



"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

7/29/09

Program 96 "Long Black Train" © Josh Turner

The Song ¹

- Title track from '03 debut album by country artist Josh Turner
- Spent more than forty weeks on the *Billboard* country charts
- Peaked at #13 and received a gold certification
- Sung by Turner at his 2001 debut at the Grand Ole Opry



"After listening to the Hank Williams Sr. box set in the Belmont University library, Josh Turner was inspired to write 'Long Black Train.' After leaving the library, Josh explains, 'All of a sudden, I got this vision of a wide open space, out on the plains. There was a train running out in the middle of nowhere, and people were standing beside the tracks, just watching it go by. It dawned on me that the train was a physical metaphor for temptation. These people were standing there, deciding whether or not to get on it.' After getting back to his room, the song just poured out of him."

The Artist – Joshua Otis "Josh" Turner (1977-)²

"The life that I live and the experiences that I have always affect what comes out of me creatively. I think that's what makes music real." – Josh Turner

- American country music artist from Florence, SC
- 2nd album, *Your Man*, (2006) charted two #1 singles on *Billboard* country charts:
 - "Your Man" and "Would You Go With Me"
 - Certified 2x multi-platinum U.S
 - Also produced "Me and God", a single that peaked at #16
- 3rd studio album, *Everything Is Fine*, released in 07, produced #2 hit "Firecracker", and the #15 "Another Try" (a duet with Trisha Yearwood)
- All 3 albums have all been certified gold or higher
- 9 of his singles have charted on the *Billboard* country charts
- Began by singing lead and bass parts in his church choir
- Formed a gospel quartet called *Thankful Hearts*; sang bass and occasionally lead
- A devout Christian; played at local bars on open mic nights
- Wife, Jennifer, accompanies him on tour, plays keyboards, sings background vocals
- Inducted into Grand Ole Opry in 2007
- Plays George Beverly Shea in the film *Billy: The Early Years*, a biopic of Billy Graham
- Won Country Inspirational Songwriter of the Year Award for this song in 2004
 - Nominated for numerous other awards
- Musical influences include *The Stanley Brothers*, *The Osborne Brothers*, various gospel quartets and old *Opry* stars, *Waylon Jennings* and *Johnny Cash*³



¹ <http://countrymusic.about.com/od/joshturner/p/blpjturner.htm>

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

³ Ibid 1

There's a long black train,
 Comin' down the line,
 Feedin' off the souls that are lost and cryin',
 Rails of sin, only evil remains
 Watch out brother for that Long Black Train

“...since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.”
 -- Romans 1:20

Look to the heavens
 You can look to the skies
 You can find redemption
 Staring back into your eyes
 There is protection and there's
 Peace the same, burnin' your ticket for that
 Long Black Train

'Cause there's vict'ry in the Lord I say,
 Vict'ry in the lord,
 Cling to the Father and His holy name,
 And don't go ridin' on that Long Black Train

There's an engineer on that Long Black Train,
 Makin' you wonder if the ride is worth the pain,
 He's just a waiting on your heart to say
 Let me ride on that Long Black Train,

But you know there's vict'ry in the Lord I say,
 Vict'ry in the Lord,
 Cling to the Father and His holy name,
 And don't go ridin' on that Long Black Train

Well, I can hear the whistle from a mile away,
 It sounds so good
 But I must stay away
 That train is a beauty, makin' everybody stare
 But its only destination is the middle of nowhere,

But you know there's vict'ry in the Lord I say,
 Vict'ry in the Lord...

I said cling to the Father and His holy name
 And don't go ridin' on that long black train
 Yeah, watch out brother for that long black train
 The Devil's a drivin' that long black train

- Christians often use **black** to describe sin and / or the fate of sinners
- “He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son...” -- Colossians 1:13-14
- “... throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth” – Matthew 25:30
- “...there will be false teachers among you... Blackest darkness is reserved for them” – 2 Peter 2:1, 17b

- How does one get **on** the Long Black Train?
 “Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned” – Romans 5:12
- How does one get **off** of it?
 “When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” Jn 8:12
 “We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death.” – 1 John 3:14
 “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” – 2 Cor. 5:17

“He [Moses] chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.” – Hebrews 11:25-26

“But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” – 1 Cor. 15:57

Compare lyrics to these...

“Living easy, living free
 Season ticket on a one-way ride
 Asking nothing, leave me be
 Taking everything in my stride
 Don't need reason, don't need rhyme
 Ain't nothing I would rather do
 Going down, party time
 My friends are gonna be there too
 I'm on the highway to hell”

• Here, the writer clearly identifies the engineer!
Final Thought -- Always remember, Jesus has already purchased your ticket to **leave** that train!

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⁴ from “Highway to Hell”, © 1979 by Bon Scott, Angus Young and Malcolm Young, Atlantic Records