – “Choices” – which was released in January. This album was produced by Butler Music Group and features thoughtful and exciting new songs written primarily by Rachel. Other writers include Sue C. Smith,

Marcia Henry and Rebecca Peck, none of which are strangers to Southern Gospel Music.

The title track – “Choices” – represents the theme of not only the record, but of the group itself.

“The title cut is an upbeat song that speaks to the ability God has given us through His Son, to choose joy, despite our circumstances,” Rachel says. “We realized very quickly that the rest of the album strongly carries this theme. Every day, in every situation, we constantly have a choice to make – to choose to have faith in Christ, in His grace, in His promise of Heaven, in His sufficiency, in the power of His blood or to place our faith in ourselves, in our works, or our abilities, allowing our failures, and the people and circumstances around us to become our determining factors.

“With this record, we have sought to create an atmosphere of strength and hope for the listener but also, to pose a challenge. Here is what God’s Word says. What will you choose to do with it?”

Another powerful song on the record is the first single, “Prepare Ye The Way,” which was written by Rachel. She says that the mid-tempo song “...is a message to the body of Christ, relaying the same challenge that John the Baptist gave to the people before Jesus entered the city ... to prepare the way for the coming of Christ. The second verse says, ‘Make ready the souls. Press towards the goal, if only for one more name on the roll.’ Let us tell the world of the Good News, that in their hearts they would make way for the coming of the risen King.”

This is truly the heart’s cry of Master’s Promise.



“Our mission is to, through music, let the world hear that it is loved by the God who gave His son Jesus Christ, who shed His blood for the remission of sins,” Rachel emphasizes. “That same Jesus is Lord of all, is worthy to

be served, and is able to heal the wounds of our land, His Church, and its people.”



God has blessed this group immensely in their four years together as Master’s Promise. In their short career, they have already made many memories that will last a lifetime.

“I think one of the most memorable experiences we have had was in 2015, when several churches in Indiana came together and brought us in to host a youth rally,” Rachel remembers. “There were about 100 kids there. The age range was from middle school to high school, and many of them had their families with them.

“Our hearts are especially broken for our generation, so any opportunity we are given to reach them is that much more special to us. That night, we watched families worship together. We watched young friends put their arms around each other and cry. We watched them laugh and clap along to the music. In a day and time in which the Body of Christ can seem so divided, it was a night of unity. That fueled our desire to see more family worship and healing among the generations. Most importantly, when we gave the altar call, 20 people – kids, teenagers, and parents – accepted Christ as their Lord and Savior. The altars were flooded with love and tears. Hearts and homes were mended. People were changed. It was unforgettable. Even on my most difficult days in serving the Lord, I am reminded that I must not cease until the whole world looks like that.”

Another such encounter also reaffirmed their mission.

“One night after a concert, a young woman came up to the table and told us that due to many surgeries that had not gone as planned, her health had taken a terrible turn, which resulted in deep depression,” Rachel shares. “She hadn’t been out of bed in days and was contemplating taking her life. She had no explanation as to how she even

managed to get to her car, let alone to our concert that night, but she said that all she knew was that she needed to be there.

“She met Jesus Christ that night, who not only saved her life and eternity, but showed her that she had a friend to walk with her for the long road ahead. She has updated us since then to let us know that she has been growing in her faith, and her life has been changed ever since. Her story alone is worth every minute of what we do.”

Already, 2017 has been a great year, and this incredible ministry-driven group is just getting started. The future is a bright one for Master’s Promise, which was recently nominated has recently received award nominations.

“Every time I think I know what to expect from 2017, God continues to surprise me,” Rachel says. “We have already visited several new states while touring this year and hope to continue doing that.

“We are currently focused on sharing our new music, so be on the lookout for some possible lyric videos and things of that nature. We are excited to continue our ‘Choices’ tour, as it is such a thrill to see audiences experience the music we have poured our hearts into. We are grateful and excited to see what God is doing.”

