

Episode Title: **Vince Gill's Tribute to Merle**

Episode Summary: In this week's episode, Sid Evans, Editor-in-Chief of Southern Living Magazine, talks to Vince Gill about his childhood in Oklahoma City, why certain foods remind him of particular family members, and his moving tribute to the late Merle Haggard. Plus, how his versatile talents have allowed him to make his mark in bluegrass, country music and now rock and roll, as a touring member of the legendary Eagles.

**Episode Transcript:**

***(Biscuits and Jam Theme begins - Fiddler's Barn on Epidemic Sound)***

**Voice Over from SID EVANS:** *Welcome to Biscuits and Jam, from Southern Living. I'm Sid Evans, editor-in-chief of Southern Living Magazine. For an artist who's won more awards than just about anyone in the business,, he's also known as one of the most humble in the industry.*

**Vince AX:** When I was a kid, I didn't dream about being a star. I dreamed about being a musician. And I just wanted to be part of the deal, you know, in any way, shape or form. And that would have always been enough for me.

**Sid NARRATION:** *Having grown up in Oklahoma City, Vince Gill has a resume that's as acclaimed and diverse as they come. Inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 2007, Vince has also made his mark on bluegrass and even rock and roll, now as a touring member of the Eagles. He's won nearly half of the 44 Grammys he's been nominated for over his career, and along with his talented wife, singer/songwriter Amy Grant, their annual run of Christmas shows at Nashville's Ryman Auditorium is often sold out months in advance. On today's show, Vince talks about how Christmas at home presents its own challenges.*

**Vince AX:** If we don't do those Christmas shows, this'll be maybe the first time in 27 years where I've had a little extra time to go Christmas shopping for the fam. We'll see. I tour all year long, Amy doesn't tour quite so much. And so she's fired up and ready to knock out a whole bunch of Christmas shows in December and I'm ready to go to bed.

**Sid NARRATION:** *Plus his grandmother's yeast rolls, Vince's touching tribute to the late Merle Haggard, and much more this week on Biscuits & Jam. (Theme music ends)*

**Sid:** Well, Vince Gill, welcome to Biscuits and Jam.

**Vince:** Thank you. Good to be here. You're at the bottom of the barrel if you getting me, down to the V's, got all the way to the V's before you found somebody to get on the show. (laughs)

**Sid:** It is a great honor to have you on. I really appreciate you doing it. Tell me a little bit about growing up in Oklahoma, and if you have fond memories of those days.

**Vince:** Well, I do, I have great memories of growing up in Oklahoma.

Um it was my normal, you know? It may not be somebody else's normal, but it was really normal, my father worked, he was a lawyer. We were just middle of the road kind of folks and mom was a farmer, grew up on farm.

And so a lot of common sense around our house. And, there was no grandstanding. And they were both strict, you know, I had a very, uh, strict upbringing and I knew where the line was and I didn't cross it. But really normal, you know, just completely normal.

**Sid:** So, can you describe the house where you grew up?

**Vince:** Yeah, it was really cool. We lived right in the center of town, Northwest 24th and May Avenue. And the cool thing about where we lived was my grade school was directly across the street. So I could sleep in longer than any kid in the neighborhood. Cause all I had to do is get across the street and in the door. Uh, then my junior high school, seventh and eighth grade was a block and a half up the street. So I could get to school in less than a minute, you know? And then my high school was three blocks through an alley and I could run a school pretty quick.

Then, then when I was 16, last couple of years, I got to drive to school. But, um, it was really a, just a, a great neighborhood, a million kids. We had pick up football games, pick up basketball games, baseball games, riding bikes, causing trouble, just everything, as it should be in the sixties, you know?

**Sid:** Yeah. And I heard you mention grandparents. Um, were they close by or were you close with them?

**Vince:** Yeah, my mom's parents, they stayed on the farm that she grew up in, in Kansas, a little town called St. John, Kansas, just North of Pratt. and then my father's parents, they didn't get along so good. And (laughing) they, they, I remember vividly that they were both in separate nursing homes. This is pretty disturbing, but yeah, every weekend we'd go to visit and we'd have to go to two different nursing homes. We'd pick one up and, take them both for a ride.

