



"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

4/29/09

Program 81 "40" © 1983 Bono

Here's a song by the world-renowned super group U2 – a secular band that some have labeled contemporary Christian. It's easy to see why, considering that many of their recordings reference Christian Scripture and/or principles. This one essentially transforms the first few verses of the 40th Psalm into a song that was placed on a secular album. It has been performed to, and sung by audiences all over the world!

The Song ¹

- 10th and final track from U2's 1983 album, *War*; not commercially released
- Noted primarily for its frequent live performances (over 300 times to date)
 - Traditionally, audience sings along for minutes after U2 has left the stage
- First verse based on Psalm 40:1-2; Second verse on Psalm 40:2-3
- Chorus loosely based in Psalm 40:3 –

"He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God..."

The Group – U2 ²

- Rock band from Dublin, Ireland; formed in '76 with limited musical proficiency
 - Constituted in response to a note posted on a high school bulletin board
 - Members: Bono (vocals, guitar), The Edge (David Howell Evans) (guitar, keyboards, vocals), Adam Clayton (bass), Larry Mullen, Jr. (percussion)
- Former names: "Feedback" and "The Hype"
- Achieved status of a top international act by mid-'80s
- Listed by Rolling Stone at #22 of 100 greatest artists of all time
- Consistently campaigns for human rights and social justice causes
- Inducted into R&R Hall of Fame in their 1st year of eligibility
- Multi-million album sales; 22 Grammy awards – more than any other band
- Band's 2nd album, *October* (released in '81) included overtly spiritual themes

"During the album's recording sessions, Bono and The Edge left the band due to spiritual conflicts, and U2 ceased to exist for a brief period of time. Bono, The Edge, and Mullen had joined a Christian group in Dublin called the 'Shalom Fellowship', which led them to question the relationship between the Christian faith and the rock and roll lifestyle."³

- For additional information concerning U2, please see the notes for Program #15, "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For"

¹ [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/40_\(song\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/40_(song))

² <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U2>

³ Ibid 2



I waited patiently for the Lord
 He inclined and heard my cry
 He brought me up out of the pit
 Out of the miry clay

- The intro to Psalm 40 is addressed to the “Chief Musician”, i.e., the Director of Music for the Israelites
 - Attributes authorship to King David
 - These words were sung by Jewish people in the Old Testament times, though we don’t know the tune
- The Promise Keeper’s anthem, “I Waited For The Lord On High”, is based on these same verses
 - Compare these lyrics with that song and the Scripture

I will sing, sing a new song
 I will sing, sing a new song



- This new song is one the Lord puts in our mouth – “...*a hymn of praise to our God...*” (Ps. 40:3a)
 - David was in trouble,... so, why is he expressing thanks and praise to God? Can you do the same?
 - Several other Psalms urge us to sing to the Lord a new song; see Ps. 33:3, 96:1, 98:1, 144:9, 149:1

How long to sing this song?
 How long to sing this song?
 How long...how long...how long...
 How long...to sing this song?

- At this point, Bono deviates from Psalm 40
 - What do you think he is asking? Why?
 - How would you answer his question?

He set my feet upon a rock
 And made my footsteps firm
 Many will see
 Many will see and fear

- Ps. 40:3 goes on to say “...*and put their trust in the LORD*”
 - Can you do the same?
- What is meant by “fear” here? How about “afraid” below?
“Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell” – Matthew 10:28

I will sing, sing a new song
 I will sing, sing a new song

- In concert finale, U2 members leave the stage individually during repetitions of this chorus, until one member remains, then he goes – leaving only the audience to sing this chorus, which they traditionally do for several minutes

How long to sing this song?
 How long to sing this song?
 How long...how long...how long...
 How long...to sing this song?

Final Thoughts:

Psalm 40 doesn’t end with U2’s lyrics... it is rich with more promise and hope! ...

⁴ *Blessed is the man who makes the LORD his trust, who does not look to the proud, to those who turn aside to false gods.*

⁵ *Many, O LORD my God, are the wonders you have done. The things you planned for us no one can recount to you; were I to speak and tell of them, they would be too many to declare.*

⁸ *I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart."*

¹¹ *Do not withhold your mercy from me, O LORD; may your love and your truth always protect me.*

¹⁶ *But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; may those who love your salvation always say, "The LORD be exalted!"*

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