Thank you deejays, program directors, fellow gospel artists, & listeners with for playing, plugging, loving, sharing, streaming, & purchasing BEN*JAM music. Our radio single “BEN*JAM - When I Pause” is continuing to touch hearts and lives.
-Pastor Benjamin & Victoria Blankenship (BEN*JAM)

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The Editor's Last Word

By Lorraine Walker

It's July, a month filled with dog days and hot dogs, fireworks and holidays from work. For some of us, it means finding a beach, or air conditioning, or a campfire. For others, it means surviving seasonal allergies, storms and droughts. I hope you have a great month and enjoy some summertime fun, whatever your situation.

This issue has been an interesting one for us to put together, with some great writing from our feature and column authors, stories from new-to-some artists and in-depth interviews with artists we know and love. There are some things you just associate with people you may have been acquainted with for some time but only see once or twice a year ... like the big smile of Gary Casto, the hugs and sweet silliness of Josh Singletary, the great vocals of Riley Harrison Clark and Anthony Davis.

Something that is also intriguing is the different personalities that make up the groups of artists that we so enjoy. It would seem that it takes a distinct personality type to create a vocalist who will step on a stage in front of an audience to sing and share about Jesus. But just like anywhere else, within Southern Gospel, you will find a range of personalities. As outgoing and earnest as Singletary is, you will find someone like Chris Hester to be a little more serious. These differences prove that if you know there is something God wants you to do, don't let your personality type keep you from doing it.

Many of you have seen my picture with the "Love Everyone, Always" banner. We also have this on a sign on our front lawn. Mostly, I find it is a reminder to me specifically when I walk out the door to live out the love of God regardless of whom I meet. When Jesus told us to love one another, He didn't make any exceptions. And it doesn't matter what your personality type is, whether you are outgoing or reserved.

Love in action can be as simple as picking up a set of keys that someone dropped, or letting them know they left their coffee cup on top of their car as they begin to drive away. It's little things, but it shows someone that they are not alone in this world. We are all brothers and sisters.

What disturbs me lately is not only the lack of love and appreciation between Christians, but the lack of human connection between Christians and the rest of the world, even the basic understanding that we are all connected regardless of race, color and even orientation. We each need to look inside ourselves to find out whether there are seeds of bigotry, bitterness, jealousy, or pride. Anything that keeps us from loving our neighbors as ourselves needs to be rooted out. Who is our neighbor? Everyone is. What does love look like? It's treating others not only as we would like to be treated, but also the way Jesus treats us.

Love includes justice and truth. Jesus wasn't shy to call out the Pharisees, but He also provided everyone a way to the Father, even those that would eventually kill Him. He told them that He was the way, the truth and the life. Let's live that life so all will see Jesus and the Father.

I'm going to try harder this month to live love, regardless of whether I'm walking in the mall or roasting marshmallows over a fire. My personality may be reserved, but that isn't an excuse to not share how God has changed my life. What about you?

If you have any questions, comments or critiques of this column or anything in this issue, please write to me at lorraine@sgnscoops.com. I enjoy hearing from you all. If you have an artist you would like to know more about or if you would like to join the SGNScoops team, I look forward to hearing from you.



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Rob Patz is the President and CEO of Coastal Media Group. Rob has an 18 year history in radio hosting the nationally syndicated radio show, "The Southern Styles Show" since its beginning in 1993. Rob is also the owner of the internet's #1 Southern Gospel station, SGMRadio.com. In 2009, Rob Patz acquired SGNScoops.com, including the all-digital Scoops Magazine and the Diamond Awards. Rob has taken part in several Christian television projects working in front of the camera and also has helped create several syndicated television programs as well. Rob does voice work for various outlets including fortune 500 companies as well as emceeing concerts and special events. Email Rob at rob@sgnscoops.com.