I was back in sitting in between them. They get all lit up about something and start fighting and arguing and whatnot. And theirs, was a little more chaotic than my mom's parents, but I love being up in Kansas and traipsing around on the farm and my granddad would take me to the pool hall and let me knock around shoot pool and play pitch and, you know, snooker and stuff like that. So, yeah, I loved my grandparents. My dad's mom was a really fine piano player. And my first conscious memory of any music at all was seeing my big, heavyset grandma play the piano, you know, and-

**Sid:** Really?

**Vince:** -she had these arms that would go back and forth, that stride piano playing. And that was my first conscious memory of ever hearing music was her I think, playing the hymn "how great thou art."

**Sid:** So this was on your dad's side of the family?

**Vince:** Right.

**Sid:** And he was a musician as well. Is that right?

**Vince:** Yeah, a little bit. I, you know, as a kid, I thought he was, uh, Roy Clark and Chet Atkins all rolled up into one dad, but turned out he wasn't very good.

**Sid:** So what about food, Vince? Who was the cook in your family?

**Vince:** Oh, definitely my mom. Sadly I've grown up to be a, good sized fella. I figured out how good gravy was and how good all these things were.

But as a kid, man, I was a rail of rails. You could see my ribs, my whole childhood, you know, and I just ate nothing. You know, I eat cereal for breakfast every now and then, my mom she'd make some, French toast or scrambled eggs and bacon, that kind of stuff. But man, a lot of mornings, it was just a bowl of Cheerios or bowl of Alphabits and four or five big scoops of sugar. I would eat mustard sandwiches, just white bread and-

**Sid:** Mustard sandwiches?

**Vince:** Oh they're horrible. But I liked them. You know, I was real finicky. I used to drive my dad nuts because if I ordered food, it couldn't have onions. It couldn't have this. Couldn't have that. Drove him out of his mind.

"Why can't you just eat it the way they cook it?" I said, "well..." Anyway, he used to tease me about picking ham fat off the ham with tweezers. And then I figured it out a little later on. And the pounds just kind of never stopped. My dad was a big man. He was a hundred pounds overweight, probably at least, and always a big boy.

**Sid:** So did you have some favorites that your mom made?

**Vince:** Yeah, I guess, you know, she made cinnamon toast. A lot of mornings. And it's funny, I go to this place in Nashville called Noshville for breakfast every morning.

**Sid:** Yeah.

**Vince:** they call themselves a New York deli and I tease em. I said-

**Sid:** I know it well, yeah.

**Vince:** I said, you might've made it about as far as Hagerstown, but you didn't make it all the way to New York. But it's really good. I got a buddy there, Sherman, that's the cook. And he, I've got about five or six things he knows I love. And he sees me come in and he just makes me something and he feels like making, and it's the best feeling in the world, but I always get cinnamon toast cause it reminds me of my mom-

**Sid:** Aw.

**Vince:** -Really, that kind of sentiment. And then my brother used to put so much pepper on his eggs and in anything that he ate, because he had a really horrific car accident when he was young. 21 or 22 and almost died, but he lost his sense of smell.

And a lot of his sense of taste too. So he put like, so much pepper on his food. And I put a lot of pepper on my eggs just to remind me of him. There's a lot about food that reminds me of things. That takes me back. I find a lot of comfort in food.

