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JULY 2007

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## How Great Is Our God Tour

The Tomlin/Giglio/Redman tour lands at First Baptist Church of Orlando, Florida

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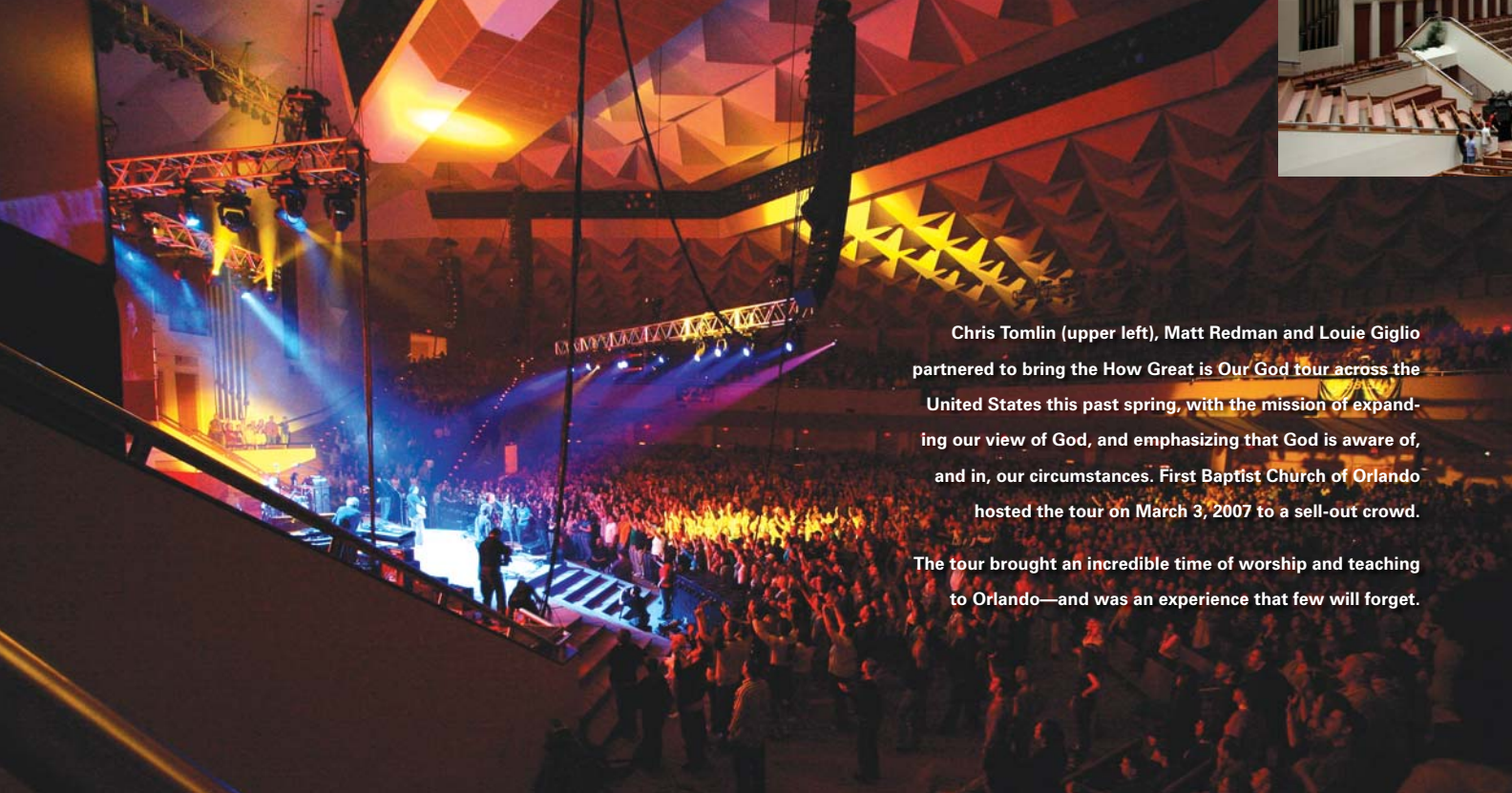


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First Baptist's existing truss system was used to help support some of the trussing for the tour. The tour travels with their own sound, lighting and video systems.



