



"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

07/30/08

Program 48 "In The Year 2525 (Exordium and Terminus)" © 1964 Rick Evans

The Bible explains that the end times will be characterized by an increase in knowledge (Daniel 12:4). By that criterion, we should all be looking to the heavens! I have heard it said that the "state of the art" in engineering technology turns over a generation every 18 months. It's amazing how anyone can keep up with the pace of change. You can get a new personal computer for your birthday, only to find out that it's obsolete in some respect by Christmas!

Our featured song speculates about technological change and how it may impact mankind across future centuries. It clearly caught the interest of the listening public, reaching and retaining the top spot on the Billboard Hot 100 chart for 6 weeks in the summer of 1969. The song's references to God and judgment give us an obvious opportunity to look for a Cross Connection in our discussion.

The Song ^{1,2} –

- Radically different when written in '64 – Billboard's Top 10 from Jan 4, 1964: ¹
 - "Dominique", "There, I've Said It Again", "Charade", "Louie, Louie", "Wives And Lovers", "Java", "Deep Purple", "I'm Leaving It Up To You", "Blue Velvet", "Maria Elena"
- "One-hit wonder" in both the US and Great Britain – oddly, the song has no chorus
- "Exordium" = "beginning"; "Terminus" = "the end point"; both terms are from Latin
- Originally released on a small local record label in Lincoln NE in 1967
- Odessa, TX radio station popularized it; RCA picked it up in '69 for national distribution
- Was #1 on July 20, 1969 in the USA, the date of the first manned moon landing by astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin
- *"The overriding theme, of a world doomed by its passive acquiescence to and overdependence on its own overdone technologies, struck a resonant chord in millions of people around the world in the 1960s"*
- Appeared on list of songs deemed inappropriate by Clear Channel following 9/11 attacks
- According to some calculations, the "Age of Aquarius" will start in or around the year 2525 – may have had some influence on the choice of year in the song

The Group ³ – Zager and Evans

- Lincoln, Nebraska rock-pop duo of the late 1960s and early 1970s named after its two members, Denny Zager and Rick Evans, who met at Nebraska Wesleyan University
- Only act in rock music history to have a #1 hit single on both the U.S. and UK singles charts, and never have another chart single
- No longer perform as a duo, but remain friends in the music business
 - Denny Zager now builds custom guitars

¹ *I've Heard Those Songs Before*, p. 284, Elston Brooks, Morrow Quill Paperbacks, NY, 1981

² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/In_the_Year_2525

³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zager_and_Evans

In the year 2525
If man is still alive
If woman can survive
They may find

Unlike George Orwell's classic book 1984, which speculated the future, this song can't be overtaken by events for over 500 years!

It is the Lord Jesus who sustains us! Paul to the crowd at Athens – "...*he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else...For in him we live and move and have our being...*" – Acts 25b, 28a

In the year 3535
Ain't gonna need to tell the truth,
tell no lies
Everything you think, do, or say
Is in the pill you took today

"De-humanization" – no responsibility for actions

Compare this to our original parents – "*The man said, 'The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.'* Then the LORD God said to the woman, '*What is this you have done?*' The woman said, '*The serpent deceived me, and I ate.*'" – Genesis 3:12,13

In the year 4545
Ain't gonna need your teeth,
won't need your eyes
You won't find a thing to chew
Nobody's gonna look at you

Have you ever been in a cave and noticed creatures with no eyesight? Salamanders, spiders, fish, crustaceans, etc.

In the year 5555
Your arms are hanging limp at your sides
Your legs got nothing to do
Some machine is doing that for you

Attention all athletes!...

The Olympic Games of 5555 should be well worth the price of admission!

In the year 6565
Ain't gonna need no husband, won't need no wife
You'll pick your son, pick your daughter too
From the bottom of a long glass tube

This will be true in heaven – "*At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven*" (Matthew 22:30)

A lyric written 14 years before the world's first test tube baby was born – July 25, 1978!

In the year 7510
If God's a-comin' he ought to make it by then
Maybe he'll look around himself and say
Guess it's time for the Judgment day

No "if" necessary -- Jesus' will return!

When? "*No one knows about that day or hour*" – Matthew 24:36a

- Wikipedia documents numerous failed predictions concerning the date of Christ's return⁴

In the year 8510
God's gonna shake his mighty head
He'll either say I'm pleased
where man has been
Or tear it down and start again

At Jesus' ascension, 2 angels told the onlookers – "*This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.*" – Acts 1:11b

In effect, this is what God did with the flood, as described in Genesis 6-9

In the year 9595
I'm kinda wondering if man's gonna be alive
He's taken everything this old earth can give
And he ain't put back nothing

We are all stewards of God's creation, but our judgment as individuals will be rendered in relation to whether we have accepted Jesus' sacrifice as atonement for our sins!

Now it's been 10,000 years
Man has cried a billion tears
For what he never knew
Now man's reign is through

The Bible explains how the world as we know it will end – cleansed with fire (2 Peter 3:10). But that is not the end! The Apostle John, "...*saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God...*" (Revelation. 21:2a), where "...*the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them*" (Revelation 21:3b).

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

But through eternal night
The twinkling of starlight
So very far away
Maybe it's only yesterday

In the year 2525
If man is still alive
If woman can survive
They may find

In the year 3535
Ain't gonna need to tell the truth, tell no lies
Everything you think, do or say
Is in the pill you took today (fading)

The implied cycle of events here makes for an interesting way to end the song, but the Bible clearly describes a linear sequence of events -- how the world began (in Genesis), where we are today (the church age) and how we will either live / reign with God or be separated from Him throughout eternity (Revelation and other prophetic books).

He didn't use the Latin terms "Exordium and Terminus", but Jesus did say, "*I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End*" (Revelation 22:13).

Final thoughts:

Some amazing advances in science and medicine have been made with the light that God gives mankind. Today, the average life expectancy in the USA is over 30 years longer than it was in 1900.⁵ My own longevity has been sustained with an artificial heart valve made of carbon composite. We enjoy the benefits of medicines and procedures that treat a wide variety of conditions and diseases.

One thing that hasn't changed, however, is human nature and the fact that we live in a fallen world. For every promising advancement announced on the evening news, there seems to be a human atrocity reported to offset it. But we need not be anxious about any of the events unfolding in our world. Jesus knows our future in infinite detail...in fact, He holds it!

Many things about tomorrow,
I don't seem to understand;
But I know Who holds tomorrow,
And I know Who holds my hand⁶

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⁵ http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2007-08-11-life-expectancy_N.htm

⁶ from "I Know Who Holds Tomorrow", words and music © Ira Staphill