

John reuben

SEX, DRUGS AND

self control

"This album is full of many questions that I have been struggling with over the past few years," explains Reuben. "It felt often like there was a tension. Artistry, career and faith felt like they were standing at odds with one another. Sex, Drugs and Self-Control is really about basic questions. Questions like 'Am I talking about honesty more than I'm actually being honest?' Everything seems to come back to these questions and trying to understand how art and faith can work together."

Jamboree - The idea of being a full time musician has some expectations that are both humbling and scary. I write songs because I feel inspired to share an idea, not for any specific means. Sometimes I feel like there is an undue expectation put on Christian artists, however all we can do is be obedient and let God do the rest.

"both feet on the stage / ready to engage / point to the sky / like you know where to aim / wish it was as easy to keep the faith / willing to say / God will make way / but it's a dangerous place / to get paid to motivate."

No Be Nah - This is a tune about pledging your allegiance to extreme people. I spent a lot of time recently studying Ecclesiastes, which has verse after verse about holding your tongue, thinking through both sides of a story, being aware of your words, living by wisdom. Life is tricky and it's filled with a lot of opinions. I think too often we think of the world as black and white, and this can just simply cause us to miss the bigger story.

Burn It Down - This song is about the different stages of life. It's about not being afraid of moving on and starting over. God is in the process, and this song is simply about obedience. It's about not trying to get somewhere, it's about being obedient in the journey of today.

In The Air - In the Air is along the same lines of Joyful Noise. It's hard to have hope when you look at how ugly the world can be, and I think it's especially hard for idealists and dreamers. While up close there is so much hurt, if we could pull back and see the big picture, I think we are able to find hope, open up and engage with God. Looking at the details causes pain, but we have to make a conscious choice to see the hope all around us.

Paranoid Schizophrenic Apocalyptic Whisper Kitten - I have a struggle with the idea of making Jesus cool. Jesus reached out to the people who didn't smell good, who were dirty, who were non-sophisticated. If this stuff is real, it's beyond cool, it's beyond trends, it's beyond fashion. It's something that is worth giving your life for.

Town Folk - Town Folk is a summary of several years of my life. I've had the opportunity to play to such a wide variety of people, from the mega-church in the suburbs to an Apple festival in the midwest. This song just pokes fun at some of the more random places that I've found myself playing and valuing and embracing the opportunities God has given me.

Confident - This is simply a song about social anxiety. It's one of my self-loathing, unbalanced party jams. My personality allows me to change my mind often, and this song is just a look into that.

Everett - "My friend Everett, he told me don't trust a man that cannot be at the bottom of a joke"
- This song is simply about a statement my friend Everett told me. I try to live this way - I take my music seriously, but I don't necessarily have to take myself seriously. It's a way to walk in humility. I think that's something that often is the struggle of artists - when you live in your own opinions and world views, it can be easy to forget to laugh at yourself. If you overvalue your appearance, you can't admit your wrong, friends feel like they can't poke fun at you - it just doesn't seem like a very healthy way to live.

Radio Makes You Lonely - This continues with the overarching theme of the record. One day, I was flipping through radio stations and felt like I couldn't relate to anything they were talking about. It got me thinking about pop culture and my place in pop culture. I wanted to tell the truth, but wanted to be accepted at the same time. So listening to the radio just made me feel detached and isolated, and, yes, lonely.

So Sexy For All The Right Reasons - This is a song about my wife. I was actually trying to write a country song, but the producer created this really great beat and we decided to try it out on the song. I was really uncomfortable singing it at first, but after getting into it, I was really happy with the song and how it turned out, hopefully humorous and endearing.

Wooden Whistle Man - I wrote this right after a conversation with an elderly man who made wooden whistles and handed them out to kids. On the surface he just seemed like a really gentle grandpa. However as our conversation went on, it's just started getting really intense. He started speaking to me like I was his son, and he started trying to give me advice. Turns out, he had abandoned his son, and was full of anger, intensity, resentment, bitterness. This conversation triggered something in me, and I just took the ideas and made them a bit more personal.

Joyful Noise - Another song about wrestling with my faith. I've always been anti the idea of faking it. But I realized that if I lived strictly from my emotions, I would be giving into a lot of lies. I'm very introspective and sometimes can get in a spiral that becomes unhealthy and irrational. The song is really about discipline and obedience. Scripture tells us to be joyful always, and sometimes we just have to make a conscious choice to do that. And ultimately the result is as simple as a more healthy lifestyle.

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