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HER WINGS

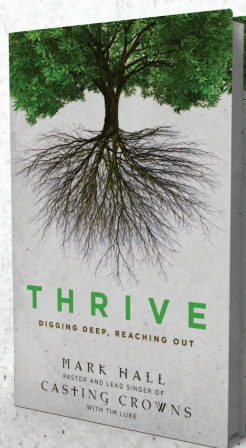
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THE SOUND
OF GLORY

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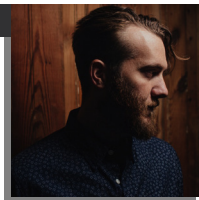
Kutless

The Sound of Glory



John Mark McMillan

Throwing caution and convention to the wind





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YOUR HEART

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YOUR WORLD

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ONE LAST LOOK

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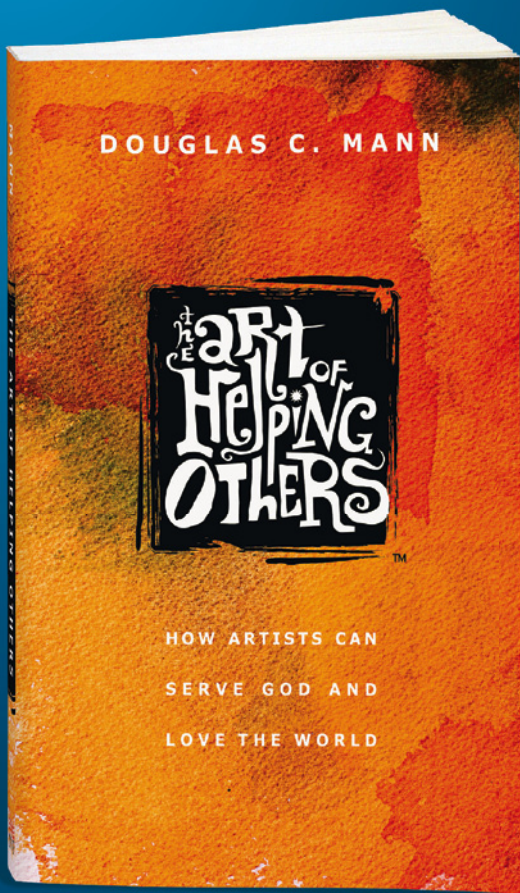
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Douglas Mann is a published songwriter, and a former music business and book-publishing executive. He is an accomplished visual artist whose art can be found in collections throughout the world. He divides his time between Colorado and Ukraine.



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I've often heard that luck is merely preparation colliding with opportunity.

It's a poetic notion but a slightly frustrating one as well—particularly for those of us who have a thing for control.

Why?

Because if good fortune is as contingent on luck as it is on effort, then we can really only do so much. When our preparations max out, we then have to rely on something that's as terrifying as it is life-giving—faith.

Yes, I said it. Faith is terrifying!

Blindly leaping into the unknown, praying that your harness will hold, is not for the faint of heart.

If it were easy, we would have a lot more young women like Jamie Grace out there. Born with Tourette Syndrome, the 22-year-old met Jesus, fell in love, discovered the gifts He had given her and honed them until the day God opened a window of opportunity.

Perhaps it is what faith demands of us that makes it appear so daunting. Faith requires us to become vulnerable.

Vulnerability requires transparency.

Transparency requires us to honestly evaluate who we are and why we do the things we do. And if facing that in the mirror was anything less than terrifying, the Cross wouldn't have been necessary. Fortunately, God knew our needs and made provision so that our reflections disappear into that of His Son's.

God gives us all the opportunity of eternity. Until we reach our heavenly home, each day we encounter opportunities to love on others, use our talents and to fellowship within the body.

It's up to us to be ready—and then, we have to learn to let go.

Faith doesn't come with guarantees. But it's only by faith that we can learn to fly.



Caroline Lusk

Caroline Lusk
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OLETA ADAMS AND JONATHAN BUTLER

“DAVE KOZ & FRIENDS” TOUR
CHICAGO THEATRE/ CHICAGO, IL

STORY AND PHOTOS BY ANDY ARGYRAKIS

Every time contemporary jazz superstar Dave Koz hosts a “Friends” tour, he selects some of the finest singers and musicians across several genres. The Grammy-nominated sax man’s latest round was no exception, including gospel greats Oleta Adams (also known for her extensive time with Tears For Fears) and Jonathan Butler (a frequent Israel Houghton associate) in several solo and collaborative spotlights.



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TOUR SPOTLIGHT

As a vocalist and pianist, the multi-platinum-selling Adams was a double threat, with treasured compositions like the soulful “Circle Of One” (accompanied by Koz) and her career-defining ballad “Get Here,” which continues to be a beacon of hope for families of soldiers serving overseas.

The South African-born Butler also demonstrated jaw-dropping dexterity as a vocalist, guitarist and percussionist, most notably enchanting with his jazzy take on Louis Armstrong’s “What A Wonderful World” and during the full-cast jam on “Brand New Day.”

More of each artist’s underrated but immense talents can be found on their latest collections, which include Adams’ inspirational *Let’s Stay Here* (Koch Records) and Butler’s gospel-grounded *Grace And Mercy* (Rendezvous Records).





1 Rock-and-worship singer/songwriter Jake Hamilton, who just released his third album, *Beautiful Rider*, is pictured with his son, Ezra (age 4), an aspiring worship leader and guitarist.

2 Former Kansas singer turned multiple-Grammy-and-Dove-Award-winning solo artist John Elefante (second from left) hangs out with his family in the green room with former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee (left) after being a guest on his television show, "Huckabee."

3 Some of Christian music's most-acclaimed singer/songwriters came together for *Roots—A Celebration of Song, Story & Faith* at Nashville's Edgemoor Café. Pictured from left to right: Andrew Greer, Cindy Morgan, Matt Brock, Zach Smith (Aaron & Amanda Crabb's guitarist), Amanda & Aaron Crabb, Trent Monk and Warren Barfield.

4 & 5 Members of Planetshakers lead the masses in worship during a Night of Fire event in Cebu, Philippines, which attracted tens of thousands to the band's inaugural event in the area.

