

For Casting Crowns, students remain top priority

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McDONOUGH, Ga. —As the lead singer for Casting Crowns and student pastor at Eagle's Landing First Baptist Church in McDonough, Ga., Mark Hall sees his life as a constant balancing act. But reaching as many people as possible for Jesus Christ provides the driving force for all he does.

"We have a purpose and calling, and that's to be a light. That begins by reaching out to the person next to you, whether it's at school or at work, and sharing Christ's love with them," Hall said. "Once you have a walk with the Lord, you begin to see the world the way Jesus does. You begin to see the hurt in people's lives, and you feel compelled to act on that."

Casting Crowns

For Hall, telling teenagers about the hope and assurance found through a relationship with Christ is top priority. He has worked in student ministry 18 years and has served Eagle's Landing First Baptist Church since 2001.

Each of the [Casting Crowns](#) band members serves a church in the Atlanta area. But students at those churches are unfazed by their leaders' achievements, such as being the five-time Dove Award-winning Group of the Year and winning Grammy and American Music Awards.

What impresses students and parents is seeing firsthand the band members' commitment and passion to reach students for Christ.

"Our music is discipleship set in songs," Hall said. "The Apostle Paul said the same thing to every church he went to: 'You need to walk with Jesus. You need to love people.' That's what our message is.

“All of our songs come from being in student ministry. The songs come from what we’re teaching and what we’re experiencing in our ministry with students. I love having the songs connect with people. Our commitment to youth ministry and to the local church keeps us in tune with the heartbeat of God and what he’s doing in churches today. It’s our priority, and we schedule our tours around those responsibilities.”

On and off the stage, band members focus on sharing three important messages with students, Hall noted.

“We want to see people come to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior. We share the gospel at all of our concerts,” he said.

“The next goal is that we want to see believers have their own walk with Jesus and not rely on having their youth pastor or pastor around so they can feel close to God. They have to establish their own relationship with Jesus.

“The third goal is that we want to see people discover their spiritual gifts, their talents and ministry. We want them to take action—start serving, helping and start seeing Jesus change people’s lives.”

In addition to reaching students, Hall tries to help parents understand the challenges students face—especially the need for parents’ involvement and monitoring time spent online.

“Technology is a great tool that they can use, but it’s also hurtful at the same time. Ultimately, it all comes back to mom and dad,” he said. “I think that parents are still the most important influence in their kids’ lives.”

This fall, Casting Crowns is on tour promoting a new album, [*Until the Whole World Hears*](#). Hall has a full schedule of events planned for the student ministry at Eagle’s Landing. In addition, Hall and his wife are adopting a child from China.

“A lot of the things that God’s teaching me now, he’s been trying to teach me for a long time. The area in my life that I’m struggling with the most and where I’m learning the most—not because I’m sharp, but because I’m learning the hard way—is that God is in control,” Hall said.

“God reminds me daily that if he wanted someone else, he would have called someone else. That lifts a weight off my shoulders, because I know that if he’s called me, then he’s also equipped me to get the job done.”