



"Cross Connection"

Radio Ministry of Hope Wesleyan Church and Wells of Salvation Ministries
Ultimate Oldies Radio – FM 97.7 and 101.5, Huber Heights, Ohio



Series: Christian Messages In Secular Music

05/21/08

Program 37 – “Crying In The Chapel” © Arthur “Artie” Glenn

The song¹:

- Written by Artie Glenn for his son Darrell who recorded it in 1953 while still in high school, along with Artie's band -- the Rhythm Riders. It went to #6
- A hit for several other artists -- June Valli #4, the Orioles #11, Rex Allen #8, Ella Fitzgerald #15, and Art Lund #23
- Elvis Presley recorded the version featured in today's program in 1960, but it wasn't released until April 1965 – as an “Easter special” single – it went to #3 on the singles chart, the greatest chart success for Presley over a 6-year span. It was later included on Presley's 1967 gospel album, *How Great Thou Art*

The recording artist^{2,3,4}:

What more can be said about Elvis Presley? Let's take a brief look at his spiritual side...

- Gospel music was one of the greatest influences in his music and in his soul, thanks to the many all-night gospel sing-ins he attended as a Memphis teenager
- During breaks at recording sessions or after concerts, Presley often joined in private with others for informal gospel music sessions
 - “Gospel pervaded Elvis' character and was a defining and enduring influence all of his days” – from interview in Rolling Stone magazine²
- Family lived just above the poverty line and attended the First Assembly of God Church (in Memphis TN), and its Pentecostal services always included singing
- 1st gospel release was “(There'll Be) Peace in the Valley (for Me)”; It hit #25 in 1957
- Recorded 2 gospel albums: *His Hand in Mine* (1960) and *How Great Thou Art* (1966)
- Despite a commanding stage presence, “...Presley was plagued by self-doubt, poor management, and a basic dissatisfaction with his life”⁴

You saw me crying in the chapel.
The tears I shed were tears of joy
I know the meaning of contentment
Now I am happy with the Lord

This stanza seems to describe a spiritual conversion
Do you have to be in a chapel or church building to find God?

- Saul found Him on the road to Damascus (Acts 9)
- Peter preached “open-air” to a crowd after Pentecost and 3,000 were converted (Acts 2:14-30)
- Philip witnessed to an Ethiopian eunuch who received Christ while in a chariot (Acts 8:26-40)
- “I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength” -- Philippians 4:12-13

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crying_in_the_Chapel

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

³ <http://www.christianmemorials.com/tributes/elvis-presley//obituary/>

⁴ <http://www.rollingstone.com/artists/elvispresley/biography>

Just a plain and simple chapel
 Where humble people go to pray
 I pray the Lord that I'll grow stronger
 As I live from day to day



Recommend a discussion of how churches and ministries have changed over the years

- You can find abandoned church buildings everywhere

A RURAL CHURCH

Tall grass marching up to a locked front door, Spiders spinning silken curtains for a paneless window, An old bell rusting in a rotting steeple, Mice, like undisciplined children, running about As the wind thunders a sermon of doom –	This is where Grandpa took his bride; This is where his firstborn was baptized; This is the last place he visited Before they laid him to rest. This is a rural church.
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-- Edmund E. Wells
© 1964

I've searched and I've searched
 But I couldn't find
 No way on earth
 To gain peace of mind

*"God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from Himself, because it is not there. There is no such thing."*⁵
 -- C.S. Lewis, from *A Clean Heart Create in Me*

Now I'm happy in the chapel
 Where people are of one accord
 We gather in the chapel
 Just to sing and praise the Lord

If only this were true! It remains a godly, but elusive goal;
 The church has all too often fallen prey to division and strife

- The church is its people – not one or more buildings
- *"...I pray also for those who will believe in me... that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you."* – John 17:20-21

You'll search and you'll search
 But you'll never find
 No way on earth
 To gain peace of mind

"Peace is not the absence of affliction, but the presence of God." – Author Unknown
"No God, no peace. Know God, know peace."
 – Author Unknown
"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" – Philippians 4:6-7

Take your troubles to the chapel
 Get down on your knees and pray
 Your burdens will be lighter
 And you'll surely find the way

Final thoughts:

The first sermon I ever preached was in a small country chapel. It was built and flourished during an era when the folks who attended were primarily farmers, and this was an essential part of their spiritual and social life. Today, many things about our world have changed, but one thing has not – no matter where we as Christians are, we are His temple – He lives in us. While it's nice to have a favorite place to worship and pray, we need not wait or rely upon any specific tradition, practice, ritual or building to find or communicate with God. The essence of our faith and Christian hope is a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. That doesn't change!

⁵ <http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/2964/lent1b.html>