

# Filter

## August 2009

### DAVID BAZAN

#### *Curse Your Branches*

**86%**



BARSUK

Back when he made music under the name “Pedro the Lion,” David Bazan was known as Christian music’s indie crossover success, popular in the secular world but acceptable to churchgoers as well. For Bazan, changing names seems to have come along with a change of faith; he was never afraid to approach touchy subjects before, but on *Curse Your Branches* he delves into his own beliefs and feelings more deeply than ever before, resulting in his most heartfelt music yet. He questions and confronts his own beliefs and ideas, without presenting them as dogma. He doesn’t so much want to tell people what he thinks, or what they should think, as he just tries to get people *to* think.

Although Bazan’s voice and songwriting on this album fit snugly with the rest of his output, the instrumentation is more textured and varied, with layered arrangements on some tracks, letting the album oscillate between ballads and pop songs. The result is less guitar-driven and aggressive, but no less soulful—and no less sincere. These songs would stand on their own in terms of sound alone, but it’s the addition of Bazan’s thoughtful lyrics that make this perhaps his most powerful and interesting album thus far. JEFFREY BROWN