

Sight & Sound

MUSIC

Worship for a New Generation

Offerings: A Worship Album

By Third Day, Essential Records.

There are few more recognizable bands in Christian circles than

Third Day. With a quiver of contemporary hits, they have established themselves as a band with a familiar sound and a heart for bringing a solid message to a younger audience. It is of no surprise that their latest offering, appropriately titled *Offerings*, is more focused on worship than breaking new ground.

Offerings combines live tracks with studio recordings. Included are some of Third Day's best releases, such as "Your Love, O Lord" and "Consuming Fire," and some new songs that should turn a few heads. The opening song, "King of Glory," is a standout cut, as is "All the Heavens." Musically, Third Day is wonderful. Even the live recordings show the talent of this young band. Great mixing, great sound, and the surprising

resonance of Mac Powells' vocals make for a great disc.

As good as the sound is throughout this project, it is eclipsed by the message through each song. Offerings seeps with Scripture, praise and worship, and the soul of the band is poured into these tracks. Even when Powell speaks on some of the live cuts, his focus is that of ministry. Offerings is not for everyone, as its sound is quite contemporary. But if your tastes lean toward worship with a harder edge or you already enjoy Third Day, this is a must-have. Though there are quite a few remakes of old tracks on Offerings, the total package here is worth a listen.

—Doug Joseph

Gospel From the UK

Live in London and More...

By Donnie McClurkin, Verity.

Once again Donnie McClurkin has released a CD that is sure to soar on

the music charts. With jubilant praise and the benefit of a live audience, Live in London and More reaches its listeners with an upbeat, soulful tempo and inspiring, thought-provoking ballads. Recorded live at the renowned Fairfield Hall in London, McClurkin lends his anointed vocals to make this project a sure success.

The opening track, "That's What I Believe," is a rousing introduction that brings worshipers to their feet. Yet its lyrics are not overshadowed by a loud, distracting arrangement. The United Kingdom is a long way from Detroit, yet pastor Marvin Winans makes an appearance on the upbeat cut "Who Would've Thought."

McClurkin's reverent worship style is apparent in the track "Didn't You Know." It's a reminder of Jesus' undying love and concern for His people. An interesting variable on the CD is heard on the track "Caribbean Medley," which is sure to be a favorite." McClurkin digs deep into the Caribbean culture to make this song spirited and vibrant.

With smooth lyrics, "We Fall Down" is ministry at work. It evokes a desire for a deeper and a more committed relationship with Christ and encourages believers who have fallen to "get back up and get back in line." Live in London and More is more than a neatly arranged compilation of songs; it is an extraordinary gift to gospel music.

—Vanessa Lowe Robinson

The Secret Place

The Father's Song

By Matt Redman, Worship Together.

Matt Redman is back and better than ever. His new album goes beyond

his previous American-imported work *The Heart of Worship and The Friendship and the Fear* with a growing lyrical maturity and sonic depth. The young British worship leader's songs still revolve around two basic poles: Scripture and unabashed love of God. The result is a heart-provoking album communicated through an acoustic guitar and light synthesizer.

The lyrics are a perfect blend of worship, petition, prayer and adoration expressed with a refreshing honesty and vulnerability. The delicate and tender "Father's Song" is one of many standouts on the album. With a simple but gripping chorus, the cut is based on Zephaniah 3:17 and reminds listeners of God's soft presence.

"Thank You for the Blood" sings of simple gratitude for the sacrifice. Sonicflood makes a guest appearance on the edgy, hauntingly intimate "Holy Moment." Expect a number of upcoming albums to feature covers of this song. The Father's Song is an outstanding worship album that you won't want to miss.
□—Margaret Feinberg

Prayer and Worship

Your Kingdom Come

By Craig Smith, Hosanna!/Integrity.

Your Kingdom Come captures the sounds emerging from intercessory worship at Metro Christian Fellowship in Kansas City, Mo. The album, recorded live over a three-hour period, uses what has become known as the “harp and

bowl” form of worship, which refers to Revelation 5:8 and the harp and bowls of incense that 24 elders hold before the throne.