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LOFTLAND

BY CAROLINE LUSK

While the median age of Loftland, a Wisconsin-based pop/rock quintet, is 21, these guys exhibit artistic maturity well beyond their years. Comprised of brothers Dominic and Tanner Gibbs, along with Steven Priske, Ben Pepin and Zach Wilke, these road warriors have burned up the highway,

amassing a huge fan base around the country and honing their sound and artistic identity. Committed to an electrifying live-show experience, as well as stellar studio skills, the group makes its label debut on Dream Records with *I Don't Want To Dance*. Get to know them more here.

CCM: *How did you come about doing what you're doing and why?*

DOMINIC GIBBS: I feel like Loftland started the same way that a lot of other bands started. We were big fans of a few other bands (for us it was Relient K, Switchfoot and Anberlin), so we started writing songs and tried really hard to sound like those bands. This was back in 2007 when I was a senior in high school. Since then it's been a long road and a slow evolution. Over the years we've been through member changes, we developed our own sound, and we started building a fan base in the Midwest. I think what we are now is a mixture of that pop/rock sound that we started with and the pop music that you hear on Top 40. A lot of the songs on our debut album, *I Don't Want To Dance*, are, ironically enough, dance songs!

CCM: *Are there any overarching themes on the record?*

DG: A lot of the songs on *I Don't Want To Dance* are anthems. They're songs that we wrote with the hope of encouraging people. They're songs that are meant to be sung at the top of your lungs, in pain or in joy.

CCM: *You've got a really cool remix contest going on right now. Tell us more about that.*

DG: The contest invites anyone to download the vocal stems from the track "Hold On, Small One" and put his or her own twist on it. We'll showcase the winning song. Our label (Dream Records) suggested that we do it, and we thought it was a great idea. They put us in contact with David Thulin, who will be hosting the contest, and we got it all put into place. We're really excited about it!

CCM: *So where can we see you? Give us your touring and social details.*

DG: Our schedule is pretty packed out for the next few months. We're currently on the *Dead Come To Life Tour* with Jonathan Thulin and Shine Bright Baby. After that we'll be out with Silverline, Shonlock, and a new band called LYNX on the *Shine A Light Tour*. All of our tour dates can be found on our facebook page, Facebook.com/Loftland. Also find us @Loftland on Twitter, and @LoftlandBand on Instagram!

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Taking Off

JAMIE GRACE SPREADS HER WINGS AND SOARS

BY CAROLINE LUSK



On Oct. 5, 1905, Wilbur Wright made history as he piloted the Wright Flyer III around Huffman Prairie in Dayton, Ohio, marking the first practical airplane flight. In only 39 minutes and 23 seconds, the flight marked the beginning of a world-changing age of aviation, proving that duration or longevity isn't necessarily required when it comes to changing the world.

Nowhere is that more evident than in young people unrestrained in creativity, passion,

commitment, intellect and drive. At 22, Jamie Grace epitomizes a generation unbound by age or stereotype. In less than three years, she has gone from obscurity to receiving Grammy nods, Dove Awards and the respect of the Christian music industry.

Intensely devoted to family and relentlessly driven by the love of her craft, Jamie has achieved in her young life what so many could only hope to approximate in the entirety of their years.



In 2014, while many young adults her age are contemplating their senior year in college or polishing their resumes for that first real job, she's been busy releasing her sophomore record, *Ready to Fly*.



"The entire concept of *Ready to Fly* is being ready even when you don't know what the Lord has planned for your future," says Jamie. "I wrote the title track the night before

I turned 18. I was crying out, wondering what God's plan for me was. I started to doubt so many things; but as I randomly began singing the lyrics to 'Ready to Fly,' I realized I didn't have to have my whole life figured out to start my journey. This record is about being in the waiting with God, yet while you're waiting being ready to move—ready to fly—when the timing is right. It's about going where the Lord says go."

In Jamie's case, the Lord has led her down phenomenal paths. The journey is even more fantastic in light of the rest of her story. Jamie has lived with Tourette Syndrome her entire life. The neurological disorder, characterized by physical and verbal tics, can be extremely debilitating. For Jamie, however, it is just another part of her walk.

"It has started to diminish some as an adult," she shares. "I can typically get through the day. I move and talk a lot. It's something that can be managed with diet and rest, but it is a struggle I wish I didn't have to face. But I believe God is my healer. I know healing will come when I'm in Heaven, until then I try to get through every day."

As one might suspect, music has been a major part of Jamie's personal healing and coping. And while the remarkable young woman is bubbly, friendly and happy, she's not fake. Pain is pain, and she's as human as the rest of us.

"Nothing comes without challenge," she

says, with wisdom beyond her years. "There are moments when I cry and go a negative route. But there are other moments when I choose to give it over to God and trust Him and follow Him. I just go to the piano and worship. I close my eyes and think about His grace and comfort, and it helps me get out of that negative mindset."

Not surprisingly, Jamie's time at the piano also seems to have a positive effect on everyone else within earshot—be it live or through a set of headphones. Somewhat of a musical chameleon, Jamie describes her own sound as, "a little rock, a little country, a little pop," meaning just about anyone will find a sonic sweet spot in the music of Jamie Grace, particularly on this record.

Her country roots are on full display on "White Boots," which is a fresh take on the idea of purity in relationships with a swagger and a touch of honky-tonk. Ironically, the thematic ideas for the song came from some conversations with Manwell from Group1Crew—decidedly not a country band.

"I went on the Revolve Tour in 2011 with Manwell, and he was like a big brother to me," Jamie shares. "Our first conversation was him giving me dating advice. I made it into a song."

She goes on to share that the evolution of that song also involved one of her most frequent collaborators—her sister.

"My sister and I wrote 'White Boots' using that as a metaphor," she explains. "We're all born in boots. We want to stay pure and stay clean. We wanted to write the song for young girls. If you have a crush, what do you do with it? You can't always make that crush go away, but that doesn't mean you have to follow him around all the time. This song asks that if God has something for us, that we allow it to happen but also allow our hearts to stay at peace and rest."

Manwell's fingerprints on this project are joined by others from artists Jamie reveres and now counts as peers—namely Jason

Crabb and Natalie Grant. (We told you she was diverse!)