Chris Tomlin (upper left), Matt Redman and Louie Giglio partnered to bring the How Great is Our God tour across the United States this past spring, with the mission of expanding our view of God, and emphasizing that God is aware of, and in, our circumstances. First Baptist Church of Orlando hosted the tour on March 3, 2007 to a sell-out crowd. The tour brought an incredible time of worship and teaching to Orlando—and was an experience that few will forget.

# How Great Is Our God

## The Tomlin/Giglio/Redman tour lands at First Baptist Church of Orlando, Florida

By Jim Kumorek

There are few contemporary churches in America—indeed, the world—that have not been impacted by the lyrics and music of Chris Tomlin and Matt Redman. As we investigated what bands would be touring this past spring in preparation for this Live Event issue of *Church Production Magazine*, and saw that Tomlin and Redman would be touring with Communicator Louie Giglio, founder of the Passion conferences, we jumped at the opportunity to see what these leaders in the Christian worship and teaching community were bringing to the table for this tour—and what it would take for a church (in this case, First Baptist Church of Orlando, Florida) to support such an event.

Pulling into FBC Orlando at 8:45 AM on an overcast Saturday morning on the third of March, two tractor-trailer trucks were already backed up to the entrance of the church, and the band's two tour buses for band and crew were parked off to the side, with the band and some of the crew grabbing a last few minutes of sleep. Even with a tour this size, the crew going out with the tour is minimal, and church volunteers are relied upon to make the load-in, setup, tear-down, and load-out happen smoothly and effectively. And it was nice to see the tour getting off on the right foot—they opened with words of instruction to the volunteers, followed by a moment of prayer, lifting up the event and team to God.

So, when a musical power-house like this takes to the road, what are they trying to do? Is it a marketing gig, or are there larger goals in mind?

Comments Tomlin, "We named the tour 'How Great is Our God,' even though that's not related to the new CD I have out, because that phrase best captures what we want to say through the tour, in



A d&b audiotechnik line array system was selected for its flexibility in dealing with venues ranging in size from 2,000 to 8,000 seats.

The tour traveled in two tractor-trailers and two tour buses. Volunteers from FBC Orlando and crew from the tour unloaded the trucks starting at 9 AM.





Barco MiStrips, an LED-based lighting/video product, flanked the center screen. Video similar to that shown on the center screen is fed to the MiStrips to create a larger-than-life video experience. Video is controlled by Renewed Vision's ProPresenter and ProVideoPlayer products.

Louie Giglio's message on the greatness of God couldn't happen effectively without video, says tour manager Greg Dolezal, because the visuals of how great the universe is, are what drives the message home.



so many different ways. The tour isn't a marketing idea, it's not born out of some record labels plan; this tour is born out of my, Louie's, and Matt's friendship. We're all like-minded in the sense of how the night should be, which is to express how great our God is. Louie does an incredible job of upsizing your view of God, but at the same time, showing that God cares about who you are." Adds Giglio, "We feel like we're carrying the kingdom to people who are at the toughest place in their lives. Everyone's going to get something out of tonight, but we feel we've been entrusted by God to come close to the people who are ready to cash it in, and think that maybe they can't take one more breath, and to say to them there is a God who sees your circumstance. In fact, He is in your circumstance. And He's carrying you through your circumstance."

To communicate this message, the technical production team for the tour plays a critical role. One might think that the

technology used is the most critical aspect of the team, but Tour Manager Greg Dolezal explains the primary driving force behind their success. "The really cool thing about this tour," Dolezal exclaims, "and what makes it work really well, is the core people here have been a part of this team for all of Chris' tours."

