



"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

7/7/09

Program 89 "Dust In The Wind" © 1977 Kerry Livgren and Steve Walsh

*"How rare it is for us to stop and appreciate the brevity of our lives! We assume that things will continue the way we they are day in and day out. The people in many of the countries on the Indian Ocean assumed it would be another vacation day. Little did anyone know that a cataclysmic tsunami would engulf and kill over 130,000 people. We simply assume that tomorrow will be like today and today will be like yesterday without thought about the brevity of life and that our time is truly a vapor."*¹

The Song ²

- Kansas guitarist Kerry Livgren wrote it after reading some Native American poetry. A line caught his attention -- "For All We Are Is Dust In The Wind" ³
- Hit single released in '77 by rock band Kansas
- From the album *Point of Know Return*, which charted at #4
 - "The band was almost done with the album when Livgren played this for them. He didn't want to use it, because it was not typical of their sound, but the band insisted they record it, and it became their biggest hit" ³
- Peaked at #6 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart – April 1978
 - Kansas' only top ten Billboard Hot 100 charting single
- Ranked #5 on VH1's 40 Greatest Slowrock songs of all time
- Cover versions by: Buddy Miles, The Scorpions, Metalium, former NY Yankee Bernie Williams, former Kansas singer John Elefante, Christian artists Acapella and Billy Smiley
- 45-rpm single certified gold (1 million units sold) shortly after the height of its popularity as a hit single. 25+ years later, certified gold for digital download sales
- *"I was only expressing my own searching for something."* – Kerry Livgren ³



The Group – Kansas ⁴

- American progressive rock band -- popular arena rock group in the '70s
- Formed in Topeka, KS, in '70; Rose to national prominence '74-'79
- Other hits [and highest chart position] include – "Carry On Wayward Son" (#11), "Point Of Know Return" (#28), "Play The Game Tonight" (#17), "All I Wanted" (#19), "People Of The South Wind" (#23), and "Fight Fire With Fire" (#3 Adult Contemp.)
- Cited by Garth Brooks as a "major influence" on his music and career
- 2 members became Christians: Kerry Livgren, Dave Hope
 - Caused creative tensions in the band; group members began to drift apart
 - Wrote and recorded overtly Christian music / messages
 - Attracted new audience / fan base
 - Lyrics used in religious tracts by evangelical Christians
- Songs still receive considerable air play on classic rock radio
- Remains a popular touring group, with some shifts in personnel alignment

¹ http://www.westpalmbeachchurchofchrist.com/articles/psalms/psalm_39.html

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

³ <http://www.songfacts.com/detail.php?id=380>

⁴ [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kansas_\(band\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kansas_(band))

I close my eyes, only for a moment,
and the moment's gone
All my dreams, pass before my eyes,
a curiosity
Dust in the wind,
all they are is dust in the wind

"The length of our days is seventy years — or eighty, if we have the strength; yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away." – Psalm 90:10, NIV

"You have made my days a mere handbreadth; the span of my years is as nothing before you. Each man's life is but a breath..." – Psalm 39:5

Same old song,
just a drop of water in an endless sea

"What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun." – Ecclesiastes 1:9

"All streams flow into the sea, yet the sea is never full. To the place the streams come from, there they return again." -- Ecclesiastes 1:7

All we do, crumbles to the ground,
though we refuse to see

"Man is a mere phantom as he goes to and fro: He bustles about, but only in vain; he heaps up wealth, not knowing who will get it." – Psalm 39:6

Dust in the wind,
all we are is dust in the wind

"As a man comes, so he departs, and what does he gain, since he toils for the wind?" – Ecclesiastes 5:16, NIV

Don't hang on,
nothing lasts forever but the earth and sky

"Generations come and generations go, but the earth remains forever" – Ecclesiastes 1:4, NIV

(Note: compare and contrast with...)

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away" – Matthew 24:35, NIV

It slips away,
and all your money won't another minute buy

Consider how many untimely departures from this life we see – many are famous singers

"...when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind; nothing was gained under the sun" – Ecclesiastes 2:11

Dust in the wind,
all we are is dust in the wind
Dust in the wind,
everything is dust in the wind

"Show me, O LORD, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting is my life." – Psalm 39:4

Final Thoughts:

One lady commented on the internet that this is the most depressing song she had ever heard, and it makes her want to "slit her wrists". Not only do our lives seem to pass quickly, the Bible characterizes our days as "troubles and sorrows". But, unlike the lyrics portray, our lives have hope and meaning when we enter a personal relationship with our Creator – the Lord Jesus Christ. He guides us through this life, and takes us into His presence for all eternity! We need only accept His sacrifice for our sins, and live for Him!

"Now listen, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.' Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, 'If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that.'" -- James 4:13-15, NIV

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