

= The Generous Mr. Lovewell =

The Generous Mr. Lovewell is the sixth studio album by Christian rock band MercyMe . Released in May 2010 , the album is a concept record revolving around a fictional character , ' Mr. Lovewell ' , and the overall theme of love . Produced by Brown Bannister and Dan Muckala , the album met with positive critical and commercial reception . The album sold over 88 @, @ 000 copies its first week and debuted at number three on the Billboard 200 and at number one on the Christian Albums chart .

Three singles were released in promotion of the album , all of them reaching number one on Billboard 's Christian Songs chart . Lead single " All of Creation " spent ten weeks at the top of the Christian Songs chart , also peaking at No. 14 on the Heatseekers Songs chart and No. 2 on the Bubbling Under Hot 100 Singles chart . " Beautiful " and " Move " also reached number one on the Christian Songs chart , holding the top spot for one and nine weeks , respectively , with " Move " also peaking at No. 20 on the Bubbling Under Hot 100 Singles chart .

= = Background , concept , and recording = =

The idea for the character of " Mr. Lovewell " and the album came up while the band was attempting to figure out concepts for the record . According to lead singer Bart Millard " we [MercyMe] were trying to come up with the concept for our next record . For some reason , the words ' love well ' got stuck in my head " . Millard elaborated that " we 're very good , as a nation , at loving well when a massive tragedy takes place ... We all of a sudden become very unified , which is a great , great thing . But on a day @-@ to @-@ day basis , we pass up opportunities . We look the other way , or we try to ignore . So the idea of loving well is almost a kind of ' pay it forward ' that revolves around the cross " . With that general idea , MercyMe was going to name the album Love Well . However , the band decided to make a character that personifies the idea of ' loving well ' , and came up with the character of ' Mr. Lovewell ' , partly inspired by The Beatles ' 1967 album Sgt. Pepper 's Lonely Hearts Club Band . Because of the character and the more diverse sound the album was going to have , the band felt the original name didn 't fit and changed the album name to reflect the character of ' Mr. Lovewell ' . Millard has described the character of ' Mr. Lovewell ' as " like Buddy the Elf meets Forrest Gump . He sees the good in everyone and knows his neighbors enough to know their needs . Mr. Lovewell may not be the next Billy Graham , but he ? s changing the world each day in every little word and deed . ?

The concept of ' loving well ' was further developed when the band made a trip to the Dominican Republic and were inspired by the resilient spirits of people living in poverty on the island . When the band started to write the songs for the album , they joined the character of ' Mr. Lovewell ' and the concept of ' loving well ' , creating the overall message of love that is present in the album . Millard stated the band 's dream for the album was " to inspire others to ? pay it forward ? to the cross . It doesn 't have to be about major sacrifices . Just let your life become such that people know what you stand for " .

The album was recorded mostly by Reid Shippen at Sonic Ranch in El Paso , Texas , with the exceptions of " Won 't You Be My Love " and " All of Creation " , which were recorded by Steve Bishir at Quad Studios .

= = Composition = =

= = Music = =

MercyMe wanted to get out of their comfort zone with the overall sound of the album , and brought in producer Dan Muckala . Millard has said that he initially wrote the songs on the album as poems and then the band worked on the music , meaning the band didn 't think much about the overall length of the songs . MercyMe further developed the sound of the album by looking to the work of

The Beatles for inspiration .

The songs on the album often vary in genre , with many falling outside of MercyMe 's usual adult contemporary sound . Songs on the album take influences from many genres , including electronic rock on " This Life " and dance music / dance @-@ rock on " Move " . " All of Creation " , " Only You Remain " , and " Won 't You Be My Love " have a more general worship or Adult Contemporary feel , while the title track takes a musical feel similar to that of The Beatles .

= = = Lyrics = = =

The album 's lyrical content generally revolves around a theme of unconditional love and a concept MercyMe has called ' loving well ' . Other lyrical themes include worship and selflessness .

Individual songs vary on the overall theme of love . " Beautiful " was written for the daughters of the band members , expressing the Christian viewpoint that Jesus saw something beautiful , something worth dying for , in everyone . " This So Called Love " expresses the belief that all good deeds done absent of Jesus are in vain .

