

BIO

We always end up where we belong.

A winding road through highs, lows, ups, downs, and everything in between has carried Rachel Purcell back home creatively. The Muscle Shoals, AL native channels the old school soul so closely associated with her hometown from a personal perspective anchored by her unapologetic and unshakable faith. As such, she unassumingly uplifts audiences with full-bodied vocals, inspiring lyrics, and a beaming smile on her *Keep Going* EP [Centricity Music]. For as high as the soaring strings elevate these songs, her belief grounds them in relatability.

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"When I think of the past two years of my life, the message to myself was always '*Keep going*,'" she says. "If there was one thing I could say to my younger self, it's that. In this day and age, the world can feel really lonely, but this body of work says, '*You're not alone*'. My prayer is these songs will meet you right where you're at and lift you up."

Rachel initially embraced her voice as a child, but she fully pursued music as a student at University of North Alabama. She sharpened her skills as a songwriter and vocalist, landed a deal, and made waves in country (*back when she still went by her maiden name Rachel Wammack*). Along the way, she gathered millions of streams, made music with iconic producer Dann Huff [Faith Hill, Lady A, Thomas Rhett], graced the stage of the Grand Ole Opry, and emerged as the rare talent versatile enough to collaborate with either Rascal Flatts or Blessing Offor. Finding a home at Centricity, she signed to the label and unveiled the *Mercy & Me* EP highlighted by the likes of "Have Church" and "Show Up."

However, a turbulent season left the songstress in need of healing.

"I came off signing a deal into one of the lowest places in my life," she sighs. "I felt like my entire fabric had crumbled. Praise God, he put me into therapy. Not only did I learn how to process grief and stand on the other side of it with some recovered joy, but I also addressed lifelong issues—which I hadn't worked through. Reaching a breaking point where I went to therapy was the best thing that could've ever happened to me. This music was another blessing that came out of it. My heart was raw enough to really be vulnerable."

In order to bring the EP to life, she leaned into her roots more than ever. An impromptu writing session with Blessing Offor cracked the doorway. He got behind his baby grand piano and she sang what would later become "You Love Me The Best." With this foundation in place, she organized her own writing camp and crafted the rest of the EP.

"I had always wanted to bring a Muscle Shoals sound to what I'm doing," she states. "The song with Blessing was the catalyst. I grew up about two minutes away from FAME Studios. I love Gladys Knight & The Pips, Otis Redding, and Aretha Franklin as well as newer artists like RAYE. I'm a sucker for horns and doo-wop background vocals! We were finally able to bring this style to CCM."

Beyond cutting tracks at FAME, her producer John Strandell tapped a Nashville-based octet ensemble for the project's orchestration, building an epic framework for the songs. Channeling classic movie scores, big screen-worthy strings and shimmering piano set the tone for the opener "(Can't) Trust You." Rachel's smoky delivery materializes out of the haze into focus. Boosted by a backing choir and triumphant horns, the tune culminates on a pledge, "*You have all my heart the rest of my life.*"

She elaborates, "My trust issues with people equate to how I view my relationship with God. He has proven to me that he is completely trustworthy and he can handle my problems. He's basically saying, '*I know you, Rachel. I*

created you. I'm going to teach you that I'm trustworthy, and I'm not going to make you feel bad'. I hope the song encourages people be patient with themselves and give themselves some grace."

On the title track, an upbeat piano melody slides into a sassy and jazz-i-fied admission, *"I've been knocked down a million times. I ain't even trying to count 'em no more."* Claps give way to a chantable chorus, urging at full blast to *"Keep going."*

"I wrote *'Keep Going'* in the middle of training for a 10K," she recalls. "It's funny how physical endurance parallels spiritual endurance. I've had major heartbreaks. I've been dropped by record labels. I've had friends hurt me and turn their backs on me. So, the song is a reminder for me. I am weak. I am tired, but Christ is with me. We aren't running by ourselves."

"You Love Me The Best" maintains the spirit of the original composition with Blessing. Its meaning is magnified through a prism of bold soul accented by a warm bassline, steady snare drum, and her stunning delivery.

"I can't expect other people to be perfect," she goes on. "God is the one who is going to love us the best. He's doing miracles for me every day and protecting me. He's the only one who can meet our highest expectations—which is why there is forgiveness when humans let us down."

Then, there's the powerful finale "Who I Belong To." Gentle keys complement her testimony, *"I belong to a perfect father who tells me that I'm not alone. I belong to a risen savior whose love will never let me go."*

"It's my salvation statement," she says. "Before I found Christ at 21-years-old, I was so desperately and dysfunctionally trying to belong. I was very much a party girl in college. The Lord says, *'You belong to me. You don't have to earn anything with anyone else. You don't need to rely on a substance or a boy's attention. You belong in my family and my kingdom'*. The more I wrap my head around it, the more I can rest in who I am."

Ultimately, Rachel is right where she belongs.

"God will make roads out of nowhere," she leaves off. "God made me as this girl who grew up in Muscle Shoals with a pretty soulful voice, and he led me all the way through everything to this moment. I'm still broken, still human, still afraid, and still falling apart on some days, but I'm in his grace. It's the best place to be."

BOILER

A winding road through highs, lows, ups, downs, and everything in between has carried Rachel Purcell back home creatively. The Muscle Shoals, AL native channels the old school soul so closely associated with her hometown from a personal perspective anchored by her unapologetic and unshakable faith. As such, she unassumingly uplifts audiences with full-bodied vocals, inspiring lyrics, and a beaming smile on her *Keep Going* EP [Centricity Music]. For as high as the soaring strings elevate these songs, her belief grounds them in relatability. Rachel initially embraced her voice as a child, but she fully pursued music as a student at University of North Alabama. She sharpened her skills as a songwriter and vocalist, landed a deal, and made waves in country (*back when she still went by her maiden name Rachel Wammack*). Along the way, she gathered millions of streams, made music with iconic producer Dann Huff [Faith Hill, Lady A, Thomas Rhett], graced the stage of the Grand Ole Opry, and emerged as the rare talent versatile enough to collaborate with either Rascal Flatts *or* Blessing Offor. Finding a home at Centricity, she signed to the label and unveiled the *Mercy & Me* EP highlighted by the likes of "Have Church" and "Show Up." Even though she's been through a lot, she's got the songs to show for it and a message to share on *Keep Going*.