

Biography

Rick Stephenson "Fill Me Full"



THE SHORT.....

Rick Stephenson is multi-faceted just like a well cut diamond. Turn and view a certain area of his life and you will see him performing in his formal training as a financial consultant. Turn again and witness him inspiring others as a certified minister. Turn once more and you will see Rick as a loving devoted husband and father. But now turn and see that he is also an encouraging and uplifting Christian Worship Leader and musician.

All of these strengths in Rick have taken time to develop and he is just now beginning to hit his stride. Once labeled a "late bloomer" in school, you will be glad that he has invested the time to ripen on the vine, as the fruit of his labors are much sweeter now. Rick has definitely established himself as a gifted songwriter with a stirring modern rock appeal. His adult contemporary Christian catalog has garnered him favorable comparisons to Jason Gray, Matt Maher and Chris Tomlin.

Rick draws from his personal experiences of being adopted, suffering physical and mental abuse, enduring significant losses and serious struggles with depression to relate to those he ministers to. That's why this kind of life outpouring satisfies the hungry heart, blesses the believer and awakens the lost. One interaction and it is evident that Rick's creativity and love of God are spilling over into his music and ministry.

AND LONG OF IT ALL

Rick's accomplishments as a minister and music professional are powerfully contextualized by his humble personal story. He was born in Libertyville, Illinois and raised in Rockford, Illinois. Rick's start to life was a rough one kicked off by being given up by his birth mother at the age of three. From the age of three to seven he then lived in a physically abusive foster home. Upon being adopted at the age of seven by parents with an active religious faith, Rick first felt the presence of God. "I remember going to church and hearing 'There is a God and God loves you', which impacted me greatly. I hadn't known anything about God or experienced real love before that moment, so it was an intriguing thought to pursue." Rick confides. And pursue it he has! In fact that very pursuit is evident in every facet of Rick's life, personality, profession and ministry.

Rick's path towards a career in ministry and music may have been destined but it was also obscure. Along the path, there have been both overwhelming challenges that could have caused him to give up and defining moments of profound revelations shining down from above guiding him through the darkness. At age eight, he began studying classical piano but disliked the rigidity of lessons so he began making up his own music. "If my mom heard music coming out of the piano, she thought I was practicing. She just didn't know that I was improvising," Rick confesses. "I would fall asleep at night wiping away tears of heartache and loneliness, and then drown myself in music. I would dream of a music career but it wasn't encouraged. Rather the 'safe' route was promoted and obediently pursued by me," admits Rick.

During college, Rick was spiritually lost. "I ran from God. I was searching but also struggling with depression and very low self-esteem. I was looking for power to change my life," he discloses. It was during this time that Rick experienced a very low and dark side of his existence. As he slowly climbed his way out, he began to drift along a numbing quest for redemption through business pursuits. "Sure I obtained the accounting degree, as well as both Certified Public Accountant and Certified Management Accountant accolades to prove I was 'good-enough' but the longing remained." It would be years later before Rick would nurture and fine-tune his ministry and musical gifts.

Like a spotlight shining down from a coal black sky, Rick had an illuminating moment. Deep in prayer and locked inside the love of God during worship, the past receded into darkness and the future beacons. He was attending a worship service by gospel artist Vicki Yohe, and it was then that he realized his fate was to spread God's love through musical ministry.

With his faith reawakened, Rick began to seriously revisit music from his spiritually centered vantage point. The songs came slowly and with much difficulty at first, but undeterred by the struggle, he began to hone his once dormant skills. He set out to write fresh Christian music that he felt had the power of contemporary tunes but addressed faith and worship in an intimately truthful way. Thankfully, Rick has found it in his recent offering appropriately entitled **New Day**, which embodies his spiritual awakening and journey.

