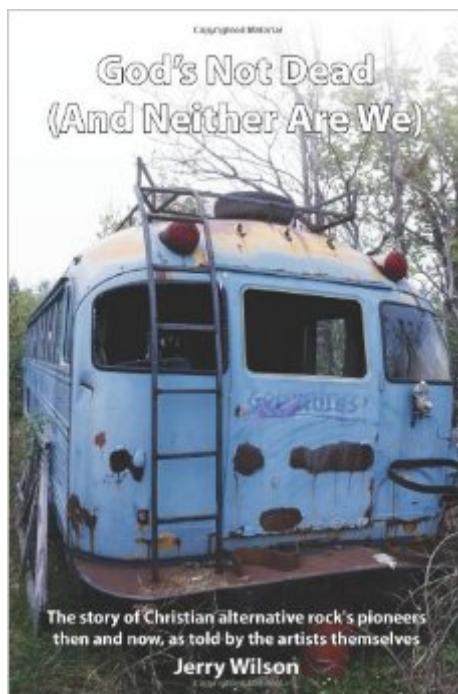


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# God's Not Dead (And Neither Are We): The Story Of Christian Alternative Rock's Pioneers Then And Now, As Told By The Artists Themselves



## Synopsis

While bands such as Switchfoot and Jars of Clay are household names, the artists who paved the way for their success by first introducing modern rock to Christian music are all but forgotten by the very industry they created. Now, they are telling their story from the beginning to the present day. This book isn't about where are they now, but who are they now as with frank and sometimes shocking openness the ones who went before talk about their lives and times... a time that is not yet passed.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a book of twenty six interviews with artists from some of my favorite bands. Here are the bands and how many members are interviewed: Undercover (5); Altar Boys (2); The Choir (2); Crumbacher (4); 4.4.1 (2); Barnabas (3); 77s (1); Daniel Amos (1); Veil of Ashes (1). Also these artists: Steve Taylor; Kemper Crabb; Caesar Kalinowski; and Marie McGilvray. If you've ever heard any of those names, you probably just clicked "Add to Shopping Cart". Bookending the book are a brief but cogent introduction by Beth Jahnson, and Jerry Wilson's brief afterward. Along the way, the artists talk about their labels (bad deals and all), their music (which album when and why); and their lives (in a surprisingly open way). Many wish they had never signed with a religious label or got stamped as a "Christian band". What's that? Mike Stand from Altar Boys comes right out and calls "Forever Mercy" a whimpy album, as against the raw, pulsating punk of Gut Level Music, their best album. Everyone loves Undercover's "Branded" and rightly so, but I'm finally vindicated in thinking

what a great album "Boys and Girls Renounce the World" is, which tops my "Best Albums You've Never Heard" list. Mike Stand even says there's some more GLM era tunage waiting to see the light of day. Just do it, Mike. That's the message here. If Jerry can kick out this book POD (print on demand) through BookSurge, you can put those songs out as MP3s on . There's a bit of an apologetic tone in this book, as if everyone missed the bar: If this isn't on MTV, what good does it do? And by the way, the road wrecked my marriage. Did I mention we were ripped off? You can't even get these CDs, so who cares? It's about time they got to vent.

God's Not Dead (And Neither Are We) is one of those books that deserves a far wider readership than it will ever attain. There are important lessons on these pages for young musicians, lessons learned the hard way and told directly by the people who learned them. To his great credit, Jerry Wilson stays very much in the background and lets the musicians speak for themselves, telling their stories in their own way, with their own words. At times the prose rises almost to the level of poetry, at other times it is dark, gritty, and as in your face as a heavy metal power chord riff a dozen bars long. Some of these stories are heartbreakingly sad, some of them are encouraging, all of them carry a profound lesson in faith that far too many modern Christians have been spared. Faith is not faith if it has not been challenged and the faith of every artist in these pages has been hit hard, with most of the attacks coming not from the audiences, but from the people the artists trusted to guide their careers and get them their royalty checks on time. I don't like the music produced by most of the artists Jerry Wilson interviews. I don't like it at all. That does not matter one bit. These stories are not apologetic essays in defense of a genre. These stories are battlefield tales of passionate individuals who sought to bring their message to a fallen world only to have their path blocked not by Satanic minions, but by their own Christian allies. These are real stories of real people with a real desire to be heard above the racket of modern life. Their victories are rich, powerful, and memorable.

Is Christian rock an oxymoron? Those that agree with that will find ammo in this book (though they'll also have to weed out examples that point the other direction). Those who don't (like myself) will get a look at what it's like to be a Christian musician at the cutting edge by seeing various different angles (namely 27 artist interviews). One strength of this book is Jerry Wilson doesn't seem to have a judgmental bone in his body and his approach encourages the reader to accept these often wounded warriors as our brothers and sisters in Christ. Some of these people do things wisely frowned on by the fundamentalist/evangelical community such as cussing (Wilson lets the artists

speak for themselves and three interviews have normally unprintable words in Christian books -- only the last one using more than one such instance), drinking, and divorce/remarriage and in some cases those behaviors are defended. But the heartbeat is that these are fellow fallen people just like we are and that we should use the nearby stones to rebuild what has fallen, not to cast at others. There are things that you can wonder why he did the way he did, such as having no interviews for one band pointed to as an alternative Christian pioneer (Lifesavers) while having five for Crumbacher or including three Barnabas interviews when that band is technically hard rock/metal as opposed to alternative rock as most of the performers are. But that is like armchair quarterbacks questioning the way the coach accomplished a victory. I may have done it different, but that does not mean it's better. I would urge any Christian wanting to get into a music ministry to read this book, especially if evangelism is a motivator.

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