***(Instrumental music break of Biscuits and Jam theme -- :10 fade in/fade out)***

**Sid:** And what about the holidays for you guys?

**Vince:** They're pretty normal. I mean, you know, I married Amy Grant and she's got about 8 million people in her family. So, you know, we have a massive holiday thing and mostly Thanksgiving. Christmas, not so much about a meal, but Thanksgiving is still easily my favorite meal. I remembered as a kid, we'd always go to my grandparents' up at the farm in Kansas and my grandmother, granny Lucy made the most amazing yeast rolls to this day that I've ever eaten. They're still, I think my favorite thing I ever ate was Granny Lucy's rolls and I've never had yeast rolls

that, that, that have come close. And I would give anything if I could have a big plate of those yeast rolls, I'd put a little butter, a little salt on there, and that's about as good as it gets.

**Sid:** So Vince you, and Amy have had a long run of Christmas shows. For a long time at the Ryman. And I think you guys actually met during a Christmas show, is that right?

**Vince:** We did, yeah. We had met a time or two before that, but. Never had a conversation really. And then we wound up doing a Christmas show in 1993 together, and she walked in the room and smiled at me and it was game over. So that same, winter of 93 she asked me to do a duet with her of "house of love." Big hit she had back in the early nineties and then she was going to do a Christmas show with guests to help bail out the Nashville symphony. She said, will you come do my show since I came and did yours? And I said, yeah. And so that's kinda how we ever got around each other was through Christmas shows and Christmas music. And she's much better at it than I am, you know? I do it just because she asked me to, but she's the one that's nuts about it.

**Sid:** Well, so what are some of the highlights of those shows for y'all? I know that your audience, your fans look forward to it every year and get so excited about it.

**Vince:** Well, I think I see myself and most people see me as the village idiot, you know, up there, keeping it, like making it fun. And, and she has, the side to her that's much more about what the season really is and how much it means to her. She loves and adores that time of year. And so I was just riding her coattails, playing guitar and making her laugh.

**Sid:** So what are y'all planning for this year? Are there going to be Christmas shows this year?

**Vince:** I don't think anybody knows. We're in October now. And, I don't see em being back to full scale shows by the 1st of December. So they may go away this year, And obviously everybody's caught up in the virtual thing and finding ways to show people a good time. And, we are too, we've done plenty of that, but nobody really knows yet. But, if I was a betting man, I would probably bet that they may not happen this year.

**Sid:** So in a normal year, y'all are extremely busy during the holiday season. You've got all these shows going on and I'm just wondering, what do you guys do when you get a rare night at home during the holidays?

**Vince:** (laughs) Well, same thing everybody else... And these days it's a little different, you know, because we're not going out at night, there's nothing to get to go and do. So you do a lot of binge watching on Netflix and all the same things that everybody else is doing and I'm kind of grateful for some sports being on TV again. I'm a sports nut, so if we don't do those Christmas shows, this'll be maybe the first time in 27 years where I've had a little extra time to go Christmas shopping for the fam. We'll see. But you know, you look up and it's the 23rd of December and I'm going, God, I haven't bought anybody anything, but I'm kind of a procrastinator in that way anyway.

So, I think we're going to do a couple of things, but we haven't had the normal year that we normally do. You know, I tour all year long, Amy doesn't tour quite so much during the year like I do. And so she's fired up and ready to knock out a whole bunch of Christmas shows in December and I'm ready to go to bed. I'm ready to lay down. but, uh, uh, I still enjoy getting to, you know, just watch her shine this time of year.

**Sid:** Well, you won't have the excuse of being busy this year, so you might have to get on that Christmas shopping.

**Vince:** No kidding. Amen.

***(Instrumental music break of Biscuits and Jam theme -- fade in/fade out)***

**SID NARRATION:** *We'll continue with Vince Gill, after the break.*

BREAK

*(Instrumental music break of Biscuits and Jam theme -- fade in/fade out)*

**SID NARRATION:** *Welcome back to Biscuits & Jam, from Southern Living. I'm Sid Evans, and we're talking with Vince Gill.*

**Sid:** So I want to ask you a little bit about your bluegrass backgrounds. Not everybody knows that you were really into bluegrass, for a while. And, you even ended up moving to Louisville I believe?

