



**I'M
STILL
WRITING
THESE
LINES**

LYRICS BY
JOHN FAIRFULL

I'm Still Writing These Lines

*“All art is God giving you a message for you to put
out there in the world.”*

-John Fairfull

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Lyrics By

John Fairfull

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And we're not so different
I'm still writing down **these lines**
Do I sound the same?
Have you found your dream?
Or do you fear what you might find?

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FRONT MATTER

FOREWORD:
CREATE, CONNECT AND
COMMUNICATE

J. R. WALLER

INTRODUCTION

Music. Every culture on earth has some form of it. From the great urban centers of the Western world, to the furthest corners of the most remote hamlets, you will find music. Music truly is one of mankind's universal languages.

We love music. It stirs the soul, provides a commentary on the world around us and sparks our imaginations. We make love to it, worship God through it, form friendships with it, grieve with it... we love it!

Personally, I'm a die-hard music collector and fan. I have enough albums to fill a spare room. In terms of my taste I do not discriminate. I enjoy a wide variety of genres and styles. How can you not? There's a treasure trove of music out there and so much of it has always been a part of my life. Music has gotten me through death, regret, and pain. It's also been there in the mountaintops and highs of my life.

Between the job moves, deaths, celebrations, milestones, graduations, and achievements in my life the beats, rhythm, intonation, tracks, mastering, concerts, tours, fans and messages that encompass the full spectrum of the world of music have always been by my side.

Now, I must digress for a moment because unfortunately, I was not gifted with musical talent. That means that yes, I'm one of the many who have always wished they could play an instrument or sing but who can't. I'm the guy who is backstage and is a part of the scene but isn't the central player. I'll never be a musician, and I'm ok with that, because while I do not know exactly what it is like to play an instrument, perform at a venue to crowds of raving fans or be "on tour," I do understand something about that world. I understand the creative drive, and impulse behind the music. I may not be a musician, but I am a writer and author, and musicians and authors are both artists.

All artists, regardless of their medium, are moved forward by the desire to create. It moves us. Just as all art is about creativity, it is also about connection and communication. We want to bring people together and tell them something they need to hear. Our audiences are our platform, and our music or prose is just the channel through which we communicate our message.

The desire to create, the need, the overwhelming compelling drive to build something, to share a message, to communicate and to let out our hearts cry...as an author, I know those desires and feelings just as well as any musician.

In fact, as a Christian, the desire is even greater because everything I do is laced with the overwhelming yearning to please God, share His message, and produce art that points to and glorifies Him.

John Fairfull, like me, is a Christian artist. I've known John for a long time. We're, as the cool kids say, "bros and besties." We've been

through a lot together. He is that rare once in a lifetime friend, but he is more. He's a mentor and brother. He's family.

Because we are both Christian artists, we share the never-ending need to create, connect and communicate through the mediums that God has gifted and entrusted us with. For him, it's a guitar and voice. For me, a pen and a book. Yet we both do the same thing, we create, we connect and we communicate.

This book however, is centered on the communication piece. Years ago, John first showed me some of his solo lyrics and those he wrote for Five Minute Plan. Being the literary critic that I am I noticed instantly there was something special about them.

I had always been blown away by his song-writing but when I read his lyrics I told him "We gotta publish these!"

Ultimately, songs are poetry set to music, and that's what this collection of lyrics really is. It's poetry and its poetic in all its unvarnished, raw, emotive and powerful glory. Through the words of these songs, the reader comes across pain, triumph, despair and hope. The entire spectrum of human emotions is on display here. It's the stuff we all relate to, and while each song has its central message, it also has a message that is unique to every reader. That's art, its not just about what the song or poem means to me, its what it means to *you* and its about what *you* do with it.

The songs in this book have caused me to question things. To reflect on my life, to look ahead to my future, to wonder more about where I'm going and how I got here. I've found solace in their comfort, I've seethed with their tension and I've laughed and smiled too.

Music. We love it. I hope in this collection you find a slice of that love and that it compels you do soemthing with it.

PREFACE

This book is a compilation of song lyrics I've written over the course of 20 years. I started writing poetry when I was 14 years old, and music always inspired my process. My brother gave me a record player and I would listen to my parents' record collection to get my creative process going. I started playing guitar and six months later, I had a moment of clarity where I knew I could write songs myself. It took me about five years to perfect my craft to the point where I had something worth hearing.

