

“Don’t Let Your Scars Cover Your Love”—An Interview With Singer/Songwriter Mitch McVicker

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Every once in awhile I have the privilege of meeting someone that brightens my soul. Singer/Songwriter Mitch McVicker is one of those people. When we met to chat at the Radisson Hotel during GMA week in Nashville, I got the feeling that Mitch is himself wherever he is. No putting on airs, no false pretenses, nothing artificial. He’s the real deal. Pure cane sugar, black coffee, what you see is what you get.

TCM: It’s [GMA Week](#) Mitch. Talk to me about your feelings about the GMA’s.

Mitch: Well, I’m not a GMA Basher. I used to come here and think “Notice me, notice me!” and it’s not so much of a big deal anymore. Through the years, I’ve developed my own process for recording, touring and presenting my music, so it’s not like I’m looking to be discovered during GMA Week.

TCM: I noticed you are associated with [Indieheaven](#), what is your relationship with them and how did that come about?

Mitch: Well, the cd came out in September, and I put it together like every single one of the albums in the past. I financed it myself, and just like [the rest of them](#), I was expecting a record label would distribute it. After pursuing some things that didn’t work out, I got a bit discouraged, but I knew there was something else out there. After a bit of time, I said “Lord you ‘birthed’ this. I can be at least faithful and get it out there myself...” So I looked into what was out there to help independent folks, and I connected with [Keith Mohr](#) and Indieheaven. They help me make sure my T’s are crossed and my I’s are dotted. During my interactions with some of the connections that Keith has, a tiny independent label got interested in helping me distribute the cd. It’s

kind of the best of both worlds... this label is helping me, and I still have control over the project... Most people in this business are like me, they are out there hoofing it, playing music for people who will listen and it’s not very glitzy. It’s just busting it every day...I am blessed to have found the label and Indieheaven, people that have the same mindset as me.

TCM: I noticed your song [Hallelujah](#) is on the [Top20 Indie 2008 CD](#). Talk to me about that.

Mitch: Well, that was another connection that was made through Indieheaven. That cd is a compilation of amazing independent Christian artists and I was happy to be selected. The song was the first “release” off of my cd, so it really made sense from a marketing standpoint that Indieheaven and then Indelible would select that song. Precious Blood is my new single, but at the time that they put that cd together, it made sense to have Hallelujah on there.

TCM: You mentioned Precious Blood. I love that song, and I am so impressed with the melody. It grabs you and doesn’t let go. Tell me about writing that.

Mitch: One of my favorite songwriters is [Tom Waits](#), and I was reading through a songbook of his, and was looking at some chord voicings. I didn’t have the music, just the chords - I’m sure they were jazzier when he did them (laughs)! Thematically, in my chorus, there’s a bunch of clichés. “Precious Blood” is a huge cliché. And honestly, I’m just sick of the standard clichés that we Christians use around the “right people” at the “right time.” But for me it came down to the blood of Jesus and the love of God cleaning us. Everything starts from there for me and in this case, the cliché worked, because it came from my heart.

Precious Blood:

So let this distress move me closer to You
In the midst of regret I can’t, I can’t forget
Your precious blood shed for me
Your gracious love wiping my slate clean

Mitch and I talked some more about Tom Waits. I told him my parents had the “[Nighthawks at the Diner](#)” record when I was growing up, and I bought a copy on cd a few years ago. We agreed that Tom’s a genius.

TCM: I recently read a statement that you made... you said, “My completion comes with the Lord”. Tell me about that.

Mitch: It’s a struggle for me sometimes. At times, I get caught up in analyzing the past, wondering why this or that went down. Sometimes I get caught up in the future... “When I finally do XYZ, I’ll be complete.” I have learned to base my living in the moment. I got sick of missing out on the present...I think that’s where our faith plays out, and we have an opportunity to LOVE others. Presents, (like gifts) and the presence—those words are tied together. I get excited and say “man there is a great mystery, the eternal now”... Jesus lived like that, and it’s the least I can do to embrace this life now, and live for today. It’s seemingly simple things that spark those thoughts... the fact that the sun comes up each day reminds me of the faithfulness of the Lord. I’m trying to be in the now all the time.

TCM: How do you think that plays in your music?

Mitch: I’m always writing songs. I’ve never gotten the concept of going to a cabin for a week and writing your next record. The songs are NOW pouring in my life... while I’m running, or driving or doing a soundcheck, if I pay attention to what’s happening around me I can grab these songs and create them. Then, later, I get to play these songs. They are living evolving organisms. If I am paying attention to the now, and writing about that, I’m hoping that other’s can relate to that... Now!



Honest of Heart:

Like a walk through
the tree covered hills
Like the scent of the leaves
Like a walk through the hills make me..