“I’ve always been a big fan of Jason’s and the whole Crabb family,” she says. “And Natalie is my role model. It was really cool for these co-writes and collaborations to really be what God wanted for the record.”

As diverse as the record is, anything less would be an incomplete representation of Jamie Grace, whose life has always been infused with a diversity of cultures and styles, a precedent set early in life by her parents, who encouraged artistic exploration as well as spiritual maturation.

“People assume I may have just grown up on Point of Grace and Avalon or tobyMac and dcTalk or Kirk Franklin and the Winans,” she says. “But for me, our home always included a spectrum of music—from Bebe and Cece to the Gaithers.”

The colorful musical palette was a fitting soundtrack to the rest of her childhood and adolescence, in which she was encouraged to express herself, never stop learning and to explore the diverse world around her.

“My parents were very open and honest with me. I know God was working through them,” she says. “They keep me on my toes.”

Always dancing, but firmly planted on the ground, Jamie’s toes and the rest of her are truly surrounded by an anointed team of family, friends, support and prayer. Add her own desire to maximize her life, gifts and heart for the Kingdom, and it’s readily apparent that Jamie Grace is decidedly one-

“NOTHING COMES WITHOUT CHALLENGE. THERE ARE MOMENTS WHEN I CRY AND GO A NEGATIVE ROUTE. BUT THERE ARE OTHER MOMENTS WHEN I CHOOSE TO GIVE IT OVER TO GOD AND TRUST HIM AND FOLLOW HIM.”

of-a-kind, as is her life. It’s a roller coaster most couldn’t imagine and one she rides with humility, grace and strength.

“I’m so happy that I’ve gotten to do so much and I want to keep going, but if I have to stop, I could honestly say that I’ve done way more than what I was expecting,” she says.

Without question, her three years in the spotlight, thus far, have been unparalleled by her contemporaries or predecessors. God only knows what the future will bring, but chances are, much like that 39-minute flight that changed the world, in her short tenure, Jamie Grace has already made her mark. And for those of us on the ground, the view is inspiring, life-changing and most decidedly, full of grace. [CCM](#)



**FOR MORE INFORMATION,
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**CLICK HERE FOR CCM'S REVIEW OF JAMIE'S
LATEST ALBUM, [READY TO FLY](#).**



KUTLESS'S KINGDOM ENCOUNTER

BY CAROLINE LUSK

The word *glory* can be found throughout the Bible, both Old Testament and New. Its origins can be traced to the Hebrew language, where it originally conveyed “weight” or “heaviness.” The same word was then translated into the Greek language, where it meant “importance,” “honor” and “majesty.” Other variations include meanings such as “judgment,” “opinion,” “good reputation” and “honor.”

As diverse as the various meanings appear, each nuance retains a characteristic that is not only good, but is a quality we often associate with God. It makes sense, then, that Kutless’s latest album, *Glory*, is all about the characteristics of God.

“We intentionally focused on the attributes of God,” says Jon Micah, front man of Kutless. “Part of the whole process was wrapping our heads around the concept of God and not on ourselves. The Bible says to seek first the Kingdom of God. Our tendency is to seek first our problems and treat our relationship with



SOUNDS LIKE
GLORY

God as you would a magical genie. But God is so much bigger than that. God's being and glory is so spectacular I find when I focus on that, the rest of the world somehow fades away, including my problems."

Focus is a key component to this album and to Kutless's ministry overall. In the twelve years since their self-titled debut, they have walked a fine, and what seems to be wavering, line between rock and worship. But while industry, radio, media and consumers have tried to place parameters around the band, Kutless has never been interested in labels.

"We love rock, and we've always done worship," says Jon. "They are both a part of who we are. They can coexist."

They can, and they do. With a dexterity that only comes from seasoned musicians, Kutless has been able to capture the emotion and intensity of rock and marry it with the vertical intention of worship.

"The emotion that comes from rock is big

and powerful," says Jon. "To capture that and focus that musical emotion up in worship consistently is a special thing to do."

And it's the very thing that has become Kutless's specialty. On this record, however, they take it a step further. Not only are the songs appealing and accessible to those hearing them, they are attainable to those who may be leading, playing and singing them in their own churches week after week.

"We've never had many songs that were accessible for worship leaders," says Jon. "I like those big soaring choruses, but not everyone can sing those. We were very intentional about trying to make these songs usable by keeping them fairly simple with very singable melodies."

Simple? Yes.

Boring? No.

As they have done so often in the past, Kutless has delivered songs that are magnetic and compelling. This time, however, the songs can feasibly be incorporated into





nearly any worship service, by any worship band or leader.

Without compromising musical integrity, each track on *Glory* beautifully melds truth and art; but to Kutless, the ultimate goal is transparency.”

“Our hope is that people will identify with the songs they’re going to sing,” says Jon.

If the past is any indication, that hope will likely be realized.

On their previous record, *Believer*, the song “Even If” became one of their most popular and divisive songs. Love it or hate it, it’s hard to not hear your own heartache, tragedy, victory or doubt in the song.

“It was a very polarizing song,” Jon reflects. “Some said it was exactly what they needed to hear; others were furious that we would suggest that God doesn’t always bring healing. Personally, I’ve seen a lot of people not be healed. I’ve grown to learn that God is working on an eternal spectrum. He is much more about the end than the process of the story.

“If you look through Scripture, you see many different stories,” he continues. “Some are victorious. Some were horrible and

brutal. But ultimately, God is always glorified. Seeing that has made me realize that faith is not a conditional thing. Personally, the most difficult times of my life have been the times when God has done the greatest work for eternity. Trials and tribulations point to Him and His glory. It’s easy to trust when everything is great. But that’s not faith. You won’t always understand what He’s doing, but faith is knowing we have a loving Father who cares for us and will never give us more than we can handle. What a small price to pay for eternity with Him.”

Until eternity calls them home, Kutless will continue doing what they do best—seeking new ways to express the weight, importance, and majesty of God in a way that is accessible to the church and to those outside the church, all the while waiting with expectation for the moment they encounter glory.