The album uses the Lord’s prayer as a framework and takes listeners on a praise, worship and prayer journey that blends celebration and intercession into a beautiful sonic tapestry. Throughout the recording, former Metro Christian Fellowship pastor Mike Bickle is one of several worship leaders whose passionate voices enter the music and echo the heart cry of a pleading prayer with the Father.

All of the songs were written by the album’s worship leader, Craig Smith, during intercessory worship times at his own church. The album is sprinkled with surprising moments. Following the first section, a woman sings a spontaneous worship song that the Lord gave her at that moment. Overall, the recording is both enjoyable and engaging—a must-have for anyone who loves to worship. □—Margaret Feinberg

Rockin’ for Christ

Somewhere to Elsewhere

By Kansas, Magna Carta.

Fans of Kerry Livgren's progressive rock music won't want to miss the

Topeka native's return to the Kansas band's recording lineup.

Kansas' *Somewhere to Elsewhere* features 10 recordings—all written and composed by Livgren, who plays keyboards and half the guitar parts on the recording released by Magna Carta in July.

Livgren also composed the lyrics for the songs, several of which have direct references to the Lord, although Livgren and bassist Dave Hope are the only two Christians who joined other original Kansas members to record the album.

Livgren, the subject of *Charisma's* September cover story on born-again rock stars, notes that Kansas is not a Christian band any more than *Somewhere to Elsewhere* is a Christian album. But Livgren was able to pen direct references to his Christian faith in the album's song lineup.

"Byzantium" is a song about the ancient Christian Byzantine culture, while "Myriad" tells how God can be seen—even in mathematics. "Distant Vision" is based on Christopher Columbus' personal journal and tells how he answered God's call to bring the gospel to the New World.

“Jesus Christ is interlaced in everything I write in one way or another,” Livgren told Charisma. “My presence in Kansas makes it a vehicle to communicate a good message that frankly is shining a light in a very dark place.”

Kansas currently is touring, minus Livgren and Hope, to promote the album. □—Billy Bruce

BOOKS

Building a Church Community

The Refuge

By Jim Bakker and Ken Abraham, Thomas Nelson, 256 pages, \$, hardcover.

Jim Bakker's most recent account of his continuing post-PTL journey

touches upon a vital and foundational aspect of the Christian life: the function and mission of the church. Bakker shares his developing insights from his recent ministries at inner-city Los Angeles' The Dream Center, as well as his own and his

wife, Lori's, current ventures in Charlotte, House and Mourning to Joy.

Bakker quickly establishes his credibility for making a plea to the contemporary church to more faithfully embody New Testament principles, sharing how "it was not until I went to prison that I experienced a New Testament church, a community of believers, unlike anything I had ever been a part of in my life."

The accessibility and availability of one Christian brother to another that Bakker found in prison impacted him in a profound way, leading him after his parole to pour his life into ministering to inner-city residents.

As Bakker continued to learn and grow by getting his hands dirty in helping to meet troubled individuals' concrete needs, he became convinced that the New Testament church was the standard for all churches: a "close-knit community."

The result? The Bakkers founded Morning House, declaring, "We will live in the house together, work together, and be a New Testament community, not just in theory, but in real life!" The Bakkers' experiment with early church life in 21-st century North Carolina continues, and Bakker provides a snapshot of what it looks and feels like: gathering regularly to study the Bible, pray and fellowship; cultivating good manners; and exploring, understanding and applying one another's gifts in order for the community to best fulfill its mission.

The book's main flaw is the first three chapters, the initial two of which are a fictional account of an unchurched couple

trapped in earthquake-rattled Los Angeles and finding refuge and love in a dynamic church community.

The third chapter is a cliché-ridden warning of coming doom and the urgent need for faith, caught in the familiar though marketable trap of squeezing literal meanings out of certain biblical texts that are apocalyptic and symbolic in nature. (For example, Bakker says he is “convinced that a monstrous asteroid will collide with the earth.”)

