



## "Cross Connection"

Radio Ministry of Hope Wesleyan Church and Wells of Salvation Ministries  
Ultimate Oldies Radio – FM 97.7 and 101.1, Huber Heights, Ohio



Series: Christian Messages In Secular Music

4/29/09

Program 81      "40"      © 1983 Bono

Here's a song by the world-renowned super group U2 – a secular band that some have labeled contemporary Christian. It's easy to see why, considering that many of their recordings reference Christian Scripture and/or principles. This one essentially transforms the first few verses of the 40<sup>th</sup> Psalm into a song that was placed on a secular album. It has been performed to, and sung by audiences all over the world!

### The Song <sup>1</sup>

- 10<sup>th</sup> and final track from U2's 1983 album, *War*; not commercially released
- Noted primarily for its frequent live performances (over 300 times to date)
  - Traditionally, audience sings along for minutes after U2 has left the stage
- First verse based on Psalm 40:1-2; Second verse on Psalm 40:2-3
- Chorus loosely based in Psalm 40:3 –

*"He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God..."*

### The Group – U2 <sup>2</sup>

- Rock band from Dublin, Ireland; formed in '76 with limited musical proficiency
  - Constituted in response to a note posted on a high school bulletin board
  - Members: Bono (vocals, guitar), The Edge (David Howell Evans) (guitar, keyboards, vocals), Adam Clayton (bass), Larry Mullen, Jr. (percussion)
- Former names: "Feedback" and "The Hype"
- Achieved status of a top international act by mid-'80s
- Listed by Rolling Stone at #22 of 100 greatest artists of all time
- Consistently campaigns for human rights and social justice causes
- Inducted into R&R Hall of Fame in their 1<sup>st</sup> year of eligibility
- Multi-million album sales; 22 Grammy awards – more than any other band
- Band's 2<sup>nd</sup> album, *October* (released in '81) included overtly spiritual themes

*"During the album's recording sessions, Bono and The Edge left the band due to spiritual conflicts, and U2 ceased to exist for a brief period of time. Bono, The Edge, and Mullen had joined a Christian group in Dublin called the 'Shalom Fellowship', which led them to question the relationship between the Christian faith and the rock and roll lifestyle."<sup>3</sup>*

- For additional information concerning U2, please see the notes for Program #15, "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For"

<sup>1</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/40\\_\(song\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/40_(song))

<sup>2</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U2>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid 2



I waited patiently for the Lord  
 He inclined and heard my cry  
 He brought me up out of the pit  
 Out of the miry clay

- The intro to Psalm 40 is addressed to the “Chief Musician”, i.e., the Director of Music for the Israelites
  - Attributes authorship to King David
  - These words were sung by Jewish people in the Old Testament times, though we don’t know the tune
- The Promise Keeper’s anthem, “I Waited For The Lord On High”, is based on these same verses
  - Compare these lyrics with that song and the Scripture

I will sing, sing a new song  
 I will sing, sing a new song



- This new song is one the Lord puts in our mouth – “...*a hymn of praise to our God...*” (Ps. 40:3a)
  - David was in trouble,... so, why is he expressing thanks and praise to God? Can you do the same?
  - Several other Psalms urge us to sing to the Lord a new song; see Ps. 33:3, 96:1, 98:1, 144:9, 149:1

How long to sing this song?  
 How long to sing this song?  
 How long...how long...how long...  
 How long...to sing this song?

- At this point, Bono deviates from Psalm 40
  - What do you think he is asking? Why?
  - How would you answer his question?

He set my feet upon a rock  
 And made my footsteps firm  
 Many will see  
 Many will see and fear

- Ps. 40:3 goes on to say “...*and put their trust in the LORD*”
  - Can you do the same?
- What is meant by “fear” here? How about “afraid” below?  
*“Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell” – Matthew 10:28*

I will sing, sing a new song  
 I will sing, sing a new song

How long to sing this song?  
 How long to sing this song?  
 How long...how long...how long...  
 How long...to sing this song?

- In concert finale, U2 members leave the stage individually during repetitions of this chorus, until one member remains, then he goes – leaving only the audience to sing this chorus, which they traditionally do for several minutes

### Final Thoughts:

Psalm 40 doesn’t end with U2’s lyrics... it is rich with more promise and hope! ...

<sup>4</sup> *Blessed is the man who makes the LORD his trust, who does not look to the proud, to those who turn aside to false gods.*

<sup>5</sup> *Many, O LORD my God, are the wonders you have done. The things you planned for us no one can recount to you; were I to speak and tell of them, they would be too many to declare.*

<sup>8</sup> *I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart."*

<sup>11</sup> *Do not withhold your mercy from me, O LORD; may your love and your truth always protect me.*

<sup>16</sup> *But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; may those who love your salvation always say, "The LORD be exalted!"*

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