“God’s glory and being is so spectacular, there’s no room to say anything but, ‘Wow!’” Jon says. “I find that when I focus on that—on what worship will look like in Heaven when we see God face-to-face—the rest of the world fades away.” CCM

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B E Y O N D
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BY MATT CONNER

JOHN MARK MCMILLAN THROWS CAUTION AND CONVENTION TO THE WIND

Forget the popularity. You could keep the platform. And don't even think of playing it safe. Caution and success were never part of John Mark McMillan's heart or plan. In fact, despite the overwhelmingly positive reception of 2011's *Economy*, the worship leader was ready to walk away from it all, though not for reasons one might assume.

As is often the case, the professional demands of the music industry became tiresome. The line-up changes in his band were challenging and administrative meetings were detracting from the art of it all, but it was the growing burden of touring that prompted John to think long and hard about his next steps. With a schedule that pulled him away from home, it was decision-making time. He knew he should either call it a day or give it one last shot.

He decided on the latter.

"Right after the *Economy* season, I didn't know what I was going to do," says McMillan on the heels of another new release, entitled *Borderland*. "I almost quit. I nearly threw in the towel, to be honest, because it was such a difficult season. I was ready to be done, and it took me about a year before I was ready to go back to the studio.

"I ... thought that I had one more good shot at this before I took a break to raise kids. I know you can and should consider being an artist late into life, but I don't want to be on the road when my kids are teenagers. I want to be a part of their lives."

When McMillan first begins to describe *Borderland*, he starts with the word *difficult*. It's a sign that McMillan had to fight for these songs—both for the inspiration from within and the stamina to keep the industry momentum alive, a trend he believes will only intensify over time.

"This is the hardest project I've ever done," says McMillan. "I don't think things get easier as you go along. I think they get

harder. You can't resort to the same tricks that you did the first time. You have to think of new stuff to say and new ways to say it to keep things fresh, but I didn't really know what I was going to write. When you start to have some level of success, you start to become responsible for other people. There's pressure to want to continue in that sort of success to keep the machine alive and babies fed."

Before *Borderland* developed, McMillan says he abandoned a more traditional worship project in favor of a blank slate. While he says he's always going to write from a place of worship, he needed a stronger connection to the music; and it was clear he was creatively

says McMillan. "For example, I might offend both Christian and general market audiences with the notion of speaking in tongues, but I actually think it's real."

As the creative process evolved, his wariness continued to dissipate as he realized that caution just isn't his forte.

"It's the worst idea for me to worry about trying to be safe," he says. "I don't compete in that world or on that level. People don't come to me for safe."

With caution thrown to the wind in more ways than one, it's clear the John Mark has not been called away from home to make songs that make the church feel good. He has

WHEN I DECIDED THAT I WOULD RECORD WHAT I WANT TO HEAR AND SAY WHAT I WANT TO SAY, IT CLICKED. I ENDED UP WRITING WORSHIP SONGS. APPARENTLY, I REALLY DO WANT TO WORSHIP.

caving to some of the pressures around him. It wasn't until he set those songs aside and opened up the opportunity to write something new that he turned the corner.

"When I decided that I would record what I want to hear and say what I want to say, it clicked," says McMillan with a laugh. "When I set aside that pressure, I ended up writing two or three worship songs. Apparently, I really do want to worship. It's not something I have to do. When the pressure is gone, it's what is actually in my heart. But I had to dig to get there."

Track to track, *Borderland* resonates with a sense of worship but also benefits from the creative freedom McMillan eventually unleashed. Thematically, he mines new territory on several songs, focusing on darker issues of identity ("Monsters Talk") and mentioning potentially divisive subjects (speaking in tongues), a route McMillan had heretofore been reticent to travel.

"On *Borderland*, I referenced things that in the past I thought might turn people off,"

been called to challenge convention. He has been called to help the church approach the edge of comfort—and then keep going.

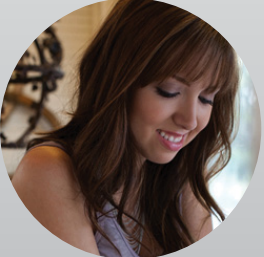
Unconcerned with fame or celebrity, unaffected by a platform and uninhibited with the truth, John Mark McMillan couldn't be more on point. People don't come to him for safe; people come to him for truth. **CCM**



**BORDERLAND RELEASES ON MARCH 4, 2014.
LEARN MORE AT JOHNMARKMCMILLAN.COM**

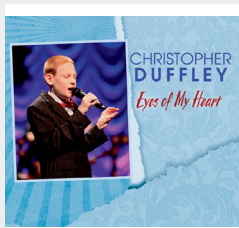
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CHRISTOPHER DUFFLEY
Eyes of My Heart

(Know Greater Love Ministries)

FOR FANS OF:

John Tesh, Matt Maher

★★★★☆

Christopher, a blind, autistic musician has a powerful story that resonates throughout this record which includes inspired covers of "Amazing Grace" and "I Can Only Imagine." The cello-backed arrangement of Jeremy Camp's "Give Me Jesus" is a standout on this project that would be an ideal gift of encouragement for any music lover.

—Grace S. Aspinwall

WE LIKE:

"Give Me Jesus"



CITY HARBOR
City Harbor

(Sparrow Records)

FOR FANS OF:

Chris August, All Sons and Daughters, Kari Jobe

★★★★☆

Two strong vocalists comprise this duo, and this, their first release, is cheerful and engaging. The first single, "Come However You Are" is delightful, while the other standout, "Lift It Up," brings to mind contemporaries like Chris August. The remainder of the album is breezy and fun, and indicates good things to come from the pair.

—Grace S. Aspinwall

WE LIKE:

"Lift It Up"



VARIOUS ARTISTS
Worship God: Everlasting

(Maranatha)

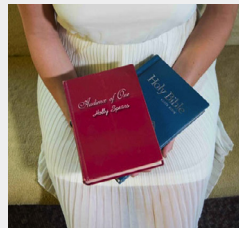
★★★★☆

With countless versions of modern worship songs like "God Of Wonders," "10,000 Reasons (Bless The Lord)" and "Everlasting God" saturating the marketplace, *Worship God: Everlasting* is more of a contemporary Sunday-morning-sampler than a significant artistic statement. Nonetheless, praise troupes from Maranatha! Music, Gateway Worship and more all turn in polished performances with a particular emphasis on vocal clarity over musical complexity.

