

"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

09/04/08

Program 53 "Free Ride" © Dan Harman

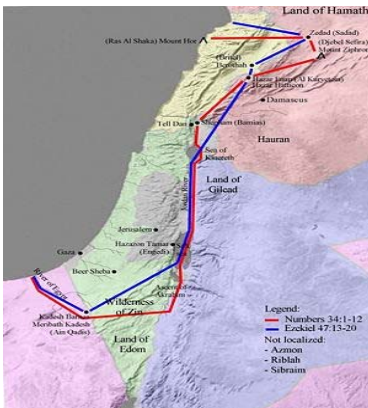
The Song ¹ –

- From hit album "They Only Come Out At Night" by the *Edgar Winter Group*
- Reached #14 on U.S. charts in 1973
- Covered by R&B group *Tavares* (1975) and Christian band *Audio Adrenaline* (1995)

The Artist – Edgar Winter ² –

- Edgar Holland Winter, born in 1946, in Beaumont, Texas
- Popular rock, jazz and blues musician with significant success in the '70s and '80s
- Vocalist and multi-instrumentalist – keyboards, saxophone, guitar, bass, percussion
- He and older brother, rock musician Johnny Winter, have albinism
- Achieved greatest success with the Edgar Winter Group, with other members Dan Hartman, Ronnie Montrose and Chuck Ruff
- Has performed and recorded with brother Johnny, and Rick Derringer (*McCoys*)
- "They Only Come Out At Night" album also featured the #1 instrumental hit "Frankenstein"
- His group *White Trash* opened on tour with Lynyrd Skynyrd when the latter's plane crashed in Mississippi in 1977, killing 3 members. Edgar's group was not on the plane
- Toured with Ringo Starr & His All Starr Band in 2006
- A Scientologist – has appeared in 7 issues of the Church of Scientology magazine

The mountain is high, the valley is low,
And you're confused on which way to go,
So I've come here to give you a hand,
And lead you into the **promised land**,



We've all heard the term "promised land" – but what does it mean?

- TV series spin-off from *Touched By An Angel*, '96-'99
- Land promised to Abram and his descendants (Gen. 15:18-21)
 - Essentially, the land occupied by the Canaanites
 - Described differently in Numbers 34:1-12 and Ezekiel 47:13-20
- One of the dictionary definitions is... "any longed-for place where one expects to find greater happiness"³
- There is an insatiable longing in the heart of mankind to live in an idyllic place, filled with happiness and bliss
 - E.g., Paradise, Utopia, Shangri-La, Xanadu, Nirvana, Shambala, El Dorado, Seventh Heaven, Arcadia



*"Far in the sea, to the west of Spain,
Is a country called Cokaygne.
There's no land not anywhere,
In goods or riches to compare.
Though Paradise be merry and bright
Cokaygne is of far fairer sight..."*

-- from "The Land of Cokaygne", c. 1315 ⁴

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_Ride_%28song%29

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

³ [Collins Essential English Dictionary](#) 2nd Edition 2006 © HarperCollins Publishers 2004, 2006

⁴ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Utopia>

So...

Come on and take a free ride [free ride!],
Come on and sit here by my side,
Come on and take a free ride!



When a sign or ad says “Free” – how do you react?

- Look for a catch? Assume “nothing is really free!”
- Eye it suspiciously, then move on?
- Look to see what’s wrong with it?

- Salvation – our ticket to the promised land of Heaven – in the presence of God – is a free gift, but it isn’t cheap!
 - Many believe it’s too good to be true!
- Our debt was paid for us. Who would do that? Why?

“...it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect” – 1 Peter 1:18-19

All over the country, I've seen it the same,
Nobody's winning at this kind of game,
We've got to do better, it's time to begin,
You know all the answers
Must come from within.

When God made the world, He said it was very good (Genesis 1:31). But because sin entered the world through the disobedience of our original parents, you and I live in a fallen world plagued with disruption.

“Nobody wins” without the redemption Jesus offers

No! Mankind has demonstrated repeatedly that the answer for a fallen world is neither generated from within us, nor within our capability to design.

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart; and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will direct your paths." -- Proverbs 3:5-6

Final thoughts:

In the late 1950s, television featured a hit series called “The Millionaire”. Each week, the plot was similar – a rich fellow would give a million dollars, tax free, to a selected individual. There was only one condition – the recipient could not disclose the source of the funds to anyone but their spouse, or the gift would be forfeited. Aren’t you glad there’s no “gag order” on receiving salvation through Jesus Christ? To the contrary, just before He ascended to God the Father, Jesus instructed His followers...

“...you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” – Acts 1:8, NIV

My father, Rev. Ed Wells, used to exclaim that he could sell rotten bananas easier than he could give away the gospel. Often, people don’t see themselves as sinful, and thus fail to recognize their need to trust in Jesus for the free gift of salvation. Why? How frustrating! Yet, be mindful that our responsibility is not to convert. Rather, our charter is to share the gospel, and trust the Holy Spirit to bring the lost under conviction, and lead them to repentance.

*Christ is the answer to your problems today
He will take your burden and your sins away
Look up, see Him smiling... He will never let you down
Look up after while and not a worry can be found...
Christ is the answer to your problems today
He'll take your grief and heartache all away!*

-- © Edmund E. Wells in *Wells of Salvation Songs*