**Vince:** I did. Yeah.

**Sid:** what did that experience teach you about music?

**Vince:** What I liked about bluegrass was how necessary everybody in the band is to make it work. Everybody has to really carry their kind of piece of the weight, you know, and, when you get four or five guys that all play that way and get it right, it's mighty. A lot of people think it couldn't couldn't rock and it couldn't really, throttle stuff.

But man, when it's four guys really doing it in that way. It's like playing with the Rolling Stones. It's a blast. And there's power in it. And I think because of that, it taught me democracy in music, taught me how important it was for all the parts to be equal.

So it was a great training ground for me and I, last couple of years of high school, I played in two different bands. One that wouldn't go play the clubs and the joints because they were young kids and their parents wouldn't let them. And then I joined another band, it was full of all guys, older guys that had day jobs and they like to have fun, they liked to roar. My parents didn't care, you know, they said, well, you stay out of trouble. You can go do whatever you want. So I was playing joints and, and having a ball and traveling around and, and that's the first band I ever made a record with and they were called Mountain Smoke. I was a junior in high school and we made a record and I heard it on the radio one time. Somebody played it on the radio and I was done. I knew what I wanted to do. And I finished high school. I never made one plan to look at a college. Cause I was making a little bit of money playing music and this a band called the Bluegrass Alliance from Louisville, Kentucky, that's where they were based out of, called and said, we got an opening. Would you be interested? And I said, "man, I'm coming." And away I went and I'd never been to Kentucky in my life and, found a place to live for \$15 a month in an attic of this old, old house that this guy would take in musicians, you know, and away I went, one band led to another band to another band and wound up in California a couple of years after that.

And it just was so much fun, I was always willing to be in the moment. I was always willing to just accept what, what there was right in front of me at the time. And I didn't look into the future and go, oh I hope I'm doing this, or I'm doing that by the time I'm this age. I didn't have any of that going on. The phone would ring and change my life and that's what I'd go do. I'm still that way today. Waiting on the phone to ring.

**Sid:** So Vince you've been in Nashville for a long time now-

**Vince:** 37 years.

**Sid:** Do you- how long?

**Vince:** 37 years.

**Sid:** 37 years. Okay. So you are a diehard Nashvillian now. Do you remember your first trip to Nashville? And when you decided to make it your home?

**Vince:** Yeah, my first trip was actually in 1974. So I was making trips here in the mid seventies and fell in love with the community and loved all the different kinds of musicians. And, it was only seven years later, eight years later that I wound up living here. I moved here from Southern California, living in LA in 83 and had my Uhaul everything in it, towing my car. And I pulled into Nashville and it was 17 below. I said, "what in the hell have you done, idiot?" It was a really good winter. And, we stayed and we survived and made it through and it's, it's been an, I, I wouldn't live anywhere else. I really love it here.

**Sid:** So you got to tell me what it's been like touring with the Eagles. Those first few shows must've been a little nerve wracking, even for you.

**Vince:** Unbelievably nerve wracking. I felt, you know, just completely overwhelmed that I was the guy that they chose. Out of this world of people they could have gone to. And they wanted to keep that band going in, the loss of Glenn Frey

Glenn was a really good friend of mine, I met him in 1980 and we crossed paths a lot over the years. And so I knew that the only reason I was getting to do that job for them was because of his passing. And so I try to be respectful and I don't go around telling people, "Hey, I'm an Eagle," so I'm just doing the gig because they need somebody to sing those songs and I'm the guy they chose, you know?

It's a heavy duty kind of a gig and my first gig with them was at Dodger Stadium in 2017 in front of about 60,000 people. And what I remember most about the first gig I was terrified, I think I felt the apprehension by so many of those people in that Glenn's not there. I'm not sure I am ready for this.

And I tell them all the time. I said, I don't want to hear anybody, but Glenn sing "new kid in town" either, but that can't happen. And so I got there to the gig and it's Southern California and it's time to go play and I really want to look cool.