—Andy Argyrakis

WE LIKE:

"10,000 Reasons (Bless The Lord)"



HOLLY SPEARS
Audience of One

(Girl on a Mission Music)

FOR FANS OF: JJ Heller

★★★★☆

Holly Spears returns to the rural roots of her small-town church in West Virginia on her latest EP, *Audience of One*. The five songs come directly from hymnals, each a straightforward, simple take on classics like "Jesus Loves Me" and "How Great Thou Art." A spirited version of "This Little Light of Mine" closes the album with an old-time gospel feel, with a backing choir and Spears at her vocal best.

—Matt Conner

WE LIKE:

"This Little Light of Mine"



DAUGHTRY
Baptized (RCA)

FOR FANS OF:
Lifeshouse, David Cook
★★★★☆
Chris Daughtry has built a strong post-“Idol” career on the back of memorable anthems perfectly suited for rock radio. The formula shifts somewhat on Daughtry’s latest album, and the results are muddled at best. Desperate attempts for radio relevance soften his signature vocal delivery behind silly synth-pop tunes and power-pop ballads. Daughtry has a secure niche if he’s willing to stay there. Perhaps he’ll learn his lesson this time around.

—Matt Conner

WE LIKE: “High Above The Ground”

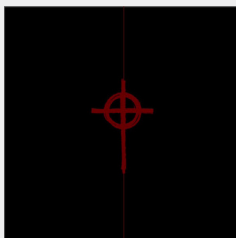


FLYING COLORS
Live in Europe
(Mascot Label Group)

FOR FANS OF:
Neal Morse, Dream Theater, Spock’s Beard
★★★★☆
With only one studio album behind them, Flying Colors delivers an impeccable performance in Holland, captured on this double-disc project. Although Flying Colors is a more mainstream group, CCM readers might recognize Neal Morse and Mike Portnoy from Morse’s explicitly Christian solo projects (*Worship Sessions, Testimony, Testimony 2*.) This pop-flavored offering has plenty of hooks and singable melodies, while the playing, by some of the most talented instrumentalists in progressive rock, is astounding.

—Bert Saraco

WE LIKE: “Blue Ocean”

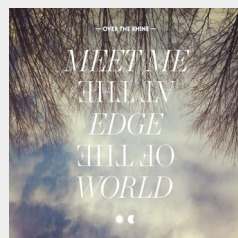


THE PROJECT
Martyrs & Prayers
(Saints and Survivors)

FOR FANS OF:
The Choir, Phil Keaggy, Ashley Cleveland
★★★★☆
Musically archiving Christendom’s sacrificial history, creative collaborators Michael Glen Bell and Duane W.H. Arnold (AKA “The Project”) set to song life-inspiring prayers by an influential list of Christian martyrs for a melodic resource for 21st century disciples desiring to understand the past. Enlisting the talents of like-hearted musicians such as Phil Keaggy, *Martyrs* is a daunting undertaking mastered with musical and intellectual finesse.

—Andrew Greer

WE LIKE: “Clement” (featuring Phil Keaggy, Kemper Crabb & Wayne Berry)



OVER THE RHINE
Meet Me at The Edge of The World
(Great Speckled Dog)

FOR FANS OF:
Aimee Mann, Sixpence None the Richer
★★★★☆
The 18 tracks that comprise *Meet Me* capture Karin Bergquist and Linford Dettweiler sounding more country than ever before. The playing is impeccable and the lyrics are poetic. Bergquist’s distinctive, earthy vocals are as arresting as ever on this collection that will leave you feeling like you were just sitting on the porch at Nowhere Farm listening to old friends making music.

—Bert Saraco

WE LIKE: “Sacred Ground”

**ISRAEL & NEW BREED****Playlist: Best Of***(Integrity Music)***FOR FANS OF:**

Donald Lawrence,
Hezekiah Walker,
Yolanda Adams

★★★★☆

After a decade-plus of Grammy-winning recordings, this thirteen-song compilation of previously released material celebrates Israel Houghton's greatest moments. Accentuated by his dynamic tour de force—New Breed—*Playlist* oscillates between live-worship and tight studio-produced urban grooves, offering a healthy set-list for fans desiring a definitive Israel go-to disc.

—Andrew Greer

WE LIKE:

"Surprises"
(with Fred Hammond)

**EARNEST PUGH****The W.I.N. (Worship in Nassau) Experience***(P. Mann Music)***FOR FANS OF:**

William McDowell, John P. Kee, Israel & New Breed

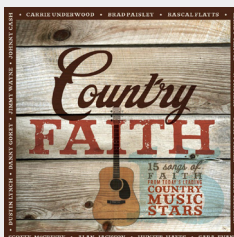
★★★★☆

A true independent artist success, Pugh has positioned himself as one of gospel music's prominent voices after releasing a series of self-initiated chart-topping singles and a #1-selling album. The worship-oriented singer-songwriter releases a fiery live experience direct from the Bahamas, utilizing his five-octave vocal power to command passionate power ballads and foot-stomping urban bouncers, all continuing his steady gospel climb.

—Andrew Greer

WE LIKE:

"I Believe
You Most"

**VARIOUS ARTISTS****Country Faith (Word)****FOR FANS OF:**

Carrie Underwood,
Brad Paisley, Wynonna

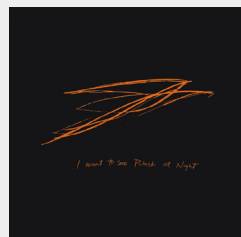
★★★★☆

Based on the recent book that explores the Christianity of various classic and country stars, this project serves as a sound track, showcasing several eras of inspiration. Contemporary, A-listers like Rascal Flatts, Carrie Underwood and Brad Paisley are introspective at every infectious turn, while veterans like Alan Jackson, Randy Travis and even the late, great Johnny Cash offer a more traditional, but equally uplifting approach.

