

Many music lovers have come to know Calvin Hunt as a featured soloist with the Grammy and Dove Award-winning Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir, but his personal and musical story reaches far beyond the successful projects that catapulted him to a public stage.

Calvin Hunt's life has been filled with stunning highs and lows, but his humble warmth and unwavering optimism persevere because of his rock-bottom commitment to the truth that Jesus Christ changes lives – and continues to restore his own life.

One of eight children, Calvin knew the struggle of growing up as the child of an alcoholic single mother. To ease financial burdens at home, 12-year-old Calvin found work at an Italian pizzeria in his hometown of Queens, New York, and became a trusted employee for the next seven years. Two significant events marked his 14th year of life: the young guitarist and singer formed his own band, and he personally experienced the joy of salvation while kneeling at an altar. Always labeled the “strongest” child by his mother, Calvin's commitment was tested as he shared his new faith at home and received only laughter in response.

After moving away from home at age 17, Calvin immersed himself in his band, riding the ups and downs of that lifestyle, and began to dabble in drug use. But after his band broke up during a studio recording session, his life quickly spiraled downhill. Calvin's wife Miriam discovered that the musician-turned-construction worker had become addicted to crack cocaine. Over the next six years, Calvin would often leave his wife and two young children, disappearing for days and weeks on binges – even sleeping in doghouses – because he was utterly unable to free himself from the bondage of his drug use.

The woman Calvin married believed God was not yet finished with him, and she prayed unceasingly for her husband. Miriam began faithfully attending Christ Tabernacle, thankful for the understanding and prayer support of this new church family. And on one unforgettable night, after another weeklong binge, Calvin felt compelled to show up at Christ Tabernacle. As he entered the building, Calvin heard his name being called out in countless fervent prayers that he would come home to his family and be rescued from his addiction. Calvin stumbled down the aisle of the church – seventeen years after he first experienced the living God – and reached the altar, falling into the arms of the loving Savior who never gave up on him. Calvin soon completed a drug treatment program at Teen Challenge, and his life was never the same. Today, Calvin still works one-on-one with men who need the same kind of deliverance, and he prays and weeps with Miriam for the healing of these men and their families. Calvin Hunt knows it made the difference for him: “Somebody believed in Him enough to pray for me.”

During his time of restoration, Calvin began to play bass guitar for the music ministry of Christ Tabernacle, but when his pastor's wife overheard him singing, she was convinced that he needed to focus on serving as a soloist with the choir. Later, during a visit to Christ Tabernacle, Jim Cymbala (pastor of Brooklyn Tabernacle) quickly came to the same conclusion when he heard Calvin sing, and invited him to join the Brooklyn Tabernacle Singers. That simple invitation led to

Calvin's participation in the award-winning projects recorded by Carol Cymbala and the Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir.

Over time, Calvin and Miriam became convinced that God was leading them into full-time ministry, and with much support from their church family, they stepped out in faith. Calvin's solo ministry has allowed him to travel all over the country to sing and to share his story.

But Calvin Hunt's story does not end with his deliverance from crack cocaine addiction; he is the first to say that being a Christian does not exempt anyone from hardships in life, and loss has become a familiar challenge for Calvin and his family. His mother passed away in 2004, his oldest brother Dwight died in 2007, and two other siblings preceded that brother in death. And in 2005, as initial plans were being made to record Calvin's latest solo project, Bridges, Calvin and Miriam were interrupted by an event that any parent would find unimaginable: Monique, their oldest daughter, was murdered by her ex-boyfriend – in front of her three young sons. Calvin and Miriam not only had to deal with this heartbreaking loss, but also the knowledge that they would become parents again. They prayed together as a family, wondering if God would have a different plan for Calvin's music ministry, but Calvin said the answer became clear: "The Lord revealed to me that they did worse than that to His Son, and he never stopped loving."

In spite of, and perhaps because of these new challenges, Calvin and Miriam Hunt are even more convinced that God has called Calvin to sing and preach the Gospel to reach hearts in need of hope and encouragement. And Calvin is finding that Bridges is an important tool for this latest chapter in his ministry. He points to the high-energy joy of the Take 6 hit, "Come On," the roof-raising testimony to God's faithfulness in the Traditional Gospel song, "Never, Never," and the tender classic, "What Sin," as highlights for him during live ministry. "This CD allows me to encourage people to look at life and know that God is the author of life."