

All Things New

God, You have made me new / You've restored my heart and turned these ashes into life.

A band of fresh-faced 21-year-olds may not be the average person's most obvious source for life wisdom and spiritual depth, but the risk is worth the reward—at least with All Things New, the surprisingly insightful act just inked to BEC Recordings.

On the surface, singer Garrett Hornbuckle, drummer Luke Wycuff, bassist Joshua Schou, and guitarist Jeff Stein are young, easygoing, and stylish: two guys met playing junior high baseball together and music runs in several of their families. But dig a little deeper and you'll find godly men who know too much too soon about broken homes, broken faith, and broken hearts.

Although the members of this worshipful, contemporary, and often folksy Florida quartet could talk about their childhood like it was yesterday—because it practically was—the songs they write and sing on their self-titled debut album already contain the clarity of a hard-won life lesson: things break apart in this world, but God restores them.

“I feel like these are songs that people need right now. They carry the message of redemption and freedom in Christ who came and died for us while we were still sinners,” says Garrett. “All Things New is just so eager to share that hope.”

Jeff named the group with 2 Corinthians 5:17 in mind (*Therefore if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come*) once the lineup was solid. The origins of All Things New date back to the guys' mid-teen years as a six-piece outfit born from other Fellowship of Christian Athletes worship bands. Besides covering Hillsong and Chris Tomlin numbers, they started writing original music together in a way that fed Garrett's childhood dream.

“It turned into something special, and I had always wanted to be in a band that got a record deal, so I started to be the driving force toward that goal,” he explains.

True to the essence of All Things New, the story behind the singer's musical aspirations is duly redemptive. He was born in Nashville, Tennessee, but moved to Deltona, Florida, after his father—a country music song promoter—left the family. Garrett was two, he had a six-year-old sister, and his mom was pregnant with a third child.

Chaotic times followed. A new stepfather was verbally abusive and emotionally vacant, leaving when Garrett was fourteen. His birth dad's remarriage to a songwriter who penned hits for Jessica Simpson and Sara Evans provided more creative influence, but that union also dissolved. By high school graduation, Garrett's mom was being evicted from their house, and his older sister was in prison for drug use.

“I live with Jeff and his family now, which is a testament to how close we are to each other in All Things New,” says Garrett. “It's really cool to have this family in my band.”

From those experiences, All Things New wrote its first single, “New Man,” a strong opening statement about how God creates beauty from ashes. Combining heartfelt vocals, muscular musicianship, and a graceful string section, the song grips listeners with a compelling force comparable to chart toppers like Tenth Avenue North.

“That one's just an awesome thing to have been part of—such a God-breathed song,” says Luke who contributed to the lyrics after reading Isaiah 61:3. “I'm just so moved by it and am pumped up knowing people will hear the message within “New Man’.”

Even before the release of *All Things New* and the arrival of “New Man” at radio, Garrett has seen the power of restoration in his life. Today he stays in contact with all of his parents and former stepparents alike and is hopeful about his sister who is now in rehab.

“It doesn't matter what you or I have been through,” he says. “In Christ you are worthy and you are whole.”

A similarly sweet and powerful truth comes through on “Washed Over Me,” a dulcimer-driven, three-part harmony, foot stomper not far removed from Mumford & Sons. The hunger for the God who completes us is also prevalent on “Borderline,” a song written by Sanctus Real singer Matt Hammitt whose vocal range is similar to Garrett Hornbuckle's. Even in the softer ballad “Holding On,” All Things New exudes a faithful confidence.

“That song tells our story as well,” says Garrett. “Sometimes you go through harder things in life, but God has you in every moment. It’s like with this band, even with all that has gone on in our separate lives, All Things New still happened, and we’re doing this record. It’s in His will. Sometimes we let go, but God holds on through every detail.”

Indeed, All Things New is the strong sum of its unique parts. The four young men have experienced different lives but are very much on the same page with this first batch of songs they wrote together. And their stories shine through as they discuss the tracks.

The youngest of five children, Joshua wrestled with drugs before joining the band and admits, “My entire life was centered around myself. I used to wake up and think: *Who might have something that I want today?*” The second time his mom caught him partying, he began to turn his life around as reflected in the faith anthem “Greater Things.”

“That song is a big one for me,” says Joshua. “It speaks so much hope into your life. It’s so powerful to know that as a Christian we have Jesus inside us, and we will do greater things because of it. I know now my life is not my own. I want my life to be devoted to Christ and serving others. That’s what makes being in All Things New such a blessing.”

Luke and Jeff agree. Both grew up in the church and around music and relish this chance to combine those loves in All Things New. They wrote the banjo carrying, southern tinged “In Your Reach” together about an outcast kid Luke knew who was close to taking his own life before finding friends at church. The two also worked on “Lead Me Home,” another soaring musical moment that focuses on *what my heart was missing all the time*.

“God has ingrained in us a love for Him,” Luke explains. “Everyone has that even if they don’t realize it yet. When the weight of the world gets to you, it’s that spark that brings you back.”

He would know. Luke admits his faith was broken a few years back when his father lost his long-held ministry job at the same church he had originally planted due to leadership conflicts and mismanaged funds. It created animosity and division within their own family; some of his siblings kept membership there while others moved on.

“My dad was so hurt,” Luke recalls. “He’s my spiritual and musical mentor, and I thought *if this is what church is about then I don’t want to be part of it*. I let the devil creep in and speak lies.”

In time, his brother’s invitation to a Passion worship conference brought Luke back toward hearing God’s voice in his life. Furthermore, his father’s position with the church was later restored, and the journey with All Things New would soon gain momentum. Signing to BEC Recordings was a dream that came true sooner than expected.

Garrett remembers, “The label brought us in for a meeting and said they wanted to take the next step. We thought that meant recording some demos, but they were ready to sign a deal and make the record. We stepped off the elevator after that meeting, and I went down on my knees in prayer. All four of us were bawling.”

God was going about His redemption work, making all things new.

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