

Florida pastor releases 2nd solo album of original music

July 6, 2021

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (BP)—Years before H.B. Charles Jr. preached his first sermon, he sat at his mother’s side on the piano stool as a young boy at Mt. Sinai Metropolitan Church in Los Angeles, listening as his father expounded on the text.

Those early experiences instilled in Charles a love of Scripture-based worship music in line with the expository preaching—for which he is more widely known as senior pastor and teacher of the 5,000-member Shiloh Metropolitan Baptist Church in Jacksonville.

“I believe that good theology ought to lead to high doxology,” Charles said. “Truth and praise go together. ... Colossians 3:16 says that songs, hymns and spiritual songs should be an extension of the word [of God] in the life of the church. It is a way to help the word dwell richly in the saints.

“Biblical worship is important not just for the pulpit, but also for the music.”

Charles released his second solo album June 11. *The Lord Bless You* is a CD of 11 original songs and melodies, the latest among many he has written over the past 10 years, often during his spiritual quiet times. His first solo album, *Psalms, Hymns & Spiritual Songs*, peaked at No. 6 on the Billboard Top 10 in November 2018.



“I don’t consider myself in any way a great singer, but I love to sing praise

to God,” Charles said. “Most of the songs I’ve written over the last couple of years that are on this album, and the music, have been such a blessing to me personally and such a blessing to our church, that we just kind of felt a burden to share it, hoping that God would use it to be a blessing to others as well.”

Grammy-nominated singer and songwriter Joe Pace, Shiloh’s current executive pastor, produced the project under the Shiloh Worship Label.

“For this last project, his current project, all the materials are all Pastor Charles,” Pace said. “I just didn’t want to get in the way of his material. And hopefully a good producer pulls the best out of the artist, and that was solely my job, to not get in the way and to make sure that we were able to lift the heart of what he was writing off of the pages so that it could be heard in the music.”

Keep worship Bible-centered

Charles believes the pastor has a responsibility to keep church worship centered on the Bible.

“I believe prayer, preaching and music ... are all three central to pastoral work. The public ministry of the pastor should really be teaching the church to understand the Scripture, to pray the Scriptures and to sing the Scriptures,” Charles said.

“In that regard, I do think that the primary teaching pastor in a local church should be considered the worship leader. That even if you can’t sing, there needs to be oversight over the music to make sure that we’re not just singing things that sound good but are not consistent with the Scriptures.”

Among songs on his latest project are selections he titled “Bless the Lord,”

“Thank You For It All,” “Help My Unbelief,” “The Son of Man Came,” and a unique arrangement of “Great Is Thy Faithfulness,” featuring his daughter Natalie Marie Charles.

Charles and Pace created the Shiloh label to produce worship music that is not complex and is easily accessible and usable by churches of all skillsets. The first three releases on the label feature the Shiloh Church choir. Charles’ second solo album is the label’s fifth release.

“We had a heart for doing and producing music that was for the church,” Pace said. “There was a lot of great music out there, a lot of great gospel out there. But we wanted to do gospel-centered, Christlike music, Christlike lyrics, and so forth, for the church that the church could reproduce that fostered congregational singing. And we talked about it often and after listening to music, decided we needed to do it ourselves.”

The CD is available on various digital platforms. Shiloh will offer resources to help the church use the music in worship, including tracks, songbooks and lyric sheets.

Charles, a national bestselling author whose book *On Preaching* has been used as curriculum in seminaries, said his music has received a twofold response.

“First is a sense of shock and surprise from other pastors who know me by my pulpit ministry and don’t really know much about my music ministry at all,” he said. “And then, we’ve had a lot of encouraging feedback.”