



"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

04/23/08

Program 34 – **"Everything Is Beautiful"** – © 1970 Ray Stevens

The songwriter / artist, Ray Stevens¹:

- Born Harold Ray Ragsdale, in 1939, in Clarkdale, Georgia
- Country music and pop singer-songwriter, producer and studio musician best known for his novelty songs and also for some more serious works
- Other hits include -- "Ahab the Arab", "Harry the Hairy Ape", "The Streak", "Misty", "Jeremiah Peabody's Polyunsaturated Quick-Dissolving, Fast-Acting Pleasant-Tasting Green and Purple Pills", "It's Me Again, Margaret", "Gitarzan", "America, Communicate With Me", "Turn Your Radio On", "All My Trials", "Love Lifted Me", "Shriners Convention", "Mississippi Squirrel Revival", and "Would Jesus Wear a Rolex"
- Under the pseudonym "Henhouse Five Plus Two", Stevens recorded a version of Glenn Miller's "In The Mood" in the style of a clucking chicken
- Last chart record on the country charts was "Osama Yo' Mama" in 2002
- Used "laugh tracks" effectively in his music; released several comedy videos
- Recognized as Comedian of the Year annually for 9 consecutive years at the fan-voted Music City News awards, 1986-1994
- Won two Grammy's, and dozens of other awards through the years
- Inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1980

The song^{1,2}:

- A plea for love and tolerance during turbulent times in the US
- #1 on Billboard charts for two weeks in 1970
- Begins with children from Oak Hill Elementary School in Nashville, Tennessee, singing a well-known Christian chorus

Jesus loves the little children,
All the little children of the world.
Red and yellow, black and white,
They are precious in his sight.
Jesus loves the little children of the world

- Words: C. Herbert Woolston (1856-1927)
- Children often sing just the refrain -- a song all to itself!
- Music: George F. Root (1820-1895); Root originally wrote this tune for the American civil war song "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp"³

Everything is beautiful in its own way
Like the starry summer night, or a snow-covered winter's day
And everybody's beautiful in their own way
Under God's heaven, the world's gonna find the way

"God saw all that he had made, and it was very good" – Gen 1:31

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" – Gen 1:27, NIV

*"Jesus answered, **I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me**"* – John 14:6, NIV

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

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

³ <http://www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/j/e/jesloves.htm>

There is none so blind as he who will not see
 We must not close our minds;
 we must let our thoughts be free
 For every hour that passes by,
 we know the world gets a little bit older
 It's time to realize that beauty lies
 in the eyes of the beholder

- Jesus sees us not only as we are, but also as we can be
- "...a woman in the city who was a sinner, ...brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, ...began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner" – Luke 7:37-39
- o Jesus responded by forgiving the woman of her sins

(Chorus repeats)

We shouldn't care about the length of his hair,
 or the color of his skin
 Don't worry about what shows from without,
 but the love that lives within
 And we're gonna get it all together now;
 everything gonna work out fine
 Just take a little time to look on the good side my friend,
 And straighten it out in your mind

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character"
 – Martin Luther King, jr., in "I Have A Dream"⁴

(Chorus repeats)

Not without help from God!
 "I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out" – Romans 7:18

- Jesus clearly sees people in a Divine light and way... **Can we?**
- "When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd" – Matthew 9:36
- "...bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you" – Luke 6:28
- "...neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin" – John 8:11
- Jesus does not make mistakes. He made you, and died to provide the means of restored fellowship between you and God.

Final Thoughts:

Can we see the beauty in this world? Can we respond with a godly attitude? After my Dad passed away in 2005, I began sorting through his writings. I soon noticed a consistent theme, for he often wrote about the beauty of God's creation, and saw the glory of God in all of it. Here is a sampling from the Wells of Salvation website:
http://www.wellssofsalvation.com/html/seasonal_holiday_poetry.html :

Autumn Beauty

God made a little snowflake
 And dropped it through the air;
 It stayed for just a moment —
 So lacy, white, and fair.
 I watched its fragile beauty
 Dissolve before my eyes,
 But it had brought a pleasure
 No sum of money buys!

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Spring

It's so nice to see the sunshine
 Painting the gloomy skies with gold,
 And the trees and flowers beginning
 to bud again.
 Springtime is a happy time
 When life returns to the barren earth.
 How like the radiant beauty
 That floods a soul when Jesus comes in!
 Gloom and chaos disappear
 As light and order are restored
 By the Master Decorator.

-- Edmund E. Wells

Whiter Jewels

All that glitters is not gold;
 Some of it is snow,
 Sparkling like a thousand gems
 In a sunny glow;
 Or beneath a full, round moon,
 Shimm'ring like the stars,
 Painting freedom with a touch,
 Gilding all the bars –
 Barren, blackened branches and
 Solitary towers
 Ringing like a prison wall
 This cold world of ours.
 Till old winter's lock shall melt,
 Setting beauty free,
 Let the jewels of the snow
 Keep on crowning me

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⁴ <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkihavedream.htm>