For this tour, Majestic Productions out of Summitville, Indiana was contracted with providing video and LED panel equipment and support; Nashville, Tennessee-based Spectrum Sound provided audio support; and IMAG, also out of Nashville, provided image projection support. Adds Dolezal, "We have their best guys out on this tour, and I wouldn't want to be out with anyone else. These guys get it—how to implement all production elements into worship, how to make it an enhancement, not a distraction. The temptation for a lot of tech guys is to bring up effects just because they can, and because it's cool, instead of finding the right mo-

**"THE TEMPTATION FOR A LOT OF TECH GUYS IS TO BRING UP EFFECTS JUST BECAUSE THEY CAN, AND BECAUSE IT'S COOL, INSTEAD OF FINDING THE RIGHT MOMENTS FOR THOSE EFFECTS. AND SOME EFFECTS SHOULD JUST NEVER BE USED IN A CHURCH SERVICE."**

— Greg Dolezal, tour manager

ments for those effects. And some effects should just never be used in a church service. These guys know their artists—what Chris, Matt, and Louie are trying to do—and how to support it."

And support it, they did. Video played a prominent role in both the worship time as well as Giglio's talk on the greatness of God. Dolezal elaborates, "This [tour] is as video-driven as any tour ever is. We're carrying Barco MiStrips, which no one else in the Christian tour world is, and hardly anyone in the secular world is, because there's only two touring companies in the country that have them." The Barco MiStrips are low-resolution LED panels that, in the case of this tour, flank the video screens and are used as a combination of video extenders off the main screen and as a lighting source. However, the MiStrips certainly don't replace the need for conventional video screens. Says Dolezal, "Louie's talk couldn't happen without video—he's showing a series of

images on a 220-square-foot screen, that brings it to life. He shows how big God is, by showing through Hubble Telescope images how big our universe is. If he was only able to talk about these things, it wouldn't have the impact that it does. That's what production is supposed to do—enhance the message.”

## Professional Sources for Professional Video

The video source for this tour is a product that came into existence from the Passion conferences. Brad Weston, president of Renewed Vision in Alpharetta, Georgia created what is now known as ProPresenter in the mid-1990s to support the conferences due to the inadequacy of business-oriented presentation software to support the cutting-edge video they wanted to do.

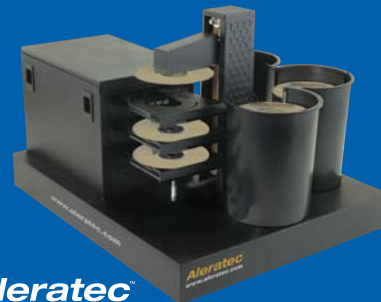
For this tour, the Barco MiStrips would be fed a video background that matched the video background of the main center screen. However, the video backgrounds needed to be coordinated. To do this, the MiStrips were being fed video from a Mac running Renewed Vision's ProVideoPlayer, while the center screen was being fed its video and text overlays from a separate Mac running ProPresenter. To achieve seamless coordination, Renewed Vision created a custom build of the two programs, enabling background changes in ProPresenter to be triggered over the network by ProVideoPlayer on the second Mac. This enabled one person to focus on background video loops, while another person could concentrate on getting the lyrics for worship up at just the right time, undistracted by having to manipulate the background video as well.

All video was delivered as DVI signals transmitted over fiber optic cable. A Barco D320 Digitizer performed the image processing needed to transfer the video to the MiStrip LED panels.

The Digidesign DShow Profile audio console (below) served duty at FOH (front-of-house) for the tour; a DShow Venue performed monitor duties (left).



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## HOSTING A TOUR



The church installed one 400-amp, three-phase electrical service, and two 200-amp, three-phase electrical services to support tours. The power systems are located behind the choir area, stage-left side of the platform.

### Audio Picks

Without quality audio, the concert just doesn't happen. Front-of-House (FOH) Engineer Mark Thomas, from Nashville, Tennessee, spec'ed out an impressive line of equipment, starting with Digidesign consoles for FOH and monitor world. The DShow Profile was arrayed at the FOH position, and an equally capable DShow Venue ran monitors for the band. Thomas comments, "When I got a chance to use one of these, I just really liked it. I like the way it sounds; I like the mic-pres; I like the EQ; I love having all the plug-ins and the way the snapshots work."