So I had a really cool leather jacket and a shirt underneath, and I got out there and in about 15 seconds, I knew I had two too many layers of clothes on, you know, so I start just profusely sweating on top of being scared to death. And, And, uh, it was, it was okay. You know, it took, it took one verse and chorus of "take it to the limit" with me singing it, before I felt everybody just take a breath and go, ah, it's going to be okay.

**Sid:** Yeah.

**Vince:** It's going to be fine. You know? And so it's been a, it's been an unbelievable experience. I tell everybody, I said it took me 60 years to get a good gig. I don't know of any other band that's had an impact, like the Eagles on music and that catalog of songs that they have, and they've written is it's about as good as it gets, you know, you can't find anybody, any American band that can rival that song, that song catalog, you know. I first joined the band and I was doing a couple of, we did a couple of rehearsals and I asked Don Henley. I said, man, what's the first song you and Glenn ever wrote. And he smiled and he said, "Desperado."

"Nuh uh, no, you didn't. You had to write a bunch of crappy songs" and he started laughing. He goes, "no, that was the very first song we ever wrote" and I said, man, "you talk about meant to be." you know, if that's, if that's your starting point, think about that.

**Sid:** Wow yeah.

**Vince:** Starting point is that song, man is it going to be good? You know?

**Sid:** That's crazy.

**Vince:** -As any songwriting collaborating bunch that's ever lived. It's a blast to be up there every night and sing great song after great song after great song, that's what Don said about me. And they said, why Vince? Because he knows how to be in a band. You know, and, and I do, and I love it. And I don't need the spotlight that much, you know, it's not my thing. When I was a kid, I didn't dream about being a star. I dreamed about being a musician. And I just wanted to be part of the deal, you know, in any way, shape or form. And that would have always been enough for me.

*(Instrumental music break of Biscuits and Jam theme -- :10 fade in/fade out)*

**Sid:** So Vince speaking of great songs, um, you have a new album out called Okie, came out last year and it's a very personal album. And I'm just wondering if you felt like it was time to kind of do a tribute to your Oklahoma roots or what was behind that album?

**Vince:** Well, you know, I think golly, the only reason I called that record Okie. It's because I'd been watching the Ken Burns documentary on country music and I'm from Oklahoma and I'm proud of it. But a lot of people don't realize that term was coined as a derogatory word. You know, it was not a kind thing to call somebody, here come those damn Okies, you know? And because this record was kind of steeped in truth and me kind of writing songs of reflection of a man that's 60 plus years old. I said, man, I want to reclaim that word.

And, um, I just wanted to make a record that was really steeped in some truth. And, obviously some hard conversations, some hard subjects, you don't see songs written about, sexual abuse, you don't hear near enough songs about equality. There's a song in there where, um, you know, the guy murdered his own father to save his family.

There's one song on there about a young girl that gets pregnant. And to me, the beauty in the song is that the storyteller, the songwriter never, never says what you should or shouldn't do. It's not a song of judgment. It's only a song that's in that moment of what choice will you make? It doesn't tell you which one to make. And to me, that's a good way to live, you know, without too much judgment. I think that's one thing we've gotten And it seems to me, you can have some great conversations about even the toughest of subjects if your intent wasn't so much to prove your point and make somebody feel like you do, and just be a little more accepting, a little more gracious.

**Sid:** Well, it feels like a very timely album and I want to ask you about a particular song on there. That's called "A World Without Haggard," which is a tribute to Merle. And I'm just wondering what kind of personal interactions did you have with Merle over the years?

**Vince:** Well, it got to be a really close friendship towards the end of his life. We had a lot of conversations and he would call from time to time. And I remember one of my favorite memories was after I sang at little Jimmy Dickens' funeral, the story behind what I'd done was I took a guitar that, and played, that I bought from the family of a fellow named Jabbo Arrington who played guitar with Jimmy back in the late forties and died way back then.

