

= American Dream (Casting Crowns song) =

" American Dream " is a song recorded by Christian rock band Casting Crowns . Written by Mark Hall and produced by Mark A. Miller and Steven Curtis Chapman , the song was included on the band 's 2003 self @-@ titled debut album . A rock song , " American Dream " features loud electric guitars similar to those on Chapman 's 2001 album Declaration . Lyrically , the song discusses how fathers caught up in advancing their career can neglect their family responsibilities . It received mostly positive reviews from critics , many of whom praised its lyrics ; several critics felt the song 's instrumentation was average or mediocre , however .

" American Dream " ' s accompanying music video , the band 's first , depicts the deterioration of a relationship due to a man 's neglect of his family . The song received nominations for Rock / Contemporary Recorded Song of the Year and Short Form Music Video of the Year at the 36th GMA Dove Awards , but lost in both categories . Although it was not officially released as a single , it was sent out to Christian rock radio between the release of the album 's second and third singles ; although it received airplay on that format , it failed to chart . " American Dream " was later included on the band 's 2004 live album Live from Atlanta , and was re @-@ recorded and released in an acoustic form on the band 's 2013 album The Acoustic Sessions : Volume One .

= = Background and recording = =

Casting Crowns ' lead vocalist Mark Hall said that " [American Dream] song was written from every student I ? ve ever ministered to , to their dads . It ? s everything they could never say . It ? s the story of a dad who provided financially , but was never there physically or emotionally " . While Hall noted that he had a great father as a child , he felt the message needed to be conveyed to dads . Hall and the band wrote the song in about two days , in order to get it done prior to an annual NASCAR event held by their church . The band felt that the event , attended by around two to three thousand families , would be an opportunity to convey that message .

= = Composition = =

" American Dream " is a song with a length of four minutes and eleven seconds . I t is in set common time in the key of D major and has a tempo of 84 beats per minute . Mark Hall 's vocal range in the song spans from the low note of B3 to the high note of F ? 5 . A rock song , " American Dream " has also been stated as being arena rock . The song has been described as demonstrative of the production style of Miller and Chapman , with loud guitars resembling those on Chapman 's 2001 album Declaration , creating an " explosive " wall of sound in the chorus . One of the most up @-@ tempo songs on the Casting Crowns , it was also noted as being " hook @-@ laden " and demonstrating the " in @-@ your @-@ face " lyrical tone of Hall . Lyrically , " American Dream " discusses " the way fathers caught up in the career rat race can neglect their kids " . The song urges fathers to spend more time with their family and more time as spiritual leaders and " exhorts listeners not to neglect their families in pursuit of wealth and careers " .

= = Reception = =

" American Dream " received mostly positive reviews from music critics . Russ Breimeier of Christianity Today praised the song as " simply yet powerfully worded " , also praising the chorus ' wall @-@ of @-@ sound as improving the chorus of an otherwise " average pop " song . Belinda S. Ayers of CBN.com regarded the song as " one of the album 's most energetic songs " and praised it as an example of Hall 's " bold " lyrics . Jessica Vander Loop of Jesus Freak Hideout criticized the song as not being " musically inclined " , but praised the song 's lyrics as " strong and personable " . Roger Gelwicks of Jesus Freak Hideout , despite regarding the message as " admirable , sharply criticized the song 's vocal delivery as " almost disdainful " and criticized what he described as a " condescending " lyrical tone . At the 36th GMA Dove Awards , the song was nominated for Rock /

Contemporary Recorded Song of the Year , losing to Switchfoot 's " Dare You to Move " . " American Dream " was released to Christian rock radio on June 26 , 2004 , after the February release of " Who Am I " , the album 's second single , and before the September release on " Voice of Truth " , the album 's third single . Reunion Records , the band 's record label , does not consider " American Dream " to have been an official single , considering " If We Are the Body " , " Who Am I " , and " Voice of Truth " as the three singles from the album . " American Dream " did receive airplay at Christian rock radio , but not enough to appear on the Radio & Records Christian Rock chart .

= = Promotion = =

On October 5 , 2003 at the band 's church in Atlanta , Georgia , the band performed " American Dream " ; this version was later included on their 2004 live album Live from Atlanta . At an April 1 , 2005 concert at the Giant Center in Hershey , Pennsylvania , Casting Crowns performed it as the third song on their set list . At an July 10 , 2005 concert at Seaholm High School in Ypsilanti , Michigan , Casting Crowns performed it as their third song in their set list . " American Dream " was included on the 2004 compilation album Dove Hits 2004 and the 2005 compilation album Pure Hits . An acoustic version of the song was included on the band 's 2013 album The Acoustic Sessions : Volume One .

" American Dream " was recorded as the band 's first music video . The video depicts a man 's crumbling relationship as he neglects his family in pursuit of his career ; the video interspaces the story with the band performing at a baseball field , Hall walking through the streets of a city , and the man unsuccessfully trying to maintain a sandcastle as the tide comes in to shore . The music video was included on their live album Live from Atlanta. as well as the ' Gift Edition ' and DualDisc version of Casting Crowns and the DVD version of WOW Hits 2005 . Tony Cummings of Cross Rhythms described the video as " rather effective " , praising the video 's imagery of " a businessman futilely trying to make a sandcastle as the tide rushes in " . The music video for " American Dream " was nominated for Short Form Music Video of the Year at the 36th GMA Dove Awards ; it ultimately lost to the music video for Switchfoot 's " Dare You to Move " .

= = Credits and personnel = =

Credits taken from Allmusic .

= = Release and radio history = =