Honest of heart
Radiate through me
So I’m walking in thankfulness
And glowing
As Your truth comes showing through
You are are lovely Lord
Fill me up with You

TCM: Everything I’ve read about you mentions [Rich Mullins](#), and that terrible tragedy that is now part of your story. I actually felt a bit sad, that in an accident where you came so close to death the ‘story’ was about Rich’s death. It was such a personal tragedy, though, on SO many levels for you. I’m sure it’s painful; do you ever get sick of talking about it?

Mitch: Do I get tired of it? Sure I get tired of it, but does that mean I shouldn’t talk about it? No. It’s a great honor to be mentioned in the same sentence with Rich. Initially I was just pissed as hell. Nobody even gave a thought to me being in the wreck. I understand the huge loss of Rich being gone, and part of me goes “I don’t know if there was anyone hurting more than me over that”. You will never know how difficult it was for me to hear people talk about him when they would come up to me after my concerts [after I recovered].

I struggled with anger initially, because I felt that by and large, when I first started doing concerts after the wreck there were lots of people that came to the show just because I was the ‘other guy in the Jeep’. I knew people were hurting, and eventually I lost the anger, and now I’m really overwhelmed at the graciousness of God and people. Now people are coming to the concerts to hear my music and maybe connect with Rich on some level. I understand that music has an unbelievable ability to connect people. As I step back and look at that situation now, I wonder how many of us are really the same person we were 10 years ago. I’ve grown a ton since then.

Mitch sings this chorus on **Come to the Well**:

Come to the well
Where deep forgiveness flows
Yes I come for a drink of living water
Oh I come to the well
Let my thirsty soul be satisfied
And never run dry.. oh I come to the well

TCM: Talk to me about what makes a song a Christian song?

Mitch: A song is going to take you somewhere. Remember that .38 Special song, [Hold on Loosely?](#) It was a hit song for them, and you could put that in the context of Jesus, and it can be spiritual. You have to have an idea of where you’re going with the song. I don’t purposely write a song with the name “Jesus” or “God” in the lyrics, but I’m not scared of that either. I mean gosh, if there’s a song about a [girl’s butt](#) that lasts 64 bars, why can’t it be about the name Jesus (we both laugh)!! I’m sure there are songs where I mention Jesus and I’m sure there are songs that I don’t and there may be people that wish I did or didn’t, but I just can’t care about that. I need to be faithful to how the Lord is moving with me and go with it.

TCM: I know you live in the present, and want to walk with Jesus. What does that look like for you?

Mitch: I am going to follow my call to love others, without expectations. Love regardless of what you get out of it.

My meeting with Mitch was too short. He is someone that I wanted to spend the afternoon with...His new cd is fantastic because he takes fun risks with his music: His themes are unique (Walking on Air, Strap My Hat On), his instrument choices range from the normal to obscure...Accordion, mandoguitar and nord keyboard for example. The intro on “Upon Further Inspection” is haunting and unique. The cd production is great (listen with headphones if you get a chance). Another interesting note...He uses a line in his song as the title of the cd, and NOT the title of a song...

Earlier I mentioned the melody on Precious Blood; you will hear great melodies scattered throughout “Love Will Rise”. My new favorite song is #8...- I love the idea of feeling so close with God that the angels are looking at you:

I’m walking on air
Even the angels stop and they stare at me
I’m on top of the hemisphere
And I can see clear to forever
I’m walking on air

One telling lyric on Hallelujah shows his brilliance and conviction to live his life in the moment. “Don’t let your scars cover your love”. If Mitch McVicker can live his life that way, can’t the rest of us?



You can listen and learn more about [Mitch](#) here.

Check out his Indieheaven site, and [support his ministry here.](#)

**I wanted to thank [Benita Teems](#) and [McCain & Company Public Relations](#), for putting together this interview!
Jason**

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I’ve known Mitch for a while now and as a Christian musician I had a few opportunities to open for him. We had him at my church yesterday (again) and got to hang out with the guys throughout the day and you hit then nail right on the head by saying, “...Mitch is himself wherever he is. No putting on airs, no false pretenses, nothing artificial. He’s the real deal.”

I can’t wait for the day when I’m sitting in my easy chair in Heaven sipping lemonade with Mitch (listen to his Lemonade song... 😊)

Thanks for the article and sharing Mitch’s story!

Ted Fillhart

May 19, 2008



excellent interview Jason. We love Mitch!

Keith Mohr

May 19, 2008



Jason,

This was a stellar interview! I admit, I've been a fan of Rich Mullins for about 20 years now. But, have never really known much about his friend Mitch. I like this guy. He's the real deal. And, you honored him well by giving him a venue to be vulnerable and transparent with us. Thank you!

Margie

Margie Brenner

May 19, 2008



[...] Take a guy like Mitch McVicker, he's out impacting people with his message. He's not going to get signed with a record label [...]

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