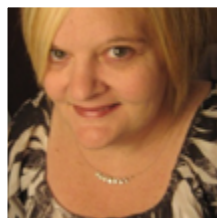
Stephanie Kelley is a public speaker and owner of Queen-O-Q, a blog featuring coupon match-ups, freebies, samples and information on frugal living. She is married, has three children and lives in Washington State. Queenoq.blogspot.com



Canadian-born Lorraine Walker has a love for Jesus Christ, music and writing. The combination of these passions has produced artist features and monthly columns for Southern Gospel publications including SGM Radio website and SGN Scoops Digital magazine. Lorraine desires that the power of the written word will glorify her Lord and bring readers closer to the love, peace and majesty of the Almighty. Email Lorraine at lorraine@sgnscoops.com



Jennifer Campbell is a singer, songwriter, musician, and middle school English teacher from McAlpin, Florida. Along with her passion for teaching, she has an even greater passion for ministering to others, sharing her testimony of how she was born lifeless and how Jesus raised her up to live for Him. Jennifer is a member of the Florida Worship Choir and Orchestra and has performed with them at Brooklyn Tabernacle, Carnegie Hall, Central Park, and Times Square. She serves as a group leader for Women of Faith, designs websites, and writes an inspirational blog at <http://jennifercampbell.net/blog.htm> and a food and travel blog at <http://jennifersjourneys.net>. Learn more about Jennifer at <http://jennifercampbell.net> and www.christwillreturn.org.



Joan Walker grew up with music in the house and first heard Southern Gospel in her early teens. With almost a quirky (some may say 'weird') need to make sure words are spelled correctly and the apostrophes are in the right place, she enjoys proofreading the articles for the SGN Scoops magazine each month...and looks beyond the letters and commas to the wonderful words each writer has written. Joan counts it as a blessing in her life to be part of SGN Scoops!



Justin Gilmore, 22, a resident of San Diego, California, graduated from Point Loma Nazarene University with a B.A. in History in June of 2014. Passionate about Southern Gospel music and its history, he decided to venture into the blog world in January starting Southern Gospel Spotlight in order to share his love of this great style of music.

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Dusty Wells is a man of many talents and multiple skills, from his speaking engagements across the country, to traveling and encouraging various artists in the Christian music genres. Dusty has a passion that is evident from the moment you meet him.

Dusty is a man who remains passionate and secure in the calling and destiny upon his life. He has come to realize the importance of finding purpose and clear direction for not only his life, but also the lives of those he comes in contact with, no matter what stage of life they may be in. Growing up in a very dysfunctional home, surrounded by all types of abuse, Dusty had every excuse to be a failure in life. He grew up on welfare, having to steal his daily necessities of life at times, being surrounded by drugs, alcohol and pornography. He was raised by a mother who was married multiple times, living in a housing project on the wrong side of town. But in the midst of what seemed to be complete devastation, God had different plans of success for Dusty. At the age of 14, a precious couple took time out of their own lives to invest in Dusty...thus leading Him to the Lord. His life is a testimony of God's relentless love and deliverance, and is one of the most triumphant stories told in modern Christianity. Dusty is confident in the fact that if God can do it for him, He can do it for anyone, no matter the situation.

Dusty and his wife of 33 years have four children, and two grandbabies with one more on the way. They make their home in Nashville, Tn.



Justin McLeod is the founder of the Justin's World of Softball website, a site that he has built into one of the premier news outlets in the sport. Justin is a longtime Gospel music fan and enjoys researching the history of the genre, attending concerts, and review-

ing recordings whenever possible. The son of a Southern Baptist pastor, he also works for a law firm as a legal secretary and is active in his local church. Justin is a native of Memphis and now resides in Northeast Louisiana.



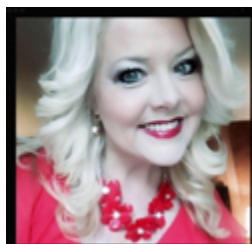
Pete Schwager is a web developer and graphic designer with a passion for Christ. He was born in Santa Rosa, California and moved to Oregon where he spent most of his life. He now lives in the quiet town of Ringgold, Georgia and enjoys living in the country with his family.

You can find him online at <http://peteschwager.com>



Staci Schwager helps with marketing and communication with her husband's web design company, Cre8able Media. Together they make a great team! Staci being the "talkative" one, loves being able to communicate one on one with clients and organizing

ideas. While Pete on the other hand is diving into the design and coding aspects to make the real masterpiece! Most of Staci's days are filled with preparing homeschool lessons for her kids, couponing, gardening, tending to her chicken flock and spending as much time on the beautiful, country land God has blessed them with.