—Andy Argyrakis

WE LIKE:

"Long Black Train"
by Josh Turner

**ANDREW BIRD****I Want To See Pulaski at Night EP (Grimsey)****FOR FANS OF:**

Sufjan Stevens,
Patrick Watson

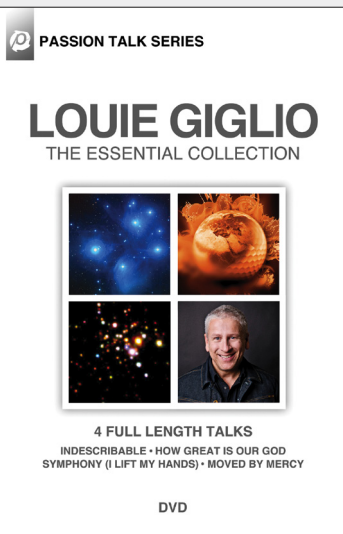
★★★★☆

Andrew Bird's latest suite of songs is as interesting for its treatment as it is for its content. The seven tracks on the EP are largely instrumental compositions, bookending the central single, "Pulaski at Night." The 30-minute set passes quickly, highlighted by the gentle violin of both "Hover I" and "Hover II." Bird's quirky whistling and imaginative use of the violin are scattered throughout, but he's broadened his palette with this curious EP.

—Matt Conner

WE LIKE:

"Pulaski at Night"



“Indescribable,” “How Great is our God,” “Symphony (I Lift My Hands)” and a new talk, “Moved By Mercy.”

From the far corners of the universe to the metaphorical dance floor that is life, and everywhere in between, each talk offers a unique paradigm through which to contemplate the Divine. Louie’s signature humor and charisma captures the attention of the viewer from the first frame, and retains it to the end.

The DVD release coincides with the first book from the Passion team, *Passion: The Bright Light of Glory*. Featuring new content from Louie Giglio, the book also contains contributions from Francis Chan, Beth Moore, John Piper, Judah Smith and Christine Cain.

“Passion gatherings have been largely shaped by worship and teaching that puts Jesus center-stage and seeks to inspire a generation to live for the ultimate glory—His fame,” says Giglio. “The release of *Passion: The Bright Light of Glory* gives us a beautiful opportunity to share the broader message of the Passion movement with people who may have only intersected our journey through an event, Passion worship album or by some other means.”

Be it a song, a talk, a book or a gathering, Passion’s singular focus—to make the name of Jesus famous, impacts countless lives, while inspiring a generation to love, to pursue justice and, above all, to keep spreading the word.

PASSION PRESENTS...

BOY MEETS GIRL; *PASSION TALK SERIES: THE ESSENTIAL COLLECTION*; *PASSION: THE BRIGHT LIGHT OF GLORY*

BY CAROLINE LUSK

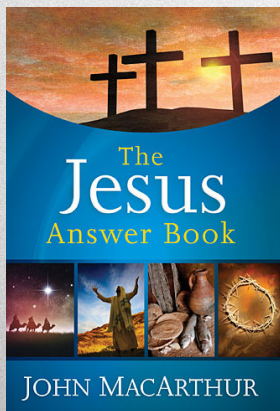
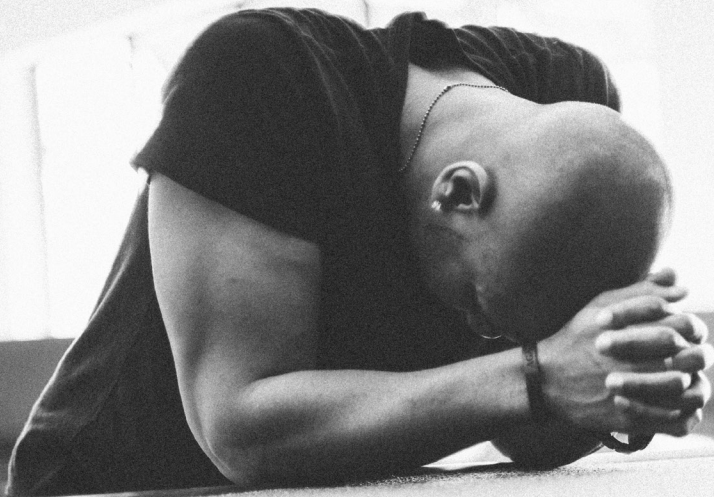
When the Passion Movement began in 1995, few predicted its unprecedented success, especially the primary founder, Louie Giglio. Since then, nearly a million university students have attended a Passion Conference and countless others have worshiped, learned and grown through Louie’s *Passion Talk Series*.

Inspiring, candid and practical, the latest installment goes straight to the heart of the most fundamental of human experiences—relationships...in particular, dating relationships. *Boy Meets Girl* digs deep into the underpinnings of romance and the potential pitfalls of dating, while offering practical advice to those seeking a relationship on God’s terms.

Also releasing in February is *Passion Talk Series: The Essential Collection*, which includes some of Giglio’s most compelling talks:

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YOUR HEART



FAITH= **SURRENDER**

EXCERPT FROM ***THE JESUS ANSWER BOOK***

BY JOHN MACARTHUR

What does having faith in Jesus as one's Savior look like in real life?

Scripture describes faith as a wholehearted trust in Christ personally (Galatians 2:16; Philippians 3:9). Not merely faith about Him; faith in Him. Note the difference: If I say I believe some promise you have made, I am saying far less than if I say I trust you. Believing in a person necessarily involves some degree of commitment. Trusting Christ means placing oneself in His custody for both life and death. It means we rely on His counsel, trust in His goodness, and entrust ourselves for time and eternity to His guardianship.

Real faith, saving faith, is all of me (mind, emotions, and will) embracing all of Him (Savior, Advocate, Provider, Sustainer, Counselor, and Lord God).

Those who have such faith will love Christ (John 8:42; John 14:15; Romans 8:28). They will therefore want to do His bidding. How could someone who truly believes in Christ continue to defy His authority and pursue what He hates? In this sense, then, the crucial issue for lordship salvation is not merely authority and submission, but the affections of the heart. Jesus as Lord is far more than just an authority figure. He's also our highest treasure and most precious companion.

We obey Him out of sheer delight.

