

'American Idol's' Clark Beckham Talks Spiritual Battles in Hollywood

Keith Urban called his performances "killer." Jennifer Lopez said he was the "vocal of the night." And Harry Connick Jr. declared his singing abilities made him forget what the song was even about—in a good way.

This week, Clark Beckham takes the *American Idol* stage as one in 11, but IdolAnalytics gives him a shot at the top 3.

His new-found fame, however, doesn't seem to be going to his head. Instead, he's focused on the author of music.

"Well, God is music, God made music, God put music in me," Beckham says. "He's driven me here, and in many ways, protected me from certain things, certain doors, that I wanted to go through that He closed. He so clearly opened this door, so I just went through. It's just been really great, and I'm just trusting Him, going where He leads."

The young singer is a graduate of Lee University, a Church of God school outside Chattanooga, where Beckham credits much of his *Idol* preparation.

"My background at Lee has been everything for this," Beckham says. "Honestly, it made the amount of singing we do here a breeze. ... What I've done at Lee before here with Campus Choir and school taught me to work really hard when I'm really really tired. Lee, my experience there, has been everything to prepare me for this."

Throughout the competition, Beckham says his biggest challenge in his faith has been maintaining a dedicated time to the Lord. He's blessed, he says, because there are other

contestants on the show, who are also strong Christians, and their love for the Lord has inspired him.

They've helped him stay focused, and Beckham is aware of the spiritual pressure that surrounds Christians in everything is definitely present in the spotlight.

"We're always in a spiritual battle to stay focused, doing what we're called to do, what He wants us to do, seeking first His kingdom and righteousness," Beckham says.