

Autobiography of Chris August

I realize that it would be smarter for me to have someone else write my bio. I've never been the best writer, and I'm not exactly sure how to keep your interest with captivating phrases explaining why you should listen to my music. What I can offer is a genuine look into my past, present and God willing, my future.

I grew up around music. I absolutely loved it. I was constantly listening and singing along with The Beach Boys, Chuck Berry, Elvis, The Beatles and my favorite, Stevie Wonder. However, my involvement with music as a child wasn't limited to the record player. My dad had put a home studio together that consisted of a few guitars, keyboard, drum machine and the standard 4track recorder. I would pluck around on each of these, but didn't get serious with them until years later when my dreams of being in the NBA fell through because of asthma...and a lack of talent.

Age 15 was a big turning point for me. This was the year that I would start playing, writing and recording music; and most importantly, become a Christian. I was suckered into going to church by a cute girl in my Spanish class. It just so happened her youth group met at a place that was known for its break dancing. I arrived Sunday evening (Addidas wind pants and all) ready to show off and perfect my Usher-like moves, only to find out there would be no break dancing, but instead, a church service for teenagers. I would have been mad, but there was free pizza and who can complain about that?

The reason for me getting to church wasn't the best, but once I was there I heard the Gospel. Week after week. I had grown up with Christian beliefs my entire life, but I was finally starting to understand what giving my life to Christ meant. I now had two new and unrefined loves in my life. God and music.

I had recently been given a keyboard for my 15th birthday. I got to personally pick it out. It was small, cheap and from Service Merchandise. I can still remember watching my future slowly crawl toward me on a conveyer belt. Along with it came a book titled, 'You Can Play Piano.' Patience was not my best



quality as a young man, but fortunately I stuck with the instrument long enough for that book title to come true.

While at church, I had gained a love for worship songs. As I learned to play more and more of them, I was asked to help lead the music for the youth group. I would show up week in and week out with my keyboard, amp and a binder of songs to sing to God with my friends. My faith was growing and so were my musical abilities. It was then that I added acoustic guitar to my repertoire, opening the door for me to sing, perform and travel.

Over the years, I started adding pieces of recording gear to my collection. The moment I was done with school I would immediately come home and work on my latest song. At age 22, I was finally ready to release my first self-produced, recorded, mixed and mastered independent album. It had been finished for about 7 months when my life took a dramatic turn. A singer/songwriter named Ryan Cabrera had gotten a hold of it and wanted to work with me. Within two weeks of Ryan hearing my music, I signed a management deal with Joe Simpson, father of Jessica and Ashlee, and a record contract with Geffen Records.

I moved to Los Angeles in January of 2005 to work on my first album with Geffen. While there, I was able to work with such notables as Brian McKnight, Jessica Simpson, Ryan Cabrera and many more. I was working on music for my album, as well as writing and producing for other artist's projects. In the fall of 2005, Ashlee Simpson asked me to go on tour with her. I would open for her, and play keys during her performance. I ended up playing with her for a year- traveling around the world doing what I loved.

In January of 2008, after restructuring at Geffen Records, I ended up back in my hometown of Garland, TX. It had been 2 years since I was involved with a church. I missed leading worship. I missed writing Christian songs. I missed the feeling of conviction. I started playing keys at a nearby church called Lake Pointe Firewheel. As I got involved with their ministries, I ended up leading their worship pretty frequently. It felt great to be playing Christian music again.

I had been back in Dallas for a year when I realized how long it had been since I had written a Christian song. Sure I had worked on some inspiring type of music while on Geffen, but nothing overtly Christian. I wanted to write a song that was a rededication of my music and my life to Jesus. On January 18, 2009 I wrote 'Starry Night.' Little did I know this song would change my life.

My indie release of 'Starry Night' had somehow made its way to Nashville, TN, and in the hands of an A&R person at Word Records. After meeting with the staff and president, I knew Word would be my new home. I decided to pack up and move to Nashville and start the next venture of my life.

The following few months were spent writing countless songs. Well, I guess not countless. I wrote about 60 songs in 3 months. It seemed countless at the time. After picking out our favorite 11, I teamed up with producer Ed Cash to record the album. Ed has always been one of my favorite producers so it was a pleasure for me to do a record with him. He challenged me not only musically, but spiritually as well.

With a couple days left before we were set to record the album, Ed told me he felt like I still needed a personal song. Unaware of my family background, he asked me to go home that night and write about what hurt me growing up. I wrote the first verse of 7x70 later that evening.

After playing my idea for him the following morning, he looked over to me with tears in his eyes and said, "this song has to be on your record and it has to be about forgiveness." This was the last thing I wanted to hear and have to deal with while making my album, but nonetheless it was something that needed to happen.

The following few days consisted of us being surrounded by the Holy Spirit like I've never felt before. This was, without a doubt, the most personal song I had ever taken on and it required a mind set on prayer.

I come from a broken home. Better yet, a broken family. Parents screaming at each other. Frustrations were commonly taken out on my brother, my sister and myself.

As the lyrics started to come to mind, so did all the memories of my past that I hadn't thought about in years. Some lines bringing smiles and some bringing another set of pains that I needed to forgive. It was through this song that I was able to forgive and be healed of that pain. I hope others can use the song in their own journey to forgiveness.

People often ask me what I want listeners to walk away with after hearing my music. My response is that I want to write music that people can relate to. I hope my music speaks to them within their own lives and becomes something they can turn on any day of the week and in any season in life. I hope that when someone listens to my music, they learn something about me, something about themselves, and most importantly about the God who creates starry nights.

Chris August will be performing at the 4th of July celebration In Yakima Washington – July 4, 2011

This performance is sponsored by Positive Life Radio – www.plr.org