So the gospel demands surrender, not only for authority's sake, but also because surrender is the believer's highest joy. Such surrender is not an extraneous adjunct to faith; it is the very essence of believing. ☩☩☩

©2014 John MacArthur

 **CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE**

SIDE THOUGHTS:

Quotes and notes to take with you from *The Jesus Answer Book*

"The almighty God of the universe humbly came to earth in human flesh to seek and to save the lost."

"Christ is God's glorious light that shines into the hearts of people."

"Jesus made it clear that the law demands love for God as well as love for one's neighbors."

"Those who come to Christ with self-renouncing faith receive true and eternal life."

"His sacrifice was a sufficient atonement for sins forever."

"What you think of God will automatically color how you think about everything else."

"To give glory to Christ, we must confess Him as Lord."

"Salvation is a matter of confessing that Christ is God and therefore that He is sovereign."

"He's also our highest treasure and most precious companion."

"We obey Him out of sheer delight."

"Surrender is the believer's highest joy."

"The Son of God stepped out of heaven and entered this world to dwell among us."

"He freely grants us eternal life."

"Men and women do not earn God's peace, but He gives it to them because He is pleased to do so."

"Once and for all He paid the price for sins for everyone who would ever believe in Him."

"A person must worship inwardly with the proper heart attitude."

"Salvation is entirely a gracious, sovereign work of God."

"Salvation is by grace alone, but it is not easy. It calls for knowledge of the truth."



Pro Music Academy uses state of the art technology and music equipment to ensure the best lessons possible. Skype lessons can be conducted anywhere in the world at any time. (Photo courtesy of Pro Music Academy)

PRO MUSIC ACADEMY

TOP MUSICIANS GIVE BACK

BY CAROLINE LUSK

For every person who sings on a stage or in a studio or makes it on the radio, there is another who never sees those dreams realized. Even the most talented can fall short due to lack of time, development, money, access or other resources. Pro Music Academy is doing their part to change that. With unprecedented access and instruction from the music industry's finest, people of all ages and backgrounds can now have a shot at learning and honing their craft from the best.

Currently, the instructor roster includes artists like Joe Rickard of Red (drums), Matt Butler of Newsong (strings), Rachael Lampa (vocals) and others who have worked with the

likes of Carrie Underwood, Ben Folds, Michael Jackson, the Rolling Stones, and the list goes on. Lessons are available online via Skype, or at one of their two locations. Founded in Nashville, Tennessee, the Academy recently opened a Seattle satellite campus.

"Being from the Northwest, I have always loved Seattle and I wanted our very first satellite studio to be representative of that," says Pro Music Academy Founder Chad Chapin. "Growing up playing music, if I had the chance to learn from my musical inspirations, it would be something I would remember for a lifetime. I just want to help give that opportunity to others." CCM



FOR MORE INFORMATION INCLUDING PRICING AND PROGRAM OPTIONS, VISIT PROMUSICACADEMY.COM

AND THE GIFT GOES ON...

It's barely a month in and already 2014 is proving to be a banner year for giving back. Casting Crowns, Jason Dunn (formerly of Hawk Nelson) and Passion have jumped into the year heart-first, with hands open wide.

PASSION



In January, over 20,000 university students descended on Atlanta, Georgia for Passion 2014, an event replete with praise, music,

teaching, learning, fellowship and a call to action. With a consistent stance of advocating social justice, the Passion team placed their philanthropic focus on one of the darkest corners of the earth—Iran. The goal was to raise \$250,000 to fund the printing and distribution of 25,000 Bibles. By the end of the weekend, over \$335,000 was given, providing 33,500 Bibles for the people of Iran.

CASTING CROWNS: MORE THAN A SONG



Never ones to leave a song on the stage, Casting Crowns is bringing the music of their latest release, *Thrive*, to life. Each month,

the band will focus on a different song from the record and provide teaching and other resources through their website. "The Thrive Challenge" is a year-long program designed to not only allow people to engage the music and the band, but to start a movement that can change the world. As front man Mark Hall says, "It's time to stop surviving. It's time to thrive."



THE JASON DUNN FOUNDATION

When Jason Dunn walked away from the band he founded and fronted for nearly a decade, he wasn't entirely sure of what the next stage of life would hold. But as God so often does, He caught the former Hawk Nelson front man by surprise when the next chapter hearkened to a page from the past. Jason has struggled with Type I Diabetes his entire life. At one point, the disease threatened to end his days on the road, thereby effectively ending his music career. Through much prayer, medical support and encouragement from friends, family and his label, he was able to procure the equipment and resources necessary to allow him to travel safely. Today, Jason is reciprocating that benevolence through the Jason Dunn Foundation, founded to offer support and resources to those struggling with Type I Diabetes. While still in its formative stages, the foundation has already provided Diabetes Alert dogs to children in need. Now a solo artist, Jason continues to pour his heart into his music, while using his story to help others.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT



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FRANCESCA BATTISTELLI

BY ANDREW GREER

Album Title: *If We're Honest*

Label: Fervent Records

Release Date: April 22, 2014

Recording Studio: The Holiday Inn,
Nashville, Tennessee

Producer: Ian Eskelin

Number of Songs: TBD

PREP PRESSURE: I honestly felt less pressure writing and recording this album than any other so far. I was in such a good place; I had just moved back to Nashville and had the whole summer to write. I really tried to soak in the process and enjoy it.

—Francesca Battistelli

SONG SELECTION: Our only litmus test for picking songs was gut reaction. In each song meeting for this record, Ian (my producer), Matt (my husband and manager), Josh (my A&R) and I would sit in a room and listen to everything we had at that point, pick four or five songs, track those and then keep writing to try to fill in holes. It was a pretty easy process. —F.B.

SIMPLY ... MORE: *If We're Honest* has more energy, more joy, more life. It's a good mix of my first two albums. I'm incredibly proud of and excited to share it! —F.B.



MOOD MUSIC: Ian has the most random snacks at his place. Salt-and-vinegar Pringles, almonds...while recording one record, I ate my weight in Riesens! I always drink a ton of water and love that the vocal booth has a dimmer switch so I can keep the lights low while I sing. —F.B.

CCM



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
FRANCESCABATTISTELLI.COM.

