



"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 47 "Walk A Mile In My Shoes" © 1970 Joe South

Although the featured song mentions God only once, we find several Cross Connections in its lyrics. Our note pages for these programs quote the words of Jesus in **red**, and other scriptural passages in **blue**. Just take a look at all the "red ink" throughout the following notes! "Walk A Mile In My Shoes" encourages all of us to do as Jesus clearly instructed us – to take care of our own faults before highlighting shortcomings in others.

The Song ¹ –

- Peaked at #12 on the charts in 1970
- Challenges hypocritical behavior

The Artist ^{2,3,4} – Joe South

- Born Joseph Alfred Souter, 28 February 1940, in Atlanta, Georgia
- Grammy Award winning singer-songwriter with a distinctive guitar sound.
- Wrote several hits in the late '60s and early '70s, e.g.,...
 - "Don't It Make You Wanna Go Home", "Games People Play", Deep Purple's "Hush", "Down In The Boondocks" and "I Knew You When" by Billy Joe Royal, the Osmonds' "Yo-Yo", and Lynn Anderson's "Rose Garden"
- Inducted into Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1979.
- Talented sideman – recorded guitar for Aretha Franklin ("Chain of Fools"), Tommy Roe ("Sheila"), Bob Dylan ("Blonde on Blonde), and Simon & Garfunkel ("Sound of Silence")
- Became deeply depressed when his brother Tommy committed suicide
 - Tommy drummed for his backup band, "The Believers", in performances and recording sessions
 - Joe took several years off; went to Maui, and "lived in a jungle"
- Retired from performing in the mid-'70s – returned to performing in '94 in London
- Inducted into Georgia Music Hall of Fame in 2003; currently active in music publishing

If I could be you and you could be me for just one hour
If we could find a way to get inside each other's mind
If you could see you through my eyes instead of your ego
I believe you'd be surprised to see that you'd been blind

This concept was explored in a famous book and film from the late '50s and early '60s – *Black Like Me*

The Lord is the only One who can see inside of us -- "*The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart*" – 1 Sam. 16:7b

Walk a mile in my shoes, walk a mile in my shoes
Yeah, before you abuse, criticize and accuse
Walk a mile in my shoes

"...first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye" – Matthew 7:5b

¹ <http://www.lyricsdownload.com/joe-south-walk-a-mile-in-my-shoes-lyrics.html>

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

³ <http://music.yahoo.com/ar-264893-bio--Joe-South>

⁴ http://uk.real.com/music/artist/Joe_South

Well, your whole world you see around you is just a reflection
And the law of common says you're gonna reap just what you sow

"Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows" – Gal. 6:7

So unless you've lived a life of total perfection
Mm-mm, you'd better be careful
of every stone that you should throw

Is this possible? What did Jesus mean in Matthew 5:48 – *"Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect"*?

Yet we spend the day throwin' stones at one another
'cause I don't think or wear my hair same way you do
Well, I may be common people but I'm your brother
And when you strike out and try to hurt me it's a 'hurtin you

Apparent reference to the account of Jesus' comments to the Pharisees who caught a woman in adultery – *"If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her."* – John 8:7b
"Do not judge, or you too will be judged" – Matthew 7:1

Walk a mile in my shoes, walk a mile in my shoes
Yeah, before you abuse, criticize and accuse
Walk a mile in my shoes

"...anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment... anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell" – Mat. 5:21b,22b

There are people on reservations and out in the ghettos
And brother, there, but for the grace of God, go you and I

If I only had the wings of little angels
don'tcha know I'd fly
To the top of the mountain and then I'd cry

Every Christian needs this kind of zeal to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ!

Walk a mile in my shoes, walk a mile in my shoes
Hey, before you abuse, criticize and accuse
Better walk a mile in my shoes

"From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked" – Luke 12:48b

Final thoughts:

Many years ago, I attended Ohio State University. I recall one occasion when I was sitting in a restroom stall between classes... I looked up and noticed someone had etched some graffiti on the stall panel – it read, "Joe South is watching you!" I'm not sure why, but I reacted by looking up at the ceiling and light fixtures trying to spot any hidden cameras!

Aren't you glad that Joe (or anyone else, for that matter!) isn't watching our every move or monitoring our thoughts like "Big Brother" in George Orwell's classic *1984*? Still, we should be mindful that Jesus Christ knows our hearts and actions. He has given us instruction that will help us become more Christ-like in dealings with our fellow man. As we meditate upon the truths highlighted in today's study, let's be sure to put them into action in our daily lives!