Music is a universal language. It crosses borders, transcends prejudice and connects us all. Speaking this language puts us in touch with the human condition. If you read this book, you will get to know me. You'll know the way I think and what I think about. Achieving that has been the driving principle in my artistic journey. It's my mark on the world and if you're reading this, I hope it means something to you. In my short time on earth, I have seen human connection waning in favor of an atomized society. I can only hope this book is a small step in reversing that trend.

The way I write has evolved over time. Early on, I would create a concept for a song, write the lyrics in poetic meter and then create music to wrap around the words. With experience, I have flipped this process. I generally create the music first now, then I develop the vocal melody, then I use an organic process to brainstorm words and phrases which begin to build a lyrical concept. This concept may even change a few times before it's complete. When I began writing, I thought this type of process would compromise the literary quality of my lyrics; but to the contrary, I found it brought out the best in me.

As the title of the book suggests, I haven't stopped writing and it's my sincere hope that "the lines I'm still writing" bring out the best in you as well.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Pursuing any musical endeavor is a humbling experience and I have been fortunate enough to have an audience in places near and far over the years, however small. I would write songs for the simple pleasure of the creative process itself, but a big thanks goes to my fans for giving me one of the best experiences of my life.

Thanks to The Greater Heritage and Jeremy Waller for editing and publishing this book. I would not be publishing this without you.

Thanks to Tim Sledd for contributing to this book and being nothing short of the best musician I have ever known.

Thanks to all the other former members of Five Minute Plan who I've played shows with: John Mark Williams, Daniel Galarza, Ted Donaldson, Danny McGee and Sam Endelicato (RIP).

Thanks to other musicians I've played with who have influenced my musical development: Christopher Evensen, Paul Long, Ryan Burket, James Edwin Meyers and Nathan Walter.

Thanks to Jordan Baptist Church in Sanford, Florida for giving

us a place to practice.

A big thank you goes to my brother Bill who inspired me to play guitar and encouraged me to pursue songwriting in the first place.

Most of all, thanks to my wife Rakel Fairfull and my daughter Annika, who provide me with endless inspiration, love and joy, and thanks to my sisters, Colleen and Kathleen and all my nieces and nephews for your support over the years.

AN INTERVIEW
WITH JOHN FAIRFULL
SEPTEMBER 1, 2020
THE GREATER HERITAGE

INTRODUCTION

I recently caught up with singer-songwriter John Fairfull to discuss his latest music project, an EP called *On Starting Over* which officially released today.

You can purchase a digital version of the album on Five Minute Plan's website and John can be followed on his Facebook page. He also recently posted a great lyric video to the song *See You Again* which we encourage you to check out!

ABOUT THE BAND

Five Minute Plan was an indie rock band from Central Florida that played locally there for over a decade. John served as the group's lead singer and principal songwriter.

They produced three EPs and two full length albums. In addi-

tion to playing numerous concerts they made several appearances on radio, including WPRK 91.5 FM at Rollins College.

The band broke up in 2010, however John hasn't missed the proverbial beat when it comes to music. He is currently the Music and Media Director at Jordan Baptist Church in Sanford, Florida where he leads worship.

He has been involved in many other projects, one of them being the composing of the intro and outro music for The Greater Heritage podcast. He's also done lots of solo work so when we heard about *On Starting Over*, his latest project, we wanted to get the scoop.

THE INTERVIEW

What prompted you to start a new album?

Well, *Shine On I* wrote years ago but never mixed it. Recently, I've had more time to work on music again and to put something out there to connect with people. Music is a legacy for me and I like to get my thoughts out there. Its cathartic. The timing was right.

What's it about?

It's a commentary on starting over, about how the world needs a reset which is essentially Christ's return but in the interim the world tries to recreate itself all the time which adds up to the Tower of Babel. Man just continually tries to climb the tower and replace God.

The songs are a journey through politics, psychology, and different aspects of human culture trying to reach its way to God but ending up back where it began.

What do you want listeners to take away from it?

I'd like people to stop looking at external things to make their life better. A lot of people recently look to either public figures or social media to find meaning rather than focusing more on their inner thought life and religion for a higher meaning in life.

One word to describe the EP?

