

No Crossroads For TENTH AVENUE NORTH



By Chris Carpenter - CBN.com Program Director

It has been quite a whirlwind for **Tenth Avenue North** over the last 12 months. In addition to being the Most Played New Artist of 2008 according to Nielson Soundscan and Radio & Records, the Florida-based quartet was recently named New Artist of the Year at the 40th Annual GMA Dove Awards.

Featuring hit singles “*Love is Here*” and “*By Your Side*”, the band’s debut release *Over and Underneath* remains near the top of the charts over a year after its release. “*Hold My Heart*” from the CD is currently #3 on Billboard’s Contemporary Christian charts. (See Page 3)

Yet for all their success, Tenth Avenue North remains humble and completely dedicated to spreading the Gospel message of Jesus Christ.

I recently sat down with all four member of Tenth Avenue North, **Mike Donehey**, **Jason Jamison**, **Jeff Owen**, and **Scott Sanders**, to discuss what it means to be called ‘the next big thing in Christian music’, the irrelevance of receiving awards, and whether there is a magic button solution to faith.

You have been together for nine years and you just received the Best New Artist of the Year award from the Dove Awards. So, obviously you are not an overnight sensation. You have paid your dues. That must be very gratifying. To be together that long and now here you are. What are your thoughts on that?

Mike: I think as an artist you make your living performing. It is ironic that we get on stage every night and we have to perform in order to tell people about a Gospel that

says you don’t have to perform. Christ performed for you. Also, our treasure is in Jesus Christ. Our reward is Christ Himself the person. So, you get these rewards and you have to hold them loosely. Just accept the compliment and hopefully the reason that we won is that people thought we’re displaying Christ well. If that is the case then praise God.

Q: As a band, what is your biggest thrill when you perform?

Mike: As part of our show now, we bring out a mechanical bull and Jeff rides it. It is completely awesome. (laughter) We actually have video of a few of us riding mechanical bulls. Honestly, being on the **MercyMe** tour recently and at the end of their set they do “*Word of God Speak*”, “*Send the Rain*”, “*I Can Only Imagine*”, and they do “*God with Us*”. There are moments in there when people are just connecting with God. There is this presence of God. People are worshipping Him and fixing their eyes on Him. It is beautiful to get to be a part of something like that. For us personally, it has been absurd the stories we have been getting from this record. Our prayer making this record was not that it would be the biggest seller or most successful. Our prayer was that people would somehow encounter through all of our nonsense, guitars, and drums, and lyrics that somehow people would come to a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. And to hear people tell us that that it happened while they were in tears has been the most rewarding thing – that God would answer our prayer.

Jason: I think that is the biggest thrill for me. It is not actually playing the show but it is more about after the show when we are meeting people. And to have someone come up to us in tears just saying, ‘You don’t know how perfect the timing was when your record came into my hands. My husband left me and I was left with all of these problems. God used your record to pull me through some tough times.’ When you hear some of those types of stories and you realize I had no idea when we were making this record that God would be able to use it. Yes, He can use whatever but that He would choose to use something as trite as a three minute song to bring people through some of the toughest times of their lives. To me, every night on tour we get one or two of these situations that just make me just take a step

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