

Casting Crowns Debuts on Billboard[®] No. 2

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Last week *The Altar and the Door*, the third release from Christian pop-worship band Casting Crowns, debuted at No. 2 on *Billboard's* Top 200. Without the backing of mainstream radio or TV, Casting Crowns—comprised of youth ministers still actively engaged in their Georgia churches—held the position as the week's highest album debut in the country. Disney's *High School Musical 2* held the No. 1 position—its third week at the top spot. "This debut is a landmark achievement for this artist and our company in so many ways," said Terry Hemmings, president and CEO of the groups label Provident Music Group. "Casting Crowns has proven that artistry, ministry, career and personal life can all co-exist successfully when the mission is clear. We are truly thankful to be a part of this at a time when record sales are hard to come by and consumers have so many choices. Clearly, Casting Crowns' message of hope and encouragement, coupled with Mark Miller's magnificent production, is resonating with listeners." Though Casting Crowns' first two albums received many music accolades and both went platinum, the Atlanta-based music group has said their focus is not on the band's success. "Our priority is to our churches and to our families," said Megan Garrett, who sings background vocals and plays the keyboard for the group to *CCM* magazine. "God's made it so obvious that Casting Crowns is something He's doing, and we know it's not going to last forever."