

= Undone (MercyMe album) =

Undone is the third studio album by Christian rock band , MercyMe . It was produced by Pete Kipley and released on April 20 , 2004 on INO Records . Following the success of MercyMe 's previous studio efforts , they were given significantly more resources with which to develop the album and brought in a sixth member , guitarist Barry Graul . Unlike the band 's previous songwriting style , which was to write the lyrics first , they wrote the music for the songs on the album before writing the lyrics . The album has a pop rock and adult contemporary sound , while the lyrics are personal and convey Christian themes .

Undone received generally favorable reviews from critics with many praising the album 's personal style , although some critics argued the album 's songwriting and sound were too similar to MercyMe 's previous efforts . It won the GMA Dove Award for Pop / Contemporary Album of the Year at the 36th GMA Dove Awards . In the United States , Undone debuted at No. 12 on the Billboard 200 and at No. 1 on the Billboard Christian Albums chart , selling over 55 @, @ 000 copies in its first week . It spent a total of two weeks atop the Christian Albums chart and was the fifth @-@ best selling Christian album of 2004 and the fourteenth best @-@ selling Christian album of 2005 . Undone has sold over 627 @, @ 000 albums in the United States and was the thirty @-@ eighth best @-@ selling Christian album of the 2000s .

Three official singles were released from Undone . " Here with Me " , the album 's lead single , was released to Christian and mainstream radio , peaking at No. 1 on the Billboard Christian Songs and Hot Christian AC charts as well as at No. 12 on the Billboard Adult Contemporary chart . The second single from the album , " Homesick " , peaked at No. 3 on the Billboard Christian Songs and Hot Christian AC charts and at No. 9 on the Billboard Adult Contemporary chart . The third single , " In the Blink of an Eye " , peaked at No. 1 on the Christian Songs and Hot Christian AC charts .

= = Background and recording = =

Following the success of the band 's previous albums Almost There and Spoken For , MercyMe was given " significantly " more resources to develop their next record by their record label , INO Records . Although they decided not to alter their Christian approach to songwriting , live performances , and interviews , they opted to work with outside songwriters on the album , employed the London Symphony Orchestra to play strings on several tracks , and added a sixth member to the band , guitarist Barry Graul . Additionally , MercyMe wrote and recorded the music for Undone before they wrote any of the lyrics . Lead singer Bart Millard noted that by using this method , instead of his lyrics swaying the musical elements of the song , the music acted as " a canvas with which to write [the lyrics] " . He elaborated that " We ? ve been making records for 10 years , so anything that sparks creativity ... is very much welcomed " . The title of the album was inspired by " the unexpected twists and turns in the band 's journey " ; Millard commented that " We had our plans for what we were going to do ; but when the bigger picture happened , all of our plans came unraveled . We don ? t know what tomorrow will hold . When you make your own plans , you suddenly find yourself undone ; and that ? s exactly where God wants us in the first place " .

Undone was produced by Pete Kipley and was recorded by F. Reid Shippen , Mike O ' Connor , and Steve Bishir ; recording took place at Blueberry Hill , Sound Stage , Abbey Road , The Indigo Room , Maximedia , Luminous Sound , and The Schwoodio . Mixing was conducted by F. Reid Shippen and Lee Bridges , while mastering was done by Ted Jensen at Sterling Sound . The string tracks on " Homesick " , " Where You Lead Me " , " Unaware " , and " Here with Me " were arranged by Rob Mathes and recorded by Simon Rhodes and Andrew Dudman at Abbey Road . The cello on " Keep Singing " was performed by Matt Slocum .

= = Composition = =

= = = Songwriting and lyrics = = =

Although he did not focus less on Christian lyrical material for Undone , mainstream radio was on Millard 's mind when he wrote the lyrics on the album . Millard attempted to write lyrics that , while still focused on God , tapped into the things people deal with every day . Further , he avoided using Christian jargon , as people who are not churchgoers might not understand what those terms mean ; instead , he tried to be " clearer in the things [the band] were talking about " . Another impact on the songwriting was the band 's experiences over the previous year ; while working on Undone , Millard and the other members of the band lost eight people close to them . Millard noted that " There 's a lot of personal stuff on [the album] about the things we 've gone through and how Christ has been the solution " . One particular song , " Homesick " , was written after two incidents . The first incident occurred during the holiday season of 2004 ; a friend of Millard 's lost her twin babies during pregnancy and was so far along in the pregnancy that doctors had to induce labor . After attending the funeral for the two babies , Millard wrote the chorus to the song . However , he didn 't write any more to " Homesick " after that as he did not want to " fake " his way through writing it . Following the death of his brother @-@ in @-@ law Chris , however , Millard finished the song . Although Undone was " essentially complete " at that point , the band recorded and included it on the album .