And this guitar probably sat under the bed for 60 years, 65 years, whatever. And they found me and said, would you be interested in this guitar? And I said, absolutely. And so I took that guitar to play at Jimmy's memorial. And I told the story of how Jabbo used to play with Jimmy when he first came to the Opry and he probably played this guitar.

I said, so I feel like that if the guitar that probably brought him into this place should be the one that takes him out of this place. It was really moving. It was really beautiful. And, I got home from, that service and then the phone rings and it's Merle. And he said you just killed me.

He said, that's one of the most beautiful things I've ever seen in my life. And he said, I can't quit crying. He says, and I don't cry. I do not cry. And I can't quit crying. That's one of the neatest things I've ever seen. He says, I want that guitar. I said, well, you can't have it. and I got to sing on the last, few songs he recorded. And, he knew how impactful he was in my life and my career and what I love. My favorite line of that song is, if I could hear one last song, it's Merle that I would choose. And that's true.

***Vince's song "A World Without Haggard" fades up as he says "And he knew how impactful he was" at full volume so we hear "If could hear one last song, it's Merle that I would choose / He was my greatest inspiration, the reason why I sing the blues." Song fades out and Vince comes back in.***

**Vince:** I wrote it the day after he passed. I found out he passed in late in the night and, I sat down and started writing this song. And, I think one of the reasons his perspective was so powerful was that, he had been in prison and he knew what it felt like to have his freedom taken away. Very few people do, very few people understand and know what it feels like to have their freedom be gone, you know? And, so his songs were so full of despair, but at the same time, they were so full of hope. If you listen to the words of "mama tried," you know, "I turned 21 in prison doing life without parole." That's about as desperate as it gets, then the next line is so hopeful, "but no one could steer me right. But mama tried," you know, she never gave up on me. And so all those songs that, had that great truth in 'em, and yet still had hope, they're lifelines.

**Sid:** So Vince, I want to ask you about, uh, about your wife, Amy who recently went through open heart surgery. And this happened in the middle of this pandemic. How is she doing? and how did you guys get through this as a family?

**Vince:** Well, she has, a grace about her and a spirit about her that's just, it's unshakeable and, we found this out early in the year. I was actually the one going to get checked because I was scared.

My father died at about my age and so I'm getting to that point where I'm going, Oh gosh, what's, what's in store for me. But, I got through with my visit with the doc. And it was so funny. He looked at me, he goes, I can't believe I'm saying this, but your heart's fine.

And I said, well good. He said, you're just fat and out of shape. I said, well, I could have told you that. I could have saved about five grand too, but he laughed. He said, he said, you're great. And he said to Amy was, she was with me, said, I really need to have a look at you, your family's got some pretty serious issues in its history.

And, and they found an abnormality that was there since birth and back in 1960, they would've never been able to know that or find that or see that. And basically you have veins that take the blood to the left side of your heart. And hers were flipped and hers went into the right side of her heart. They said you really need to get that fixed.

So it wasn't something where she was having symptoms, shortness of breath or any of that kind of stuff, where there was blockage. She was healthy when she went in and had this done, but to do it right. They had to go do the big deal. and she did great, you know, she was at home in four days.

They said you'll be at the hospital for seven days. After three, he said, you could go home today you're doing so great. I said, well, I'll be two or three months before you feel good. She was right back at it in about three weeks.



So, the model patient as we all know, she is, you know, took it with a grain of salt and just was really beautiful about it. But she's fine.

**Sid:** Well, good. Thank God for that. And, you've got a gorgeous new song, called "when my Amy prays." And I was just wondering if that song was on your mind at all when all this was happening.

**Vince:** Well, I mean, you got to understand all this was happening in the weirdest year of our lifetime. You know, we're sitting there and friends are dying. Strangers are dying just by the multitudes, you know, and you're sitting there going into it going well, man, you talk about the worst year ever. This is going to pile on because a month before Amy went in for a surgery, my oldest friend died. And not from COVID, but he had cancer and he was diagnosed and he was gone in five or six weeks.

