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You'll Find No Trucks or Cold Ones On The 10 Best Country Albums of 2018

Eric Church scorched, Willie Nelson passed on wisdom, and Ashley McBryde broke out.

5. DIERKS BENTLEY — THE MOUNTAIN



“I’m a little bit steady, but still little bit rollin’ stone,” Dierks Bentley admits on the opening track of his expansive ninth LP, *The Mountain*. “I’m a little bit heaven, but still a little bit flesh and bone.” It’s that embrace of duality that has led the Arizona native to rarely-charted lands in country music: the top of the charts (a place Bentley finds frequently) with artistic vision firmly intact. Credit goes to the 41-year-old’s heady mix of earnestness and confidence, both of which are on display all across the 2018 set. While most of his industry peers are still dropping lines about hot young things in cutoff shorts, Bentley digs into the importance of family (“My Religion”), the transformative powers of love and monogamy (“Woman, Amen”), and the hard-won perspective found in his forties (“Travelin’ Light”). Amen is right.