

Heath Addresses Abandonment of Sin in Leaving Eden

Charisma: Your newest album *Leaving Eden* is coming out Jan. 18. Tell us what to expect from this album. What's going to be unique and different about it?

Brandon Heath: With the new record it's time to try new things and that can always be a little scary. But for me, I have a lot of trust in my producer, Dan Muckala. He and I have worked together for about six years. My last record, *Give Me Your Eyes*, was kind of the one I let him have free reign on, and it did so well that I really wanted to go a little further into that pop realm.

The first single, "Your Love," was co-written with Jason Ingram who I also wrote "Give Me Your Eyes" with. So it kind of sets the tone I think for the record. We're looking at the fact that sin is alive and well in the world but the light of God is here and pierces the darkness and even exists, I think, in the darkest parts of our hearts. That's something we need to address.

The title of the record is *Leaving Eden*. Even though we're walking away from where it all went down, almost looking at Eden as ground zero, I think that we could be walking toward hope instead of hopelessness and the reminder that we are all in the same state of ... betrayal. I don't want to betray God anymore and I don't want to eat the apple anymore. So for me, what does it look like in my life; and I think a lot of the songs on the record talk about that.

Charisma: Did any interesting or funny things happen while you were recording this record?

Heath: The flood happened in the middle of our recording. That was interesting.

Charisma: That's right—you are based in Tennessee, right?

Heath: We are based in Nashville. Nashville had a really big flood this last spring. So we kind of stopped working and we put gloves on and went and helped some people with demolition and with some of the recovery efforts that happened right after the flood.

Charisma: Was the recording studio affected?

Heath: No, it wasn't. But it just felt like so many of our neighbors needed help and we just needed to help. That was one of the great things about Nashville that I love and something I will always be proud of was how many volunteers were there. I'm really proud of our town and the way we pulled through that flood. For me it was kind of something special that happened in the middle of the record.

Charisma: I know it's usually difficult for artists to find a favorite, but do you have a favorite song on this record?

Heath: It's funny, every day it kind of changes. I would say today my favorite song would be "Stolen," which is a song that I wrote with Dan Mukala and Nate Anthony. I was thinking about *The Fugitive*, that movie and how the guy is on the run through the whole movie and then the police officer is, like, passionate about catching him. But in the end he discovers his innocence. For me I think about God—even though by the blood of Jesus we are innocent, He's bought our innocence.

I still feel like a lot of us forget that sometimes, and we start running again. We start running away from God, the God who passionately pursues us. I wanted to write a song about that. So it kind of had a New York feel to it, almost like a *Law and Order* vibe. I know that's funny, but that's what I was thinking. I wanted it to sound like something that you would hear on the streets of New York. I think "Stolen" really captures that.