The Digidesign Venue snapshot system allows each snapshot to store as little or as much information about the current console state as the operator desires. Thomas reports. Thus, he can have merely an EQ change for one channel stored, without fear of manual fader changes being lost when that snapshot gets restored.

At the opposite end of the audio system, Thomas went with a d&b audiotechnik line array loudspeaker system. "I chose

When well prepared, hosting a tour can be a blessing to both the host church and the community in which it is located. FBC Orlando's Worship and Events Pastor Jon Marks expresses FBC's reasoning behind the desire to bring tours into their facility. "We are a new pastoral team here at FBC Orlando, and we're trying to do events that signal to the community that we're a church aggressively reaching out to the community, and putting on big events is just one of the things we will do to penetrate central Florida with the Gospel." He adds, "This is not just a concert—this is a worship service."

Marks says that they are working regularly to make it more feasible for tours to come in to their church. "The big thing that we have to do right now is get the venue ready for events like this," states Marks. "Power, for example: the church, some time ago, put in a 400-amp, three-phase electrical service for touring events. That's no longer nearly enough for shows like this. So, we had to evaluate our power needs, and for this event, added two additional 200-amp, three-phase services. Also, the big concert events like this want to rig—they don't want to ground-stack [their loudspeakers and lighting fixtures]. So, we are looking at our building structure, [putting] in rigging points, to be ready so the shows can load in very quickly. With each show that comes in, we add more rigging points."

One of the non-obvious aspects of tour hosting is ticketing. "We want to do an effective job of ticketing things like this, so we built an in-house ticket office," Marks comments. "We've partnered with Event Software who runs the service for us."

Another thing to ask yourself is, on which days is it reasonable to host a tour? Marks explains, "As a matter of policy, we don't do Saturday night events. We are not willing to run the risk that an event of any sort will compromise what our pastor calls "game day"—our Sunday morning services. This concert is an unusual circumstance in that we made an offer to host the tour on a Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday, but as they routed the tour, Saturday is what the tour could do."

Tomlin/Giglio/Redman is a tour they really wanted to bring in, so Marks discussed it with the technical production team, and they felt led to do it, so they went for it. "We anticipate working through the night to reset for our services and finishing just in time for the first service," Marks concludes.

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this PA because it's versatile," Thomas states. "We go from 2,000-seat smaller venues up to 8,000-seat arenas. This rig will do a lot of different sized rooms, and we can reconfigure it as necessary. I have 62 cabinets, and it only takes 22 amplifiers to run all 62 cabinets."

Forty d&b Q1 mid/high cabinets were brought on the tour as the main line-array cabinets, housing dual 10-inch low-frequency drivers and a 1.3-inch high-frequency compression driver. Six Q10 cabinets were also employed, tacked on to the bottom of the main arrays, containing