The album has been noted as having ' personal ' lyrics , a trait that is common for MercyMe . Otherwise , most of the lyrics deal with Christian themes and there is an " abundance " of " spiritually vertical " content . " Here with Me " discusses and conveys the theme of God 's love and omnipotence , while " Homesick " focuses on " persevering on earth in anticipation of heaven " . The title track describes the human " never @-@ ending quest for self @-@ improvement " . " Unaware " and " Caught Up In The Middle " are about making everything in life secondary to God while " Keep Singing " is about " pressing on and praising God in light of tragedy " .

= = = Music = = =

Musically , the band regarded the album as a ' new progression ' . Bassist Nathan Cochran said that " It ? s not a sharp left turn ; it ? s a step beyond what we ? ve ever done . We feel like our message and calling are the same ... We ? re still worship leaders ; we ? re just on a different scale " . As a whole , Undone is a guitar @-@ driven album with a pop rock and adult contemporary sound . The album 's opening track , " Where You Lead Me " , builds from an acoustic guitar @-@ driven opening into a crescendo featuring synthesizers and guitars . " Here with Me " has a musical vibe similar to alternative rock band Coldplay . " Homesick " is a ballad featuring strings from the London Symphony Orchestra . More upbeat cuts on the album include " In The Blink Of An Eye " , " Caught Up In The Middle " , and " A Million Miles Away " , while " Keep Singing " is driven by a piano .

= = Reception = =

= = = Critical = = =

Undone received mostly positive reviews from music critics . Although some critics felt the songwriting and music were too similar to the band 's previous efforts , others praised the album 's ' personal ' style . Kim Jones of About.com gave the album five out of five stars , saying that " [the album] has been called by many people as one of the best new releases of 2004 and I have to agree " . Johnny Loftus of Allmusic gave it three out of five stars , saying that " With its slick production and MercyMe 's full lineup of guitars , percussion , and keys , [Undone] suggests the tangent of Nashville contemporary country that favors straightforward pop melody over any sort of hard twang . Likewise , the album 's more upbeat moments reflect the trend in secular adult alternative toward earnest vocals over whitewashed rock (à la Vertical Horizon) . Both sounds work well for MercyMe on Undone , doubtless giving fans of the band 's music and devotion plenty more

to believe in " . David McCreary of CCM Magazine gave Undone an A , calling it " [MercyMe 's] most mature , personal recording to date " , also praising Bart Millard 's vocals . Tony Cummings of Cross Rhythms gave the album nine out of ten stars , calling it a " huge improvement " over Spoken For (2002) .

While calling Undone MercyMe 's " most satisfying " record to date , Russ Breimeier of Christianity Today regarded the songwriting as " monotonous " and felt that MercyMe was " beginning to sound like they 're repeating themselves " . Josh Taylor of Jesus Freak Hideout gave the album three out of five stars , opining that " Frankly , this is the same stuff they were doing three years and two albums ago ... If you ? re a diehard MercyMe fan , this disc will be music to your ears . But for those of us who long for change (Not drastic ones , mind you . But small , significant ones .) , Undone seems redundant . It ? s still good , but it ? s beginning to become stale " .

At the 36th GMA Dove Awards , Undone won the award for Pop / Contemporary Album of the Year .

= = = Commercial = = =

Undone sold 55 @, @ 000 copies in the United States in its first week , MercyMe 's highest sales week at that point . It debuted at No. 12 on the Billboard 200 and at No. 1 on the Billboard Christian Albums chart , their second career number @-@ one album on the latter . The album 's lead single , " Here with Me " , played a large part in the early sales of the album by having success on both Christian and mainstream radio . It spent a total of two weeks atop the Christian Albums chart and became the fifth best @-@ selling Christian album of 2004 and fourteenth best @-@ selling Christian album of 2005 . It ranked as the thirty @-@ eighth best @-@ selling Christian album of the 2000s in the United States and has sold over 627 @, @ 000 copies in the United States .

= = Singles = =

Three official singles were released from Undone . " Here with Me " , the album 's lead single , topped the Billboard Hot Christian Songs chart for thirteen weeks and the Billboard Hot Christian AC chart for ten weeks . It also appeared on mainstream chart formats , peaking at No. 12 on the Adult Contemporary chart and No. 38 on the Adult Top 40 chart . " Here with Me " ranked at No. 16 on the decade @-@ end Hot Christian Songs and Hot Christian AC charts .

The album 's second single , " Homesick " , peaked at No. 3 on the Billboard Hot Christian Songs and Hot Christian AC charts and at No. 1 on the Radio & Records Christian AC Indicator and Inspo charts . It also peaked at No. 9 on the Billboard Adult Contemporary chart .

The third and final single from Undone , " In the Blink of an Eye " , spent five weeks atop the Billboard Hot Christian Songs chart and six weeks atop the Billboard Hot Christian AC chart . It ranked at No. 48 on the 2000s decade @-@ end Hot Christian Songs and Hot Christian AC charts .

= = Track listing = =

All songs written by Jim Bryson , Nathan Cochran , Barry Graul , Pete Kipley , Bart Millard , Mike Scheuchzer and Robby Shaffer except where noted .

= = Personnel = =

(Credits lifted from the album liner notes)

= = Charts and certifications = =

= = Release history = =

