



"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

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Program 88 "Choices" © Billy Yates and Mike Curtis

Much of what we experience in life stems directly from choices that we make. If we abuse our bodies, it should come as no surprise when we encounter health problems. If we drive recklessly, it should be no shock when we wreck the car.

"Don't be deceived: God is not mocked. For whatever a man sows he will also reap, because the one who sows to his flesh will reap corruption from the flesh, but the one who sows to the Spirit will reap eternal life from the Spirit." – Galatians 6:7-8, Holman Christian Standard Bible

The Song ¹

- From 1999 album *The Cold Hard Truth*, by legendary country artist George Jones
- Essentially recounts Jones's true life story, having struggled with alcohol and drugs
- Listeners can relate to the message of living and dying by choices we make

The Artist – George Glenn Jones (1931 –) ²



- American country music singer from Beaumont, Texas
- 40-year member of the Grand Ole Opry; charted first hit in 1955
- Frequently referred to as "the greatest living country singer"
- Recorded 150+ hit records, 14 of which reached #1 on the country charts
- Known for distinctive voice and phrasing, and his marriage to Tammy Wynette
- Legendary for excessive drinking, drug use, stormy relationships with women, violent rages, and missing many performances (earned nickname of "No-Show Jones")
 - Once drove riding lawnmower to a liquor store after wife took away his car keys
 - With help of his wife Nancy, Jones has overcome his addictions
- Raised in a home with an alcoholic father; Influenced by gospel music; left home at 16 to sing and play on a radio station in Jasper, Texas; later served in the Marine Corps
- Other hits include: "White Lightning", "The Race Is On", "Tender Years", "She Thinks I Still Care", "Walk Through This World With Me", "We're Gonna Hold On", "The Grand Tour", "Golden Ring", "He Stopped Loving Her Today", "(I Was Country) When Country Wasn't Cool", "Still Doin' Time", "Yesterday's Wine", "I Always Get Lucky With You"
- Resides in Franklin, TN; still actively records and tours extensively

I've had choices
Since the day that I was born
There were voices
That told me right from wrong
If I had listened
No I wouldn't be here today
Living and dying
With the choices I made

"Everything is permissible for me' — but not everything is beneficial [i.e., 'helpful']. 'Everything is permissible for me' — but I will not be mastered by anything." – 1 Corinthians 6:12

- Choices have consequences. Christians should consider –
 - Is it helpful? Will I be mastered by this? Will it cause someone else to stumble? (see [1 Corinthians 8:7-13](#))
 - Does it glorify God? (see [1 Corinthians 10:31](#)) ³

¹ <http://www.songfacts.com/detail.php?id=4896>

² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Jones

³ <http://www.christiananswers.net/q-dml/dml-y003.html>

I was tempted
By an early age I found
I liked drinkin'
Oh, and I never turned it down
There were loved ones
But I turned them all away
Now I'm living and dying
With the choices I made

"No one undergoing a trial should say, 'I am being tempted by God.' For God is not tempted by evil, and He Himself doesn't tempt anyone. But each person is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his own evil desires." – James 1:13-14

"God is faithful and He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation He will also provide a way of escape, so that you are able to bear it." -- 1 Cor. 10:13

(Chorus Repeats)

I guess I'm payin'
For the things that I have done
If I could go back
Oh, **Lord** knows I'd run
But I'm still losin'
This game of life I play
Living and dying
With the choices I made

- George Jones titled his autobiography, *I Lived to Tell It All*
 - Reached #6 on *The New York Times* bestseller list in '96 ⁴
- Notice how the lyrics reveal taking ownership of the choices
 - Blames self – not the influence of an alcoholic father
- *"He will not leave [the guilty] unpunished, bringing the consequences of the fathers' wrongdoing on the children and grandchildren to the third and fourth generation."*
 - Exodus 34:7b

(Chorus Repeats)

Living and dying
With the choices I made

*"...I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; **therefore choose life**, that both you and your descendants may live; that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days" – Deuteronomy 30:19a-20*

Final Thoughts:

In light of his many years of reckless living, it's truly a testimony to the grace of God that George Jones has been sustained. The lyrics to this song lament "But I'm still losin' this game of life I play". It doesn't have to be that way. As long as we have life, we have the opportunity to choose to give that life, including whatever is left of it, to serve Jesus Christ.

In the Old Testament, we are told that Joshua assembled the Israelites and reminded them of how God had blessed and protected them. Given the choice between serving God or pagan idols, Joshua presented this clear and unambiguous instruction:

"...choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve... But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD." – Joshua 24:15

As a Bob Dylan song advises – "You gotta serve somebody". The choice is yours!

⁴ http://www.cmt.com/artists/az/jones_george/bio.html
