

Carl Cartee



Carl Cartee wrote his first song at the age of 7, considering music more of a second language than an acquired skill. His catalog of songs and studio albums have garnered him a Dove award as well as tracks on the albums of artists including Laura Story, Aaron Schust, Selah, Jaci Valesquez, Big Daddy Weave, The Martins, Travis Cottrell and more.

His latest album, "Just to Know You," is set to release in the fall of 2012. Though the end product was a skillful and unique representation of Carl's heart and faith, the journey towards it wasn't easy.

Carl's seventh studio album grew out of a season of life marked by discouragement and exhaustion. A failed fundraising campaign for the project loomed overhead, and the birth of the songwriter's fourth son pushed his family to their emotional and physical limits.

"I wondered whether I should even pursue making the album at all," he said. "But my wife encouraged me to continue to write and share my experiences and what God was taking us through."

What resulted was an honest, passionate record comprised of songs declaring God's goodness and faithfulness despite even the most trying circumstances.

Rather than filling the album with material to meet a deadline or simply to finish the record, Carl crafted each song painstakingly and intentionally, wrapping in the wins as well as the losses, to create a true reflection of himself and his life during that time. Though each was written in different settings and with different people, in the end, all ten songs fit together perfectly to form a creative yet cohesive record.

Perhaps one of the most raw tracks lyrically is "We Give It All," describing the world's rampant brokenness, but also reviving a sense of hope by declaring the freedom that comes in turning those broken pieces over to God to redeem.

An earnest portrayal of Carl's experiences during the making of the album, "Faithful God" is a story of redemption and revival for a broken, sorrowful spirit.

The anthemic "We Will Sing Jesus" serves as a testament to the significance of individual lives, encouraging the body of Christ to leave a legacy by passing on the good news of Christ to the coming generations.

Varying slightly thematically, "Tender Love" was written as a declaration of truth to sing over Carl's four children at night, though his own needs and prayers helped redefine the song to be a message for Carl as well.

The songs on "Just to Know You" introduce a range of emotion and style yet untapped by Carl's previous records. Some invite others to sing along, and some are to be taken in. But each one reflects Carl's vision for worship music to express most accurately the truths of Christian doctrine, how those truths enlighten the human experience and how they help make sense of the world's problems.

Having emerged on the other side of what he calls the longest and driest difficult season in his life with a renewed joy and refreshed faith, Carl has now learned to embrace the value of enduring challenging circumstances.

"One of my favorite songwriters wrote a song that says, 'all the roots go deeper when it's dry,'" he said. "Usually the best growth happens when the seasons are the hardest."

It is Carl's desire that the exclamations of joy amidst hardship represented on this record will resonate with others who are struggling with the great wear and tear of life.

"I hope that in this album, doubters find faith and the lonely find companionship," he said. "I hope it becomes a refuge for people needing an authentic expression of their faith in Jesus."