And he was my oldest friend and my best friend. And he actually toured with me for the last 30 years taking care of all my guitars. And so all that went down and then I'm going oh God and now here comes open heart surgery with my wife. And it's just like, what else you got? You know, keep bringing the craziness, you know?

And, and we got through that and it was all good, but it was, it was a really, you know, it was a fearful time. You know, it has been fearful all year long and, rightfully so. There's plenty to be afraid of I think. I'm not one that's just blowing this off and thinking it's no big deal. I think it's pretty real, and there's a million people that have died from it that I think their families would agree. So, um, but you know, we'll get to the end of it. We kind of always do.

**Sid:** Well, Vince, you and Amy have done a lot of charity work over the years and with so many people struggling right now um, I'm wondering what charity is closest to your heart right now, or what you're focused on?

**Vince:** Well, I've kind of made it a practice to, feed the need right in front of you. I think we've all got a story. We all struggle. We all need to be lifted up sometimes. And I'm going to scratch the itch that's right in front of me. And, you know, whether it's golf, whether it's cancer, whether it's this, whether it's that, you know, if somebody needs help. Yeah, I'll help you out. This isn't, this isn't hard, you know? You see the best in people when people are struggling. I wish we could just see the best in people all the time, you know, but we had a giant tornado come through Nashville.

**Sid:** Right.

**Vince:** Right before COVID shut everything down. And, because of COVID, nobody's been able to go and, really help those folks dig out of that hole, so it's just kind of like, there's always something, and I just feel like if, you know, phone rings and somebody needs this or needs that. I'll go, I'll go chip in.

**Sid:** so you're on the road all the time in a normal year and Amy's on the road a good bit too. And, now you've been home for several months; have there been some good aspects of all this for you?

**Vince:** Well, yeah, and you hate to say that when you see so many people struggling, you know, you feel a little hypocritical saying, Hey, I'm fine, but that's just the truth.

And, it's not that different, you know, I play golf a lot on a normal year. I played a lot of golf this year, and that's all there is to go and do, And, we got our kid back Corina. Our youngest had gone off to university, in the fall of last year. So spring break happened and everything got shut down. She came home. So we got her back. For the last six months. And then

**Sid:** And she's a musician too, is she not?

**Vince:** Yeah. She's crazy good. Better than all of us put together, but, she came home and she was singing songs in the living room and it just was so neat to get her back, so there was a gift there. We get to see our grandkids a lot. You can make things good or you can make things bad, however you want to react to them and you just choose to make the best of it.

**Sid:** Well Vince, what are you looking forward to the most when we get past this?

**Vince:** Oh, you know what? Just uh... (I think we should keep the contemplative pause) people would find a way to find a little more empathy, little more compassion, a little bit more grace. It's tough to even turn on the news and, just deal with, it being so, so far apart, I don't think most people are that far apart, it's just seems like the loudest voices are the furthest apart and it shouldn't define us, you know? I really will be glad when this election is over, to be honest with you.

**Sid:** I think we'll all be glad.

**Vince:** Amen.

**Sid:** Well, Vince Gill. Thank you so much for being on Biscuits and Jam.

**Vince:** You bet.

**Sid NARRATION:** *Thanks for listening to my conversation with Vince Gill. His latest album Okie is available wherever you get music.*

*Southern Living is based in Birmingham, AL, and this podcast was produced and edited in Nashville, TN. If you like what you hear, please consider leaving us a review on Apple Podcasts or telling your friends about the program. You can find us online at [southernliving.com](http://southernliving.com), and subscribe to our print publication by searching for Southern Living at [www.magazine.store](http://www.magazine.store).*

*Biscuits and Jam is produced by Heather Morgan Shott, Krissy Tiglias and me, Sid Evans, for Southern Living. Thanks also to Ann Kane, Jim Hanke, Eliza Lambert and Rachael King at Pod People.*

*I'll see you back here next week for more Biscuits & Jam.*