

BarlowGirl

HOW CAN WE BE SILENT

For some people it takes a lifetime to discover their true voice. After all it takes time to be still, listen to what God is giving you to say, and then craft a way of effectively sharing that message with others. On BarlowGirl's new album, *How Can We Be Silent*, it's obvious the sisters are confident in sharing their faith with the world and boldly delivering the messages God has placed on their hearts.

After all, how many Christian artists, especially female artists, would have their cover photo shot in a boxing ring? One look at the poised young women on the CD cover and it's easy to see Alyssa, Lauren and Rebecca Barlow have grown into beautiful women, but the depth and maturity that permeates every track on the album has nothing to do with appearance, and has everything to do with the wisdom that comes from spending time in the Word of God and having that dedication reflect itself in one's art.

"Our goal in so many of these songs is to say there's victory no matter what we face in this life. God does have victory," states Alyssa. "There is a hope in the midst of the darkness. I think that was one of the biggest things we wanted to get across. No matter what we are facing, if we continue to stand in God's strength, we will see Him win the battle."

The sisters have never been timid when it comes to standing up for what they believe in. Stereotypical images of Christians being weak are contrary to the Barlow approach to ministry. "We're very battle-oriented in our family. I think it may have intimidated a lot of people," admits Alyssa, the middle Barlow sibling. "As Christians we so often think we're on the defense and we're not. We think we're these weak people that can't stand up and I think the point we have tried to get across is that we are the offense. Be the one at the frontline! Look at the God we serve; He definitely isn't on the defense. God is the one pursuing. We've said, 'God, we're going to just stand with You where You're at and You're not near the back. You are right up front going forward, conquering for your Kingdom.' That's where we want to be."

Becca enthusiastically agrees. "There's so much power in knowing that you are fighting for God. I hope that people get a new taste of what Christianity is. I hope the world gets to see a new way that Christians are living as passionate, powerful people. They aren't just sitting back watching the world unravel; they are doing something about it. They are trusting and praying and they are warriors."

Being bold about their faith is a stance that the siblings took early in life. The trio began performing with their father, Vince, as the backup band supporting his music ministry. But even before the sisters moved to the forefront, they became well known to Christian music lovers courtesy of the Superchick[k] hit "Barlow Girl," a song the band recorded as a tribute to the sisters and their stand for sexual purity.

In 2004, BarlowGirl made its bow with a self-titled debut on Fervent Records. The trio's compelling vocals, skilled musicianship and insightful songwriting soon made them one of the most successful acts in Christian music. The hit single, "Never Alone," was the longest running No. 1 song on Radio & Records' Christian Hit Radio (CHR) and Christian Rock charts. BarlowGirl became the best-selling new Christian artist of 2004.

The group's momentum continued with the release of *Another Journal Entry* in 2005, which spawned the hit singles "Let Go" and "I Need You to Love Me." The latter tune spent a record 13 weeks at No. 1 on the CHR charts, making BarlowGirl the second most played CHR artist of the year, just behind Sanctus Real.

On *How Can We Be Silent*, the siblings again deliver a thought-provoking set of songs. From the hopeful declaration of "I Believe in Love" to the inventive boxing metaphor in "One More Round," BarlowGirl musically pushes the envelope and lyrically delivers strong, substantive songs that challenge their other believers. Many of the songs came as a response to things their fans were sharing with them after concerts.

“People would come up to us after the shows and in just one minute share their broken life with us,” Becca says quietly recalling stories of abuse and other struggles. “We’d try to give them a verse and some hope, but we feel like we need to reach these people more than just the short time that we see them after the show. Most of the songs are birthed out of that, wanting to give hope to these people.”

Becca cites “One More Round” as one of her favorites on the disc. “It was inspired by a teacher we heard on a Focus on the Family radio broadcast” she recalls. “He was an ex-football player and he talked about boxing and how our spiritual life is like being in a boxing ring. It doesn’t matter how many times we are knocked down, we need to get right back up, pick right back up and keep following what God has for us.”

Lauren agrees. “We just want peace. We want everybody to be happy, but I think God has shown us in our life that this world is a battle. This life is a battle between good and evil. It’s not just a battle physically; it’s a spiritual battle. We as Christians have to fight. We have to fight against the things of this world that are trying to drive us down. So that is what that boxing ring symbolizes: To fight and to not give up.”

Another very empowering anthem on the album is titled “The Guy Song.” “We’re very passionate about speaking into guys’ lives,” says Alyssa. “Because we’re a girl band, a lot of people assume we’re just for girls and that’s something that we’ve always tried to challenge from the beginning. This song is for the guys. The world is also targeting you to bring you down, to get you to let your guard down, and put images in your mind that are going to take a toll on you. This world is doing everything to bring down the men, but a lot of men stood up and changed the course of history for us. Our goal was really just to say to the guys in our audience: ‘You could be that man and you are that man! Stand up and take your place and take what God has for you!’”

The first single, “Here’s My Life,” is one of the girls’ favorites because it is so personal. “I love that song!” enthuses Lauren, the youngest sister. “That one hits really close to home. We cried as we were writing that because we wrote it for our family, for our nieces and nephew. Sometimes when we’re traveling, I think ‘Why can’t I just go home?’ but this is our calling. This is what God has created us to do. So saying goodbye to those things that we love so much, we know that the calling is so much greater than the sacrifice ever will be. We find comfort in that and strength in God during the lonely times.”

On “How Can We Be Silent” the girls once again team with producer Otto Price. “He’s the most amazing man. I love him, love him, love him,” gushes Lauren, summing up the sentiments of Alyssa and Becca as well. “He brings so much life to our albums. We come in with songs as the foundation of a house and Otto is like the decorator. He brings so much flare and flavor to all of our songs.”

The album’s title, “How Can We Be Silent,” comes from the in-your-face challenge the girls issue in the hard rockin’ “Million Voices.” “This would definitely be one of my favorites just because it’s an anthem for our generation,” says Lauren. “We’re standing up. We’re not afraid to fight for what we believe in, and we’re not going to back down. This is who we are. God has put so much in us, we can’t shut up about it. How can we be silent when we have so much truth? That title is to challenge our generation: You can’t be silent anymore.”

Lauren, Alyssa and Becca Barlow refuse to be silent. They are ready to fight the good fight and lead others of their generation into the battle. The songs on “How Can We Be Silent” are powerful anthems of victory and hope. “Lyrically I think the issues are a little deeper and a little heavier,” admits Alyssa, “but we are comfortable speaking heavy things. We are more comfortable in speaking the deep things because I think we’ve seen the benefit of it over the last three years. We know what our audience is going through and the things a lot of them are dealing with. We know what’s going on and we’re so excited to be able to present a message like this.”



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