Vonda Easley is the Vice President of Sales and Marketing. Vonda draws on a vast knowledge of Southern Gospel Music for her expertise in the field. In addition to her many personal friendships within the industry she also hosts a weekly radio show which keeps

her in touch with many of Southern Gospel's leading executives and artists. It also allows her a fresh view of new music and the latest happenings inside the industry. Vonda is also a group owner and manager as well! A self starter Vonda has started and managed several "new" events in Southern as well as "Country Gospel" Music. These events are fast be

coming trend setters within the industry. She is a graduate of The University of Alabama at Birmingham.

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Robert York- During my childhood days my parents took me to the Atlanta City Auditorium for concerts hosted by Warren Roberts. That was the beginning of my love for Southern Gospel music. After 35 years I retired from USPS, during which time I got married. My wife and

I often went to The Joyful Noise for dinner and concerts. Every known name in Gospel Music sang there at one time or another. After I retired, we decided to start promoting concerts. Our goal was not only to promote our concerts, but also to promote any Gospel concerts in our area and attend as many as we possibly could. I came to a crossroads in December 2013 when my wife graduated to heaven, not knowing what to do. After much prayer God led me to continue promoting concerts. Have promoted around 100 concerts and can't tell you how many I attended. I still enjoy going to concerts and writing a little about the groups.



Erin Stevens is a uniquely talented shutterbug, singer, guitar player, writer, blogger, and social networker. She is the owner/operator of Photos For Keeps By Erin. Along with running her own business, she is the official photographer for Abraham Productions (API). You will find her behind the lens at all API events, along with

working behind the scenes on their social media. She also travels full-time on the road with her family's gospel group, The Stevens Family. Photography is her passion and singing for Jesus is her calling. For several years, you have known her as our very own "Younger Perspective" writer. Check out her photography website www.photosforkeepsbyerin.com and her ministry website www.stevensfamilymusic.com.



Vivian is the marketing manager at KKGW in Dallas/Fort Worth Texas, as well as hosting a program on Sundays where she features national, regional as well as local artists. She also brings news of upcoming concert events in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex and surrounding area. Vivian has promoted various artists in this area for over

10 years beginning with Phil Cross and Poet Voices and later Sharron Kay King and Jerry Bennett to name a few. She has spent the past several years promoting Southern Gospel, Inspirational Country Gospel and Bluegrass in this area in order to preserve this part of our heritage.



Hello, I'm Randall Hamm, Gospel Program Director of WFLQ French Lick Indiana, host of the Sunday Morning Gospel Show for the past 20 years on WFLQ French Lick Indiana and Singing News Top 10 Small Market DJ for the past three years. I now add something new to

my resume! Record Reviewer, ok... CD Reviewer. I'm Old School, having started in the days of LP's, 45's and Reel to Reel along with cassettes as the main form of music played. If you'd like to listen to my program, you can visit <https://www.facebook.com/TheSundayMorningGospelShow> and listen to archived programs, plus I post various Southern Gospel news updates, uplifting music and Gospel-related items. If you're in the six-county area around French Lick Indiana, in the heart of Southern Indiana, tune in every Sunday 6:00am-12:00pm and listen to the Gospel Greats with Paul Heil, 6:00am to 8:00am and the Sunday Morning Gospel Show with Randall Hamm 8:00am to 12:00pm.



After graduating from Middle Tennessee State University with a Mass Communication degree, Craig Harris has been in the journalism field for more than 15 years, working daily as both a photographer and writer at one of the largest non-daily publications in the state of Tennessee. He has experience in feature writing, news writing, action

photography, portrait photography, web-site maintenance and layout. Craig has been a part of numerous awards, both collective and individual honors in the journalism field. He has had articles published in numerous newspapers and magazines on a variety of subjects, most notably in the world of sports.

Craig's Southern Gospel interest dates back for approximately the same time span, having closely followed the industry since the later portion of the 1990s. He also performed for seven years with a local trio prior to joining the SGN Scoops staff.

