

# A N D Y   C H E R R Y

## Nothing Left to Fear

There was a moment in **Andy Cherry**'s life when he just wasn't sure. Fresh out of high school, leading worship at church in the morning and playing music in bars at night, he stood up to sing during a service one morning and something just didn't feel right.

"I didn't want to be there. I thought, 'I'm wasting my time.' And then it just hit me. God was touching people where they were and He didn't *need* me to work in their lives," says Cherry, now 26, newly married to wife Michelle, and released his first LP *Nothing Left to Fear* on Essential Records, March 6.

"That was the moment where I thought, 'OK, this is bigger than me, and I'd better get on board. I'd better hold on for dear life and follow wherever God leads me.'"

You'll sense the musical and spiritual growth Cherry's been led toward in *Nothing Left to Fear*, which he created alongside highly regarded producer and six-time SESAC Christian songwriter of the year, Jason Ingram.

Stomping percussion underlines the celebratory refrain of "Rise with a shout, cry out, our God's alive!" in leadoff single, "Our God's Alive." Gentle fingerpicked guitars lead through "Running to Our Savior," an expression of God's comfort in the face of loss. And "Nothing to Fear" -- with its refrain of "Why should I worry/ When Your love surrounds me?" -- grounds the album's overarching sense of the comfort and hope that comes with faith, the knowledge that worry is needless, that God will sustain you.

But Cherry also funneled the struggle and uncertainty that lingers, and the honest questioning that comes with both, into *Nothing Left to Fear*.

Opening track "City of Light" -- a lush melodic rock anthem -- ended up a treatise to God that asks Him to awaken our hearts and for that to be recognized. It started as the expression of a personal breaking point, when Cherry was confused and lost and needed to be reminded that a new day would dawn. That song and others -- "He Has Done it All," about how God has made us complete; "Beautiful Morning," in which Cherry sings, "I need nothing, but Your love" -- aren't just proclamations of devotion but reminders and sources of comfort to Cherry himself.

To Cherry, there's strength -- and closeness to God -- in admitting that you haven't figured it all out. *Nothing Left to Fear* is his admission, and his invitations to question, learn, grow and worship with him, together.

"The reason I do what I do is because I want to compel people to a deeper walk with God," says Cherry.

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“Through my work in churches, I’ve witnessed people – for whatever reasons – shy away from asking hard questions. I think this hesitancy, or fear, keep them from a closer relationship with God. Through these songs, I hope to help people work around that fear and find the love He intends for each us.”

He continues, “There’s an understanding that comes when you start looking at yourself through God’s eyes, and when you’re finally able to communicate with Him on an honest level I think you’re able to see yourself without a filter.”

He finds inspiration toward that intent in the “pretty extensive example of worship music” we have in Psalms. (He takes on a very famous hymn on *Nothing Left to Fear* -- “Nothing But the Blood” -- repackaging and modernizing it as a propulsive, layered sonic celebration.) Beyond the poetry and praise in the hymn, you also find real struggle -- and real honesty.

“I’m sure we’ve all had moments where we’ve felt like we’ve been attacked; even forsaken,” Cherry says. “The moments where you just want to say, ‘My life is really messed up, and I think You have let this happen to me.’ God can handle that -- He’s got really broad shoulders and He handle your honesty and confusion – even your anger. His feelings aren’t going to be hurt. He doesn’t need us to sugarcoat things because He knows what we’re feeling. So when we dancing around what we’re actually feeling towards Him I think we do ourselves a disservice. In my writing and playing, I hope to point people to a broader view of God; to encourage them to dialogue in honesty, like David did.”

Cherry’s drive toward holistic relationships extends to those between other people, too. In his career and in his life, he aims to be a uniter, to help bring together generations and denominations, to help draw people closer to God -- to live out John 17:11, which says:

*“And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, which You have given me, that they be one, even as we are one.”*

He finds various ways to express that desire, from concert stages to leading worship. Andy spent much of the last year on tour but never abandoned his heart for leading worship. For years, he served at his church in North Carolina and participated in a weekly city-wide gathering called Charlotte One. Andy currently serves as the Worship Director and primary worship leader at Mission Community Church in Gilbert, Ariz.

Regardless of whether those concert stages grow with the release of *Nothing Left to Fear*, Cherry’s a lot more certain of his direction these days.

“If this record isn’t a success I don’t think that’s gonna change who I am,” he says. “It won’t change what I’m passionate about, it won’t change how I approach songwriting, it won’t change how I approach God. It will just be the end of a really cool trip.”

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