Hmmmm, thoughtful.

In what way?

It's a culmination of my thoughts on society and world progress over the past decade.

Tell me about each track.

See You Again is about when my father passed away. It contrasts that experience with a man that is very important in your life and Christ. It's a contrast between your earthly and heavenly father and is about the idea that you will see each one of them again. Christ at His return and your loved one in heaven.

On Starting Over is about...a search for yourself, trying to find your identity and having difficulty doing that. It's also about the difficulty of relating to others or having others relate to you. It talks about how society can lie to you. Ultimately it's about how God has to find you for you to find yourself.

Legacy is about politics. About how people look to a public fig-

ure to intervene in their life, and they look to strong leaders because they feel powerless because people are not self-actualized.

Shine On is about the re-creation of the tower of Babel. It's about civilization and progress as a way towards creating the tower. It's also about the Whore of Babylon in the form of world religion and how man is his own God, and how that is so empty. Lastly, it's about being a Christian and seeing that and living in that and the difficulties in that.

In general, where does your inspiration for songwriting come from?

I'm inspired to write in general from the idea of creating something for posterity. I like to connect with people and give meaning with something that is very accessible. When I write a piece of music and I decide to turn that into a song it's really an inspiration from God.

All art is God giving you a message for you to put out there in the world. I like the aspect of creation and having a global reach, it inspires me to keep going with it. God is a creator so we create, that's what makes us in the image of God, we can make things out of nothing.

How is songwriting different from other forms of writing?

You're writing for this separate thing, the music itself, you should write for that. When you develop as a songwriter you put words in the music that deal with emotions relating to the music and not entirely to yourself.

You've made some interesting statements about current trends in

John Fairfull

music, can you elaborate?

I feel like music is getting safer and more commercial, there is an ever increasing focus on image and less on art. There are really talented people out there who are in it for commercial success and there hasn't been a viable path from that because the major labels have cornered the market and taken over small labels.

There needs to be more of an internet and indy renaissance for them to make a living on it and for them to re-take market share.

If there is less challenging of the status quo, art will suffer. In turn the lack of challenge creates a tableau where the ante is simply playing it safe.

Some would argue today that the stage is set for creativity to flourish because music operates in an anything goes world. What do you think about that?

Do you mean how music has pushed the boundaries of what's acceptable to just appeal to the base instincts of man which is not art?

Exactly (laughs).

Well that's a question of what's morally acceptable, that's a different discussion. It's the artist's job to challenge things and create a commentary on what is going on, that's been pushed to the side and music is just recycling what's already been said at this point.

How has your style changed since your last album?

I've gone more electronic, 90% of the EP was recorded digitally, and I'm doing everything myself. I've simplified musically. I'm more clear and concise.

What's your philosophy on music?

It should be something that makes sense, that's more concrete and less abstract. I like crafting lyrics and I like the lyrics to make sense. You can't challenge the status quo with gibberish. I try to do something different with each new song.

So, you're an innovator?

Yeah.

Any advice for aspiring musicians?

You have to follow the path no matter what anyone else says, you have to be thick skinned, you have to be very objective and take a lot of constructive criticism and be willing to improve.

You also need to work well with other people, which is hard because most musicians start when they are young and don't have those skills.

In the US things are aimed at younger people creating music. Having a business mind is essential but not everyone knows it and it's something I've struggled with.

What are you most proud of from your musical career?

With the small reach I've had, I've been able to reach people in

John Fairfull

other countries. Connecting with individuals, it's a big part of why I do music. Also, my lyrics and how I've improved over the years and always challenged myself to get better.

Has your message changed over time?

It's always been about where I am in life, when I was younger it was about struggles, about growing up and friends and now it's just more mature and well-developed. Its more cohesive and not so emotional.

What does the creative process feel like?

It's almost like when you're really into it, you're not even in control of it, it's happening and you're just harnessing it, it's a flow, you get in the zone, and let it happen. It's almost separate from you. You're left feeling like 'Did I do that?' (laughs)

Last but not least, what's the future hold?

I could see myself creating another all original, all electronica album or cover album in the next few years, or re-doing some of my older stuff in a newer style.

-J.R. Waller, September 1, 2020

The Greater Heritage

LYRICS

4 1 7

I can see it in your face
You still want out of here
It's the skill of time to pass us by
It's not apt to change your mind

And we're not so different
I'm still writing down these lines
Do I sound the same?
Have you found your dream?
Or do you fear what you might find?