The book certainly could stand on its own without this opening segment, as Bakker’s own nonfictional journey and tangible insights are powerful and faithful testimony to where Christ is calling His church throughout all ages.

—John M. De Marco

Jesus, No Other

Jesus Among Other Gods

By Ravi Zacharias, Word Publishing, 240 pages, \$, hardcover.

“The purpose of this book is to lay I firmly believe Jesus Christ to be who He claimed to be—the Son of the Living God, the One who came to seek and to save a lost humanity.”

Author Ravi Zacharias does not waver from this purpose in his

latest release, *Jesus Among Other Gods*. Carefully, he moves through a minefield of the false claims of Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism, exposing the danger as he goes. To say this is a book about Christian apologetics would be true—the author even says so. However, it goes much further because Zacharias weaves into the text stories and illustrations that drive home the truth of his teaching.

The author does not shrink back from the heavy armor of these religious worldviews. Facing them head-on, he exposes their weakness and destroys their claim to the truth. Confronting the emptiness of idol worship, Zacharias states: “Our greatest hunger, as Jesus described it, is for a consummate relationship that combines the physical and the spiritual, that engenders both awe and love, and that is expressed in celebration and commitment.”

This book satisfies the searching mind whether the person is a theologian or a janitor, a secretary or an academic dean. *Jesus Among Other Gods* does more than supply fuel for debate, it moves readers to the heart of the argument: Jesus Christ. “He is not dead. He is alive in the best sense of the term. The celebration has begun.” —Tom Gill

Made in His Image

The Image Maker

*By Terry Crist, Creation House,
222 pages, \$, paperback.*

Do you know who you really are? Do you understand the purpose for which you were born?" author Terry Crist bluntly asks. The answers to both questions connect directly to a person's self-image. Every Christian has one, yet most people have distorted, tortured or exaggerated images of who they are and what they're about. Knowing who God made us to be and how to see ourselves correctly—through the eyes of the Image Maker—is the subject of Crist's forthright book.

Starting with postmodern society's take on the self-image theme, Crist logically and painstakingly moves through the process by which God created man and woman, the effects of the fall of man and what the new covenant promises to believers today.

Through anecdotes, examples and plentiful Scriptural references, Crist illustrates how deformed our images of ourselves have become and how God's power through the Holy Spirit can result in extraordinary change and forgiveness.

After he establishes the image in which God created us and desires us to live under, Crist sets forth his thesis about living in the image of God, becoming and remaining one with Christ. Readers are presented with both the disgraceful state into which mankind has tumbled and the formula offered in Scripture through which God wants to transform those who seek Him.

Crist writes with clarity and strength, presenting his facts well. He avoids pop psychology, neither scolding believers nor coddling them. The Image Maker is serious reading and contains

essential truths from which earnest readers will undoubtedly benefit. □—Karen Schmidt

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

Jesus Is Good Medicine

Native-style praise: Jonathan Maracle

On a fateful day in 1995, Native American worship leader Jonathan Maracle discovered a simple truth that changed his life: It's OK to be an Indian.

Growing up a Christian among the Longhouse people, Maracle, a Mohawk, had been taught that the Native American customs and traditions were evil and must be denounced to embrace Christ.

But at a unification gathering for Native Americans, Maracle says God gave him the words of a song, "Broken Walls," that challenges the church to end its historic cultural division.

Now he believes God is raising up First Nations people to help the church see one another through Jesus' eyes, and not the eyes of culture. He travels the world ministering in his unique style to dispel the stereotypes of First Nations people as being alcoholics and on welfare.

"Our honor has been brought to a level of shame in the last 500 years," he says. "People have been ashamed to be who God created them to be." Through his

ministry, Broken Walls (), Maracle hopes to help First Nations people “realize that we are God’s people and restore the integrity that has been stolen.”

And with the widespread popularity of historical Native American figures, Maracle believes Native people are invaluable to fulfilling the Great Commission: “There’s no people group on earth better positioned to evangelize the earth.” □

–Adrienne S. Gaines