= = Critical reception and accolades = =

Critical reception to The Generous Mr. Lovewell was generally positive . Giving the album four @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half out of five stars , Allmusic reviewer Jared Johnson stated " If you only know MercyMe for their 2001 ubiquitous AC crossover hit " I Can Only Imagine , " you 've missed out on some of the Christian genre 's most accessible and well @-@ known hits ? which means you might not fully appreciate the full artistic statement that the band makes on The Generous Mr. Lovewell , a daring reinvention that drove the band far outside its comfort zone and sparked a national social trend in the process , " also noting that " the band 's collaboration with Brown Bannister and Dan Muckala delivers the messages with authenticity and contemporary new sounds that make it perfectly believable to envision a world in which Lovewell 's considerate and genuine actions are manifest in the lives of real everyday people " . Kevin Davis of Christian Music Review , giving the album an A + , opined that the album reminds him " of a classic theme album like Sgt. Pepper 's Lonely Hearts Club Band by The Beatles or Songs For Jane [sic] by Maroon 5 , both in musical diversity and with the challenging lyrics " and " truly establishes MercyMe as the premier artist in all of Christian music " .

Kevin McNeese of NewReleaseTuesday gave the album five out of five stars , opining that " [The Generous Mr. Lovewell] takes the formula that MercyMe has perfected and drop kicks it out of Mr. Lovewell 's window " . Roger Gelwicks of Jesus Freak Hideout was even less positive , opining that " MercyMe is still on top of their game ... however , The Generous Mr. Lovewell is undeniably a pretty forgettable record , and while there are a few gems to be found , it 's only going to appeal to the already @-@ existent fanbase MercyMe has garnered after all these years " , also stating that " MercyMe still has great things to say and their musical progression has been adequate enough , but it 's hard to see their sixth record as anything extraordinary and more desirable than their previous material . " Billboard reviewer Deborah Evans Price commented that " from the buoyant opener " This Life " to the brief but eloquent closer " This So Called Love , " MercyMe 's sixth studio album , " The Generous Mr. Lovewell , " is a beautifully executed set that celebrates how the power of love can change the world ... Music with a message has never sounded lovelier " .

At the 2011 Billboard Music Awards , The Generous Mr. Lovewell was nominated for Top Christian Album and " All of Creation " was nominated for Top Christian Song . At the 42nd GMA Dove Awards , " All of Creation " was nominated for Song of the Year and Pop / Contemporary Recorded Song of the Year .

= = Release and promotion = =

" The Generous Mr. Lovewell " debuted at number 3 on the Billboard 200 with 88 @, @ 000 copies sold in its first week of release . This marked both a record sales week for the band as well as their

highest chart peak to date . 80 % of the album 's sales came from Christian retailers . The album also debuted at number 1 on the Christian Albums chart . The high first week sales totals were led by a lengthy pre @-@ order campaign . Accordingly , album sales slid sharply in its second week , with the album selling 18 @,@ 000 units (an 80 % sales drop) and sliding 20 spots , to number 23 on the Billboard 200 . The Generous Mr. Lovewell spent a total of six weeks atop the Christian Albums chart during its run . It ranked as the sixth best @-@ selling Christian album of 2010 , the seventh best @-@ selling Christian album of 2011 , and the 47th best @-@ selling Christian album of 2012 . It was certified Gold by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) on May 15 , 2015 , signifying shipments of over 500 @,@ 000 copies .

Three singles were released from The Generous Mr. Lovewell . The album 's first single , " All of Creation " , was released to radio of January 29 , 2010 . On March 2 , 2010 it was released as a digital download on iTunes and as a CD single at select Walmart locations . It spent nine weeks atop the Billboard Christian Songs chart and peaked at number 11 on the Billboard Bubbling Under Hot 100 Singles chart . " All of Creation " was ranked by Billboard at the top spot on the 2010 year @-@ end Christian Songs chart . " Beautiful " , was released on September 17 , 2010 as the album 's second single , and spent one week atop the Christian Songs chart . " Move " was released as the album 's third single . It spent nine weeks atop the Christian Songs chart and peaked at number 20 on the Bubbling Under Hot 100 Singles chart .

= = Track listing = =

(Writing credits lifted from the inner notes of the album)

= = Personnel = =

(Credits lifted from Allmusic)

= = Charts = =