Sail away
It's not like the city to know your name
Millions of faces that haunt your dreams
Won't bring the comfort of home
It's something inside you to own

Run into breaking day
This time it's not a mistake
On the road you know
There's Someone who knows your name

A BATTLE INSIDE

What seems random can be made to add up
Interpret volumes that were long since shut
You pull an instance out of the distance
And ask if it exists

Wires are disconnected within you
There's an emptiness I can't fill
My heart is a trap you fell into
Unsuspecting of the kill

Where is independence
When the battle's won?
Where's your solace
When the day is done?
I'm only human
Just as undone
And yet the answer comes

Want and time aren't on your side

THE ANSWER

Sifting through sand by the grain
Voices always sounding the same
You don't resist
They're not making much sense anyway
You're sure making headway

Searching the world far and wide
For a philosophy you can buy into
That doesn't put holes in your pride
Cause you are your own god in your mind

They say humanism is the answer to the deepest questions
Though only a shallow facade it provides
Man created God, I've heard it a hundred times
A lie like that can never bring peace of mind

They say humanism is the answer to the deepest questions
Though only a shallow facade it provides
Man created God, a shot in the dark
Regeneration in Christ is the path to true light

They say humanism is the answer to the deepest questions
Though only a shallow facade it provides
Man created God, a shot in the dark
Regeneration in Christ is the path to true sight

AT THE END OF THE WORLD

Today was like draining all the water from my body
If I could flood the world I would end everything again
I wouldn't know what still stood here
Sand would be what's left of me
I'd wake up alone in the cool air
Quiet and still, washed by the rain

And we would be brought back to life
Live in a garden in the middle of the sea
We would know no wrong from right
Just you and me quietly for all eternity

I'd dream a thousand dreams
Not accomplish one and not feel unfulfilled
I'd walk outside in the rain
Right between the drops and the lightning bolts
I'd walk out to the ocean
Look to the horizon, find it standing still
And stay there
Until the moon and the stars
All spun out of control

And we would never see anyone again
Just sit on our island
And watch the world come to its end

BLEEDING HEART

She's falling again
It's the reason that her heart bleeds
She's having trouble keeping touch
She's fallen in love too much
She's asking me what she should do
If only I knew
I'd shout it clear and loud
I'd write it down
And somehow, there would be no doubt
That's something we all can live without

When you wake up tomorrow, pick up the phone
And tell him you're leaving forever again
But this time for real, why can't you move on?
You've taken the easy way out all along

Years pile up
You're letting a lifetime fly by
It's time to make sense of it all
This is the second song I've written like this
Hopefully my last
But the way things are going, my ink well runs dry
By the end of July
In a flurry of goodbyes and teary eyes

About The Greater Heritage



Mission

The Greater Heritage equips Christians for an abundant life of service, personal spiritual growth and character development through the study of God's Word and the contributions of His people in the fields of art, literature and music throughout history.

What We Do

The Greater Heritage publishes original articles, books and Bible studies. The ministry also hosts a digital museum and podcast. All of its books are entirely made in the USA.

Want to publish with us? Inquire at:

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www.thegreaterheritage.com/shop

“All art is God giving you a message for you to put out there in the world.”

In this collection of lyrics, noted guitarist and lead singer John Fairfull takes readers through a kaleidoscopic dreamscape of song that is both a poetic vision and a social commentary on the world around us.

The realization of over 20 years of creative energy, his lyrics confront the emotional complexities of pain, embrace the soul-stirring realities of triumph, and seek to comprehend the seemingly paradoxical feelings of despair and hope.

His songs put readers in touch with not only the human condition, but with God Himself through the universal language of music, a gift that He has so graciously enabled us to use to worship Him and connect with each other.

John Fairfull is a singer-songwriter and former lead guitarist and singer of Five Minute Plan, a Central Florida indie rock band. Throughout his accomplished career in the music industry, John has released two full length albums, three extended play albums, and has been involved in numerous solo projects, radio appearances and concerts. John also serves as the Music and Media Director at Jordan Baptist Church in Sanford, Florida, and is owner of Simplicity Solutions Group, a software company in Orange City, Florida.

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