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David's distinctive sound and his ability to blend perfectly with a variety of vocalists has made him a valuable commodity on live events as well as in the studio. His compassionate and gentle spirit makes him more than an artist, it makes him a great friend!

David began singing at age 6 with family. In 1990, he filled in for the Speer Family and later that year he became the lead vocalist for The Trailblazers. In 2002, Staton filled the lead position with Priority. While with Priority, the group was the resident gospel group at the Silver Dollar City theme park in Branson, MO and they performed for over one million people in one year. After the group disbanded in 1995, David continued to write for artists in many different genres of music while occasionally performing solo. It was during this time that his song, "Every Knee Shall Bow", recorded by Dottie Peoples, was nominated for a Grammy Award. His song, "Together We Can" was adopted as the national theme song to bring awareness to violence in schools. The music video (Together We Can) that featured many Atlanta based artists was shown at the 1999 Grammy Awards show, which helped launch the careers of artists like R&B's Jagged Edge, India Arie, and 4.O. In 2004, David partnered with Mike LeFevre to form The LeFevre Quartet. During the seven years that he was the lead vocalist, the group had many hit songs and won many awards. After leaving the LeFevre Quartet in 2011, Staton began working on a solo project and also began singing with Palmetto State Quartet. The group appeared on television and toured with country music superstar, Wynonna Judd while Staton was there.

Through the years, artists like Gold City, Jeff & Sheri Easter, Kingsmen, Singing Americans, Dixie Melody Boys, Imperials, Dottie Peoples, Ball Brothers, LeFevre Quartet, Palmetto State Quartet, Priority, Trailblazers, The Greenes, Ivan Parker, Brian Free and many more have recorded David's music. From 2005 to 2013, Staton was the Executive Vice President for Song Garden Music Group in Nashville, TN. In recent years, the National Quartet Convention has asked David to be a part of an industry advisory panel to help artists who need assistance and training. Not only has David made a mark as an artist, he is passing on his talent and knowledge to new artists, influencing and shaping the future of Gospel music.



Kelly Nelon Clark is the daughter of Gospel Music icon, the late Rex Nelon. As part of her father's group, The Nelons, she blazed a musical trail bringing a fresh new sound to the traditional Gospel quartet style. That sound and style influenced a generation of Gospel music performers and can be heard today in the styling of

groups like the Martins, Point of Grace, The Crabb Family and more.

As The Nelons broke new ground, the Gospel Music industry repeatedly recognized their excellence. The group won four GMA Dove awards as well as multiple awards from readers of Singing News Magazine. Kelly was named female vocalist of the year on four occasions and received favorite alto vocalist award 3 times. At one time, Kelly was the most awarded artists in the history of the Singing News Fan Awards. The music industry at large also recognized The Nelons with 3 Grammy nominations.

Today, Kelly currently performs throughout the United States, Canada and Europe with her husband and two daughters as The Nelons. The group is featured in hundreds of churches and concerts each year. The Nelons have been part of Gaither Homecoming concerts sharing their music with thousands of Gospel Music fans in sold-out arenas across the country. For more information, visit <http://www.kellynelon.com/>.



Paige Givens is a Christ follower, wife, mother of two boys and kindergarten teacher to 18 five-year-olds. She is a writer, reader, singer, studier, and teacher of words. Paige lives in Hayden, Alabama with her husband of 10 years, Chris Givens, and their sons Parker and Peyton. Paige loves to blog about faith, writing, music, and teaching. Her goal is to serve the

Lord by inspiring others to be who He has called them to be. You can listen to her music and read her devotionals at www.paigegivens.com.

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Marcie Gray was born and raised in sunny California, yet always dreamed of moving to Tennessee. She had planned to move to the south as a young adult and sing with a gospel group, after being inspired to do so by her Great Uncle, Alphus LeFevre. Though it took longer than she had expected, in 2011, her dream of moving

east finally came true when her husband, Don, retired from the CHP. They packed up their two youngest daughters, three dogs and two horses and headed east. What a blessing to finally be where the tea is sweet, the Southern Gospel music is plentiful and there's a Cracker Barrel on every corner!

