

# *THE GREATER CAUSE* JOHN SCHLITT

Classic rock, album-oriented rock, back to the roots rock – whatever name it goes by, legendary vocalist John Schlitt was performing his music to record-breaking crowds in arenas and stadiums when “classic” was current. Today he’s carrying his past into the future with *The Greater Cause*.

John’s fourth solo release, *The Greater Cause*, combines elements of classic rock infiltrated with blues rock, rock anthems and heavy rock ballads overlaid with John’s signature vocal style, resulting in a sonic explosion packed with intensity and drive. In other words, there is no doubt that *The Greater Cause* is a genuine *rock* album.

“So many people have asked me ‘When are you going to get that next CD out? We want another rocker from you!’ I have been truly blessed by the love and support I have been shown throughout the years,” says John. “I wanted to give something back in return. *The Greater Cause* exists because my fans and supporters asked for it – and partnered with me to make it possible”

In a unique collaboration, John raised capital for the new CD through the Kickstarter “crowd-funding” business model, an inventive partnership in which fans of the vocalist contributed financially to the making of the album. Donors to the project, dubbed the TGC Crew (*The Greater Cause Crew*) in honor of the CD title, received rewards and special thank-you messages from John. They also have access to a restricted website with a behind the scenes look at the recording of *The Greater Cause*, including photos, videos and a blog.

John has a history of striving to deliver what is asked of him... and his track record proves it. He has earned multiple Gold Records, GRAMMYs and Dove Awards and has been inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame as the lead singer of Petra, one of the most successful Christian rock bands of all time. John was named the best rock singer in Christian music history by GospelMusicChannel.com, and according to the website, John "remains one of the most distinctive and impactful men to ever stand behind a microphone." He was also named "Best Male Vocalist" in About.com's 2011 Reader's Choice Awards.

While there’s no question about John’s vocal prowess, his voice often overshadows his lyrical ability. Not content to merely vocalize other songwriter’s works, John co-wrote the majority of *The Greater Cause*, partnering with Ian Eskelin (Francesca Battistelli, Sidewalk Prophets, Stellar Kart, Dove Producer Of The Year), Ed Cash (Chris Tomlin, Dave Barnes, Brit Nicole, Kari Jobe, Dove Producer Of The Year), Chris Rodriguez (Amy Grant, Michael W. Smith, Wynonna Judd, Shania Twain) and songwriter/producer Dan Needham (Michael McDonald, the Neville Brothers, Amy Grant, Chris Tomlin, Garth Brooks, Kathy Mattea).

“Dan, who is my son-in-law, produced my last album, *The Grafting*, and revealed qualities in my voice that I didn’t even know I had!” exclaims John. “I wanted Dan to push me even further on *The Greater Cause* because I knew he would bring out exactly what I was looking for.”

According to Needham, "When I began to reach out to some of the most successful writers and musicians in contemporary Christian music and ask if they were interested in being a part of John's project - there was a resounding ‘Yes!’ I believe that is a testimony to John's reputation among his peers. He is respected and loved not only because of his legendary status in CCM history but because he is a genuinely wonderful man," declares Needham.

With lyrics that are wrought with relevance to today's world, *The Greater Cause* is a collage of themes examining living in Christ and living for Christ.

"Every song on the album has a message that is pertinent to what is happening in our daily lives," explains John. "How relevant are we, as Christians, in the world today? What are we doing in our surroundings – how are we making a difference? We need to use common sense in this world and awaken to the fact that Jesus is Lord, no matter what those around us may say – or do," states John.

Nowhere is this statement more evident than in what could conceivably be considered the title cut because of its lyrics, "Hope That Saves The World." From the pulse-pounding drumbeats to the anthemic proclamation, the question is posed: *You lit the stars/You spun the earth/You gave us life/So tell me why can't we see/You're the hope that saves the world.* The query is finalized with the introspective *We're incomplete/Always searching for the greater cause.*

Using a multi-textured approach, John proves he is as gifted at conveying the emotional cry of a shattered man as he is at belting out driving anthems in "Where I Wanna Be," an intense ballad revealing a broken and hurting relationship desperately in need of healing. The song candidly points out that true healing comes only through the power of God's love. "When our love fails, we need God's love to flow through us to truly love another person," says John. "In order for that to happen we must be honest with God about our own hearts."

The remaining nine songs surge with the musical intensity brewing behind them. Opening the album like a sonic boom is "Live It Loud," exploring the choices we have in how we live our lives, followed by the explosive "Take Me Home," an autobiographical account of a modern day prodigal son with all the regret and repentance that comes from making the wrong choices.

"Love Won't Leave Me Alone" and "Run" bring a colorful twist to *The Greater Cause*, blending rolling blues into a laid-back rock mix. "We need to realize that God won't give up on us," states John. "He loves us too much to leave us to ourselves. We need to leave behind the things that bind us and run towards Him, not away."

Born out of concern not only about the direction America is headed but what the Christian's role is in pulling back the darkness that is creeping into the moral fabric of society is the focus of "One of These Days" and "Faith & Freedom," an anthem boldly declaring that *Truth can never be divided/We have strength when we're united.*

There are proclamations and anthems all over this record, but there are also tender moments of love and reflection on the horizontal and vertical plane. "The Gift," written as a tribute to John's wife, Dorla, is an intensely personal look at the love a husband has for his wife, while "End of Fear" and "The Cross Remains" are bold statements that despite the frustrations and fears in life, the cross remains a triumphant symbol of victory in Christ Jesus.

Harkening back to his roots, *The Greater Cause* is a multi-leveled proclamation of life, of victory in Christ, and of John Schlitt himself. "From the very beginning this CD has been a special blessing," reflects John. "From the new way of financing the CD that brought a large number of partners, to the writers who saw the vision right away, to the musicians who gave their very best, this CD has been a thrilling experience. And I believe it shows with the final results."