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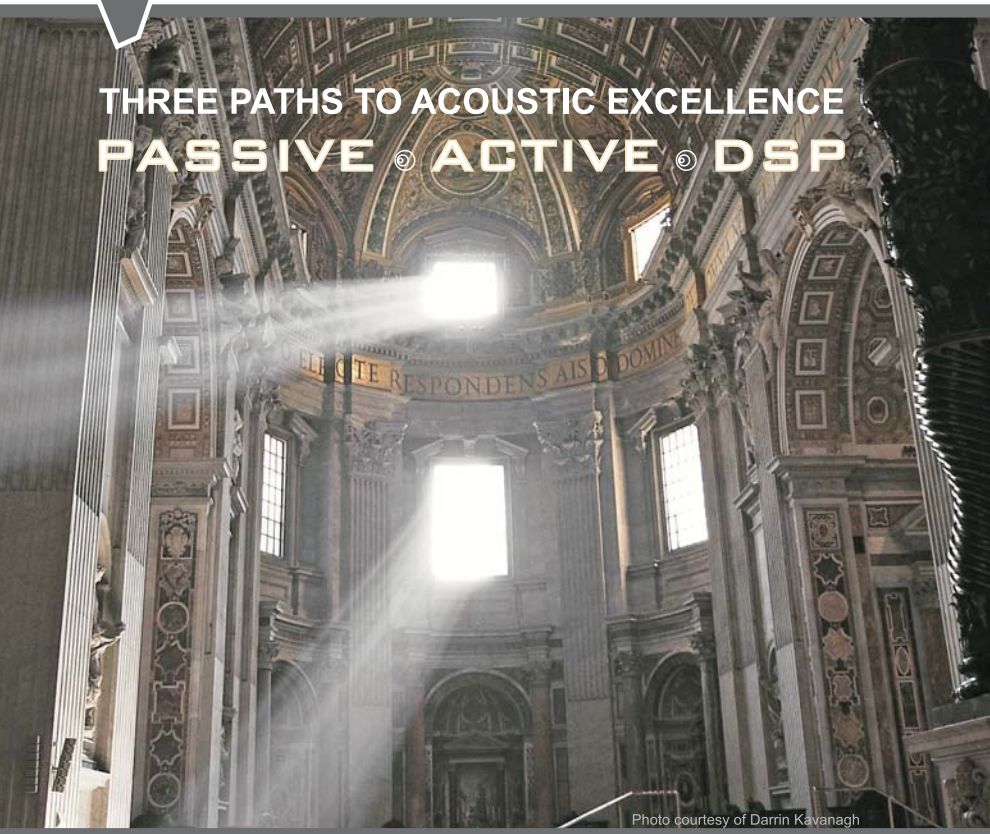


Photo courtesy of Darrin Kavanagh

True understanding is only possible when the message is clear, articulate and detailed.



similar drivers—but with a wider dispersion pattern for better front-row coverage through a shorter throw distance. Twelve Q-Sub subwoofers housing one 18-inch driver were flown at the top of the line arrays, and d&b's largest subwoofers, Twelve of the B2-Sub cabinets sporting dual 18-inch drivers were placed on the floor in front of the stage, ensuring solid bass throughout the room, as well as thoroughly blended stomach contents for the younger attendees crowding the front of the platform throughout the concert. d&b amplifiers powered all loudspeakers.

Additional audio equipment included Shure wireless personal monitors and

corresponding transmitters; Sensaphonics in-ear personal monitors; and Shure and Sennheiser microphones.

## A Brilliant Concert

Of course, what would a concert be without lighting? Jon "Hillbilly" Weir, with Majestic Productions, went with his preferred console, a High End Systems Hog 3, accompanied by High End's new X-Wing expansion wing. Weir was a beta tester for the Hog 3, and states, "The Hog 3 is one of the best consoles on the market. It had a rough start, but it's a rock-solid console now. It'll do anything I need it to do, and interface with any equipment."

Martin Professional's MAC 600 fixtures were the primary lighting fixture on the tour. Weir's reasoning for this choice was similar: "Those things are bullet-proof.

They always work, they don't break. Plenty of output, all the color mixing I need." Majestic's co-owner Ryan Bates adds, "We have thirty-two automated fixtures on this show, and thirty-two work every day." Weir agrees with Bates' sentiment. "When you have that sort of track record, it really speaks a lot for the manufacturer, and for the fixture itself."

## Under Way

By the time the concert started at 7:00 PM, the house was packed—the concert was a sell-out—and the opening song "Your Grace is Enough" quickly brought the crowd to its feet. Tomlin and Redman led an outstanding time of worship, and it was impressive that two of the biggest names in Christian music are able to maintain such humble countenances, and keep the focus on God throughout the event.

Louie Giglio's mid-concert presentation on how great our God is was outstanding, taking us from the vastness of the universe to the microcosm of our own bodies, and wrapping up his discussion of how fearfully and wonderfully made we are with an introduction to Laminin. Laminin is basically the protean that acts as the glue, holding our bodies together. And it's in the shape of a cross.

How great is our God?!

*"He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together."*

— Colossians 1:17

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*Jim Kumorek is the managing editor of Church Production and Worship Facilities magazines.*



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