Spend ten minutes with Marcie and you'll learn that she is rarely lacking for something to say. Her passion for Southern Gospel music, combined with her instinct to be behind the camera, makes journalism a very enjoyable outlet for that "Type A" personality she has been affectionately labeled with by her family and friends.

Marcie is a worship leader, vocalist and songwriter. She has directed choirs of all ages and given voice lessons for many years. Her solo CD, "Carry Me Home" was released in September of 2014.

Having family in ministry has given Marcie a desire to support those who are on the road sharing the gospel through song. Visit her website at www.graydoveministries.com to learn more!



Hi, my name is Dean Adkins and I am honored to be a part of the SGN Scoops family. Perhaps some background information would be beneficial. I am sometimes called "Professor" because I was a Biology professor at Marshall University for 31 years and I retired in 2004. I grew up listening to gospel music (or as it is now termed Southern Gospel Music) and many

of my relatives (Adkins, Toney, Booth families) are gospel singers/musicians. I collect records, primarily LPs, and SGM related items. Over the years I have studied the history of this genre. I would like to use these articles to describe events and the mind-set of the 1950s and 60s – sometimes called the Golden Age of Gospel Music.



Nathan Kistler was born on the road and was singing at the age of three years old. He has had the opportunity travel with groups like Southern Gospel's beloved trio the Nelons, and most recently for almost two years with Americas Favorite family of gospel music The Hoppers. Nathan has had the privilege to be in 49 states and 24 countries singing about the won-

derful story of Jesus Christ our Lord. He has also been a part of three crusades on the National Mall in Washington D.C. and while there, he had the privilege of singing in the Pentagon courtyard twice. Through his father's ministry in Washington, Nathan began his work on the Hill as a ministry partner with different Christian organizations like Faith and Action and more. Nathan is a missionary to Washington and continues to work there during the week while singing Gospel music on the weekends around the country and being an artist in residence at the American Mountain Theater in Elkins, West Virginia.



Selena Day is from Atlanta GA. During her twenties she worked in the field of fashion, as both a make-up artist and model.

Selena became a Christian in her early 20's and then quickly met her husband, Chuck Day, who is a songwriter and recording artist. Selena and Chuck have been in the ministry for 26 years raising

three daughters and homeschooling them while they traveled together as a family. During this time God taught her how crucial intergenerational ministry is for the furthering of God's kingdom. Selena travels the world speaking at conferences with the emphasis on empowering a multi-generation of women to rise up and become everything that God has called them to. Encouraging the next generation of the church to break the walls of limitations in their mind and rise to their full potential. Selena and her husband are life coaches for The World Race, which is an extreme missions trip for adults 21 through 35. They travel every two months somewhere around the world to mentor these missionaries. She and Chuck have been pastoring a home-church for 14 years where they have experienced God moving in community and seeing the body of Christ in action through each other.

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Roger Barkley Jr. is an award-winning Christian artist and musical evangelist. With multiple charting songs reaching to the top 10, his goals remain the same: to win souls for Christ, use Gospel Music of any kind to reach the world with the Good News, seeing lives changed and being an encouragement to the saints. When asked about his

ministry, Roger said, "I can remember the first time singing with my dad playing the guitar and standing beside my mom when I was four years old. I have always loved all types of music." His vision is to lead as many people to Christ through preaching, singing, sharing testimony, comedy, drama and technology as possible. Having been labeled a Christian Entertainer, he believes it is possible to minister in an entertaining way, and in over 35 years of ministry has found that he can utilize all different types of music to let people know the love of Jesus Christ. Currently he is Artist-In-Residence with his wife, Dianna, and daughter, Chelsea, at Leestown Gospel Church in Frankfort, KY, and Redemption Road Community Church in Stamping Ground, KY where he leads worship when not spreading the Gospel across America.



