



## **Bay Turner**

### **Biography**

Bay Turner's love for music was first ignited by a gas station mixtape he'd listen to from the passenger seat to and from his dad's house. Turner's parents divorced when he was an infant, and when his father moved out to the Texas Hill Country, his weekends were always bookended by a car ride with his dad.

"That hour-and-a-half ride there and that hour-and-a-half ride back were, I think, foundational for who I am," Turner reflects. "We were both new to Jesus, and we talked about everything you could ever talk about as we were both growing in our faith. And I also think part of my journey as a musician started in that car ride."

Attempting to mimic the vocal runs of his favorite R&B artists — like Donny Hathaway, Luther Vandross and Stevie Wonder — Turner would sing the songs he'd learned the week before on that weekly drive. In the same way soul music moved the aspiring singer, the playlist from the local Christian station that flowed from his car radio also stirred something in his heart. It would be a long time, however, before Turner realized his simultaneous pull toward both R&B/Soul and Christian music wasn't by chance.

With his vocal capabilities fully blossoming in college, Turner completed his undergrad, then began participating in young artist programs affiliated with major opera houses around the world. After studying at multiple international houses throughout North America and Europe, the ambitious vocalist relocated to New York in pursuit of a career in classical music.

Although he was vigorously immersed in classical training and evolving into a rising star, Turner's spirit remained unsettled. As his faith became more of a central force in his life, his values began to clash with the trajectory of a typical opera performer. While walking the streets of Brooklyn in 2018, he was grappling with his next professional steps when he heard voices harmonizing around what sounded like a familiar melody. He followed the sound and found himself in a church, only to realize the Gospel standard was being sung by none other than the iconic Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir.

"That was a defining moment for me. It was like rediscovering the thing that I found as a kid that really turned me on to music. Jesus came rushing back into my life. I felt like my heart started beating again," he shares. "I still have the journal from that church service where I wrote, 'One day, I am going to sing in the Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir.'"

In a matter of months, Turner was leading worship alongside the historic ensemble. Giving up the opportunity to pursue an operatic career, the Texas native decided he was going to leverage his talent for his first love and direct his efforts wholeheartedly toward Christian music.

Just when he thought he was stepping into a divinely orchestrated era of his career, he found two tumors in his chest. While benign, doctors advised surgery to remove both masses in 2020. In the days following

the procedure, Turner quickly realized something was off with his voice. A visit to the ENT revealed one of his vocal cords had been nicked during the surgery and paralyzed by the intubation tube. He was told he would likely never sing again.

Under doctors' orders, he spent the next several months in complete silence. "I had to really wrestle with God," Turner says. "I had to sit and be quiet and trust God that my voice was not going to be taken away from me for the rest of my life."

Much of that wrestling took place in a tiny space he carved out in his small New York apartment. It was there that God eventually put on his heart to see a different ENT. Miraculously, new tests revealed his vocal cords to be seamlessly healed and healthy — so healthy that there wasn't even any visible scar tissue, which was a rare occurrence that left even the seasoned ENT confounded.

"I think my faith grew in pain," Turner observes. "God had to teach me how to separate who I am as a man from my gift of singing. I think I would have crashed and burned as a recording artist if I was fully relying on my gifting and not on God. Today, I'm so grateful for the pain that brought me fully back to Jesus, though it's crazy to be thankful for the stuff that felt like the end of the world."

A week after the second ENT appointment, a producer for "America's Got Talent" called and encouraged Turner to audition. This led to his first performance post-surgery on Season 17 of the televised talent competition. This wasn't Turner's first time to compete in a nationwide talent search, however, because prior to his health complication, Turner previously showcased his penchant for Gospel music on Season 10 of BET's "Sunday Best."

While many artists have earned record deals thanks to airtime on these widely publicized contests, before his season of "America's Got Talent" even aired, Turner was approached by his new label home, who initially discovered him via a YouTube video where he was singing a cover of CeCe Winans' "Alabaster Box." After attending Centricity Music's invitation-only independent artist retreat, Turner was signed to both a recording and publishing contract.

Since being paired with some of Christian music's most respected songwriters, like Tony Wood, Michael Farren, Ethan Hulse and Bryan Fowler, among others, Turner has fallen in love with crafting original music. The burgeoning lyricist now has upwards of 90 songs he's co-written over the course of the past 18 months. It's a deep well from which to draw as he chooses selections to record for his debut EP, due later this year. A fusion of the R&B/Soul that raised him, the opera that challenged him, the Gospel that shaped him and the modern worship that captured his heart, Turner's diverse artistry is currently being cultivated in the studio as he works on the new music he's excited to share in the months to come.

"There's no pressure for me to be anything other than who God's called me to be. So, I think that takes a lot of the worldly weight off," the newcomer remarks of the chapter in his story that's about to unfold. "There's nothing I could do as Bay Turner to ever make this thing happen. I know I'm supposed to be using what God gave me to bring Him glory. It's 100% in God's hands, and I'm just here to be His faithful servant."

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For all the latest Bay Turner music, news and more information, go to [www.bayturner.com](http://www.bayturner.com), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [TikTok](#) and [YouTube](#).



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