



"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

03/12/08

Program 27 – “Put Your Hand In The Hand” © 1970 Gene McClellan

From the heyday of the Jesus Movement era emerged this unashamedly gospel number which filled the airwaves during the summer of 1971. We need look no further than the first line of the opening chorus to find the obvious “Cross Connection” in this one!

The Songwriter, Gene McClellan¹ –

- Canadian singer-songwriter from Prince Edward Island
- Also wrote the hit, “Snowbird”, for fellow Canadian Anne Murray
- Won a Juno Award (Canadian; similar to Grammy) in 1971 for best songwriter
- Died in 1995, reportedly from suicide
- Posthumously inducted into Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame in 1995

The Recording Group, Ocean^{2,3} –

- Formed in summer of 1970 in Toronto, Canada
- When their first single, “Put Your Hand In The Hand” began to chart in 1971, the group was still playing high school dances in the Toronto area
- Released several singles in the early '70s, none as popular as their debut hit
- Unable to fully reconcile their religious beliefs with their monetary gains & obligations
- “Ripped off” by the business side of the music business, and disbanded in 1975
- One member lobbied to change legislation that would protect Canadian artists from signing contracts without a lawyer; another member committed suicide

The Song, "Put Your Hand in the Hand"^{3,4} –

- Gospel pop song – 22nd best-seller of the year in 1971 – 2 million copies
- Reached #2 in the US and #1 in Canada
- Lyrics to the first verse do not appear in most versions sung by other artists; most of the lyrics to the second verse differ in versions by most other artists
- Also covered in the 1970s by Anne Murray, Elvis Presley, Lynn Anderson, Randy Stonehill, Donny Hathaway and Joan Baez

Put your hand in the hand of the man who stilled the water
 Put your hand in the hand of the man who calmed the sea
 Take a look at yourself and-a you can look at others differently
 By puttin' your hand in the hand of the man from-a Gallilee.

- Today that hand is nail-scarred
 - Do you know why?
- Jesus explained this concept as, “...*first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye*” – Mat. 7:5
- As we walk hand in hand with Jesus, and are yielded to the Holy Spirit, we can become more selfless, and see others as Jesus sees them (i.e., “WWJD?”)

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

² http://theband.hiof.no/albums/put_your_hand_in_the_hand.html

³ http://jam.canoe.ca/Music/Pop_Encyclopedia/O/Ocean.html

⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Put_Your_Hand_in_the_Hand

Ev'ry time I look into the Holy Book I want to tremble (tremble)
 When I read about the part where the carpenter cleared the temple (temple)
 For the buyers and the sellers were no different fellas
 Than what I profess to be
 And it causes me shame to know we're not the people we should be.

(Chorus repeats)

You're not alone! "...for **all** have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" – Romans 3:23, NIV

- Does the Bible scare you? Should it?
 - More Bible verses on Hell than Heaven
 - Jesus spoke of Hell more than Heaven
- If God is love, what makes Him angry?
- Why was Jesus angry in this account? (Matthew 21:12)
- Consider that we too are temples
 - When worldly things replace Jesus as the focus within our temples, His response is likely much the same

My mama taught me how to pray before I reached the age of seven
 She said, "There'll come a time when there'll probably be room in heaven"
 But I'm feeling kinda of guilty 'bout the number of times
 To do what we must do
 Oh we forget what he said when we figured that he'd still make room

My mama taught me how to pray before I reached the age of seven
 When I'm down on my knees, that's when I'm closest to heaven
 Daddy lived his life, two kids and a wife
 Well you do what you must do
 But he showed me enough of what it takes to get me through.

(Chorus repeats twice)

- Never feel guilty about the number of times you approach God – especially for forgiveness and restoration! We are not perfect people, but He is a gracious God!
- "...how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven" – Mat 18:21-22*

- This is how the verse reads in most other recordings of the song – i.e., other than by Ocean – suggesting these were the McClellan lyrics
- Parents portrayed as godly models of faith
- *"...imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised" – Heb. 6:12, NIV*

Final Thoughts:

"Put Your Hand In The Hand" – and especially the chorus – describes the essence of Christianity – i.e., a hand-in-hand relationship with Jesus Christ. He not only paid the price for our sins, but He advocates for us before God the Father, who sees the righteousness of His Son when He would otherwise see our imperfections.

Over the years, I have heard many Christians tell how they have come under spiritual attack after having taken a strong stand for Jesus Christ. Consider how this song presented such a powerful witness to the world. Yet, it's sad to recognize that two people integrally connected to the song and its wonderful message ultimately committed suicide – the author, and one of the members of the group that made it popular. The Bible refers to Satan – our enemy, and God's enemy – as the "prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2, KJV). I'm convinced he is not a happy camper when God is glorified over the airwaves, such as He was and is through this song. As you take a stand for the Lord, be prepared to engage in spiritual battle. Do so by putting on the whole armor of God, and by keeping your hand in the hand of the man from Galilee!

*As I travel thru this pilgrim land there is a Friend who walks with me,
 Leads me safely through the sinking sand -- It is the Christ of Calvary;
 This would be my prayer, dear Lord, each day, to help me do the best I can,
 For I need Thy light to guide me day and night -- Blessed Jesus, hold my hand.*

-- From "Jesus Hold My Hand", © 1933 Albert E. Brumley