Fayth Lore is a young woman from southern Ohio with a love for God and people. Although she enjoys chocolate, oldies music and spending time with friends around the bonfire, her passion is ministry. In January of 2014, after pastoring for 20 years, her family decided to follow God's call into music evangelism. In September 2015, they

launched into full-time ministry. The Lore Family travels the country, spreading the Gospel through songs, sermons and seminars. While Fayth loves to sing, she also has a heart for encouraging young women in Christ. She has spoken at various youth/women's events, as well as hosted her own blog for young ladies. To see more about The Lore Family, visit their website at www.thelorefamilyministries.com. To learn more about Fayth's blog, visit www.truepurposegirls.weebly.com.



Debbie Seagraves is a Gospel music soloist, songwriter and speaker from Hull, Ga. She and her husband, Mike have been married for 21 years and have five grown children, including four sons and one daughter that graduated to Heaven in 2009, as well as nine grandchildren. She loves singing, speaking, and writing her own songs. Debbie is

currently working on her third project. All of the songs on this CD will be songs that she has penned. She is an award winning artist, having won Female Vocalist of the Year with Lighthouse Gospel Music Association, and Female Vocalist and Soloist of the year with the GGCBBA (Georgia Gospel Country Bluegrass Association) in 2016. She enjoys speaking at Ladies Events, sharing her testimony of how God spared her life from a near fatal motorcycle accident in 2011, how He brought her out of the depths of severe clinical depression, and through the death of her daughter in 2009. Also, Debbie is an avid Georgia Bulldogs fan and loves to fish, read, and spend time with her children and grandchildren. Debbie says: "No one can come as close as I did to dying and have it not change you. I am forever changed, blessed beyond measure, and just so grateful for every day that the Lord allows me to spend with those I love and to serve Him." She considers Micah 7:8 her life verse as she says that verse has carried her through some of the darkest times in her life. If you would like to have Debbie at your church or venue, you can reach her through her website: debbieseagraves-music.com/, on Facebook, or send her an email at: fully-alive1956@att.net.



Jimmy Reno is from Birmingham, Alabama. He began singing in church at four years of age. Jimmy has sung with various groups over the years, until singing professionally for Mark209 and the Florida Boys. Jimmy is married with three children.

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Auke Bijlsma- I was born in Zaandam, The Netherlands on September 21st 1966. I'm Head of Operations for a major airline. My home is in the countryside of Holland where I live with my wife Patty, and our two kids: Jake who's 16, and Lexi who is 14, and our pack of dogs. My oldest children, son Jesse 23, and daughter Sarah 21, don't

live with me; they are all grown up building their own homes and lives.

In my childhood, I went to church with my family, and I fell in love with harmony singing. I sang in choirs, a Southern Gospel Trio, and made a few television appearances with that trio here in The Netherlands. At the moment I am not active in music anymore, but you never know what comes along.

In my teens, I started to listen to 50's Rock and Roll, and of course, Elvis Presley. Through Presley I was introduced to the great Gospel Quartets. I started looking for music by The Imperials, Jordanares, and J.D.Sumner and the Stamps at first, because these were the quartets that backed Elvis for many years. My first love is Gospel singing, particularly Southern Gospel. I love groups like The Stamps, The Imperials, The Weatherfords, The Rambos, The Hinsons, The Cathedrals and many more.

Besides being a music lover, I love vintage cars, architecture, books, movies and writing. I hold a Masters in Journalism and Communication. I will write articles about anything; music, faith and life in general. Hope you will enjoy the views of an outsider. Thank you SGNscoops for giving me this opportunity.



Sarah Murray sings soprano for the Southern Gospel group Bless'd. The group is from Greenville, Tennessee and has been together for over five years. Sarah was born and raised in Jonesborough, Tennessee, but now resides in Greenville with her husband, Chase. She has a bachelor's degree in K-6 Education and a

Master's degree in Human Resources Development. Her daytime job is being the Human Resources Director for a small company in Greenville, Tennessee. Her passion outside of singing, writing, and crafting, is simply God's people. "I love the Lord and truly believe my mission in life is to reach his people, and that's both on and off the stage, behind my desk, and in my community. I just want people to see Jesus in me! I'm so honored to be a part of Bless'd and love our tight knit family group." For more information on Sarah, visit blessdministries.com