

Recording Artist Phil Wickham Balances Worship With Fatherhood

Between recording a new album and raising a toddler, worship leader/songwriter Phil Wickham's life is a flurry of activity, and it's about to get even more exciting.

Wickham's wife is pregnant with the couple's second daughter, due in July.

"It's going to be a crazy couple of years," said Wickham on having two children under the age of 2. "We're hoping they'll be really close friends."

The Humbling Side of Fatherhood

The 29-year-old musician—who is clearly head-over-heels for his 18-month-old daughter, Penelope—can't even imagine what it'll be like to welcome a second little girl into his life. He just knows it's going to be a whole different world.

"I can't wait to experience it," said Wickham, who admits fatherhood can be a humbling experience.

"You don't have any pride left when you're sitting at a table in a restaurant, and your kid barfs, and you're under the table cleaning it up."

Sure, there are awkward moments, but in the next breath, Wickham explains that they're absolutely worth it.

"I've just so fallen in love with this girl," he said. "Your life is no longer about you. It's about training and loving and meeting the needs of this little person."

While parenthood may not be an overt theme in Wickham's music, he says being a dad is something that has subtly infused

itself into his songwriting.

“I haven’t literally written about it,” said Wickham, “but there’s a whole new lens added to everything. A whole new lens to look at the world. It’s hard to express how much it changes the way I even view myself, because it’s amazing. You see God in this different way, and it’s so humbling. It’s so humbling to have a kid.”

Testimony of Grace

Wickham is preparing to release a new record called “The Ascension,” which may come out in late summer/early fall. The album shares its name with the title track, based on the book of Psalms.

“Some of the psalms are called ‘Psalms of Ascent,’” said Wickham. “People would sing as they went up to Jerusalem to the house of the Lord. They’d be singing these songs to kind of prepare their hearts for the presence of God.”

Wickham says the idea of running into the Lord’s presence is a recurring theme in the record, the majority of which he penned himself.

Even though he hasn’t yet reached his thirties, Wickham has already been writing music for many years. Raised in the Church with worship leader parents, Wickham dedicated his life to the Lord as a sixth grader.

“I remember being a 12-year-old kid, and I wanted to officially say, ‘God, I just want to follow you.’”

Through the years, as he heard others’ dramatic testimonies of coming to the Lord, Wickham admits he sometimes felt a pang of envy that his own story wasn’t more dramatic.

“It’s not a life and death story,” said Wickham. “I’d hear these guys have these crazy testimonies of almost dying, and crazy stuff.”

It took a little time, but the Lord helped him recognize the quiet beauty of his own, unique story.

“I think it’s such a testimony of grace in a different way—how God kept my heart pure before Him.”

Bring Your Singing Voice

Soon, Wickham will bring his mellow, worshipful music to The Cove in Asheville, N.C. He’s the featured artist for “An Evening at The Cove” May 11, the same day of The Cove’s annual Open House event.

Wickham visited The Cove once before but has never performed there.

“It’s going to be awesome,” he said. “I loved it up there the last time I went. It’s so beautiful.”

The mountain retreat is run by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. Wickham says Billy Graham is someone he looks up to and respects for the positive influence he’s had on so many.

“It’s crazy—in one man’s life you just follow these trails of fruit and significance,” he said of Mr. Graham’s legacy.

Wickham’s performance at The Cove will be an acoustic one, featuring bits and pieces from half a dozen albums such as *Cannons*, *Singalong*, and *Heaven and Earth*.

“I try to keep it as intimate as possible,” said Wickham. “I love when I have just me and an acoustic guitar on stage. There’s more room to get to know each other and have community and hang out.”

Wickham says the evening will be “low key,” but the audience should be ready to worship and praise the Lord together.

“Come with your singing voice ready.”

This article was originally posted on .