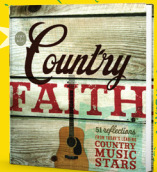
★ F E A T U R I N G ★

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CHARLIE DANIELS
AND JOHN BAPTIST
WITH 51 THE BAPTIST



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STRYMON TIMELINE

DIGITAL DELAY

BY JASON AHLBRANDT

I can't say enough about Strymon effects. I love their versatility, quality of construction and, most of all, the sound. Strymon's Timeline Delay unit is no exception. It's a great delay pedal for the road or studio.

The first thing I noticed about this pedal was its size. It is considerably smaller than other similar pedals. Its size, however, is not a reflection on its superb, user-friendly interface and diverse options.

This delay boasts stereo outputs, expression input and MIDI in and out. The MIDI control options are vast and include a function to sync your delay time to a MIDI clock, remote control and any parameter knob or switch, and select pre-sets via MIDI. The MIDI in can also be used to update the unit's software as Strymon makes improvements and/or changes.

The Timeline has some great features and delay types that its predecessors do not. One



of my favorites is the “Ice” delay. It adds your choice of interval to the delay signal. The great part about each type of delay is that they all have more fine-tuning capabilities within the parameters menu. The Strymon Timeline is bound to keep your delay sounds fresh in the studio and on the road. But beware: you can spend hours playing with this on your own time, as its variable options draw you in. **CCM**

Jason Ahlbrandt is a guitar soloist and session musician. He currently travels with Guy Penrod and has two solo acoustic guitar albums. He lives in Nashville, Tenn., with his wife, Martina, and daughter, Alianna.

Follow Jason Ahlbrandt on **Instagram**, **YouTube**, **Twitter**, and **Facebook**

PROS

- Durable
- Smaller than other delay units
- Runs on 9VDC power
- Single-step switching to presets

CONS

- Lots of parameter choices can be overwhelming
- Display shows bank number but not user bank name while scrolling
- A bit pricey

RATING ★★★★★

PRICE \$449.00

Hear it for yourself at www.strymon.net or watch my video below.



“FOREVER”

ARTIST: KARI JOBE

The world was first privy to Kari Jobe’s crystalline voice through songs like “Revelation Song” and “Healer.” Since then, the Texas-based worship leader has written and sung her way into hearts the world over. Her forthcoming album, Majesty, releases in March; but the first single, “Forever,” is already soaring on the charts. Kari Jobe shares how the twelve-minute song came to be.

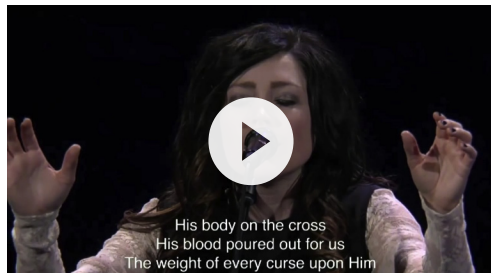
“Forever” was a co-write with Brian Johnson (Bethel). We wrote the melody and theme and knew the title would be “Forever,” but the lyrics took awhile. I actually thought that was cool. It took a lot of different poetic ideas to get it where we wanted it. It took about eight months to a year to finish and was a twelve-minute song when it was led at Bethel for the first time. At the end, Jenn (Brian’s wife and

fellow worship leader) started responding, singing what became the bridge.

We sing hallelujah, the Lamb has overcome...

Others also started responding, and it changed the whole room. People were getting a revelation in the middle of church. My favorite thing is to see people having an encounter with God. When I see them connecting, I feel like I’ve done my job. **CCM**

WATCH THE SONG AS PERFORMED AT BETHEL.



+ [CLICK HERE FOR THE CHORD CHART OF “FOREVER.”](#)



SON OF GOD PROJECT DEBUTS

BY CAROLINE LUSK

When Roma Downey and husband Mark Burnett brought the epic 10-hour miniseries “The Bible” to the History channel, the response was immediate and overwhelming. More than 100 million people around the world tuned in to watch the greatest story ever told.

Not surprisingly, the small-screen masterpiece has found its way to the silver screen, alongside the creation of a star-studded sound track and accompanying tour. *Son of God* will premiere on February 28, the first feature film about the life of Jesus Christ since Mel Gibson’s controversial and harrowing *The Passion of the Christ* ten years ago.

Word Entertainment partnered with the production company behind the miniseries and film, LightWorkers Media, to create the film sound track, *Son of God: Music Inspired by the Epic Motion Picture*.

Released January 21, the album features music from Meredith Andrews, Francesca Battistelli, Chris August, Big Daddy Weave, Jason Castro, Everfound, for KING & COUNTRY, Love & The Outcome, Dara Maclean, Point of Grace, Sidewalk Prophets and Group 1 Crew. On March 20, *The Bible: Son of God Tour* will commence, with 16 dates through April 13.

Below is the latest trailer for the *Son of God* film, featuring the song “Crave” from the Dove Award-winning New Artist of the Year, for KING & COUNTRY. [CCM](#)

SON OF GOD | “CRAVE” BY FOR KING & COUNTRY | 20TH CENTURY FOX



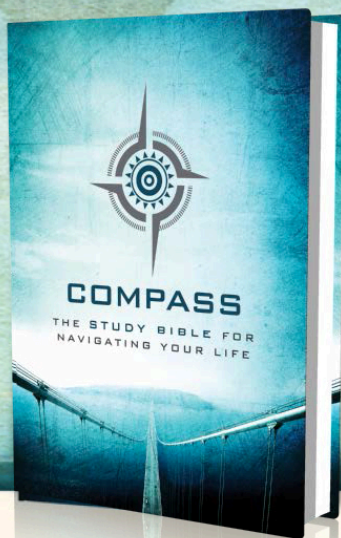
COMING NEXT ISSUE



JASON GRAY

- CENTRIC WORSHIP
- HIGHLIGHTS FROM WINTER JAM 2014

THE STUDY BIBLE FOR NAVIGATING YOUR LIFE ▶



Compass is about discovering God's Word to help you find the answers you're looking for in the pages of the Scriptures and let that truth navigate your life. Do you want to start reading and applying the Bible to your life, but aren't quite sure where to start?

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