



Rightside Band

Living on the Right Side

Written by Frank Kocher

San Diego's Rightside Band has been around for over a decade, but under the name of the Gospel Review Vocal Band. The contemporary Christian/gospel-rock band changed their name, but not their approach, a couple of years ago. The group was put together in the late '90s by Jim Burnett, their manager and producer, and his wife Linda Lee, who is the featured singer in a vocal quartet. A band of supporting musicians, including long-time drummer John Watts provide the musical backing for the spirited sounds that have been featured in numerous county churches, festivals and coffeehouses. The old band and Linda Lee have released discs previously, and the new one, under the new name, is *Living on the Right Side*.



The ten songs are covers of Christian folk-rock and gospel songs by a number of established genre songwriters. Recorded in "the upper room" on several of the tracks there is a live in-the-studio sound, joyful and inspired (and with the instruments echoing together, buried by the keyboards). No big problem, though, when one remembers that this is a big band that plays in churches; it often sounds like it was recorded in one.

Gospel starts off with "Living for the Moment," as snare drum shots set up a vigorous foot-stomp; Linda Lee sings about living the righteous life. The three male harmony backups give her plenty of support throughout, and on "Rightside of the Dirt" there are vocal tradeoffs. "When you wake up in the morning, no matter if you hurt/Be glad you're still alive and on the right side of the dirt." This one has some old-South, country-style gospel going for it, reminding the listener that "Jesus still saves." "Eagle Song" is a harmony vocal, different than the other music on the disc, a folk hymn that seems to float, with a nice arrangement that overcomes the harmonies being off just a bit. A couple of church-rocking country-style tunes follow: "Get Up in Jesus' Name" and "Have You Traveled with the Lord Lately?" On the latter, Linda Lee is in best voice on the disc, clear and commanding while she talks up a sermon worth of lyrics as the guitar plays a Creedence riff.

God, of course, loves rock and roll, and "How Long" is a boogie blues that serves as a reminder of just how much both rock and blues owe to the church house, as the gospel lyrics mix with blues. "How long must I wander/before I finally get home?" The Rightsiders pull out all of the stops on the rocker "I'm Loving Life," a highlight that uses keyboards and drums to pound out a beat as Linda Lee leads the vocal charge.

Fans of contemporary Christian music and gospel rock should find much to enjoy on *Living on the Rightside*. The Rightside Band does a good job of getting their message out on some entertaining material. Visit their website at: www.rightsideband.com