



"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

3/4/09

Program 73 “(I’ve Been) Searching So Long” © James Pankow

A book was written recently that says, at some time in our lives, we ask ourselves three key questions: “Who am I?”, “Where did I come from?”, and “Where am I going?”. At that point, we all become searchers – looking for answers... trying to find meaning for our lives. That’s the theme of this great song by *Chicago*. Let’s look at the Cross Connections!

The Song ^{1,2,3}

- 1st single released from album *Chicago VII*, reached #9 on U.S. Billboard Hot 100
 - Double album, released in 1974, featuring instrumental jazz on the first disc
 - Also included hits “Call On Me”, and “Wishing You Were Here”
- James Pankow, a trombonist, is principal architect of Chicago’s brass arrangements
 - He also wrote: “Make Me Smile”, “Colour My World”, “Just You ‘N’ Me”, “Old Days”, and (with Peter Cetera) “Feelin’ Stronger Every Day”
 - Recorded with Three Dog Night (1969 hit “Celebrate”) and the group Toto

The Group – Chicago ^{4,5}

- Highly-successful American pop / rock band formed in 1967 in Chicago, Illinois
- Formed by group of DePaul U. music students playing a series of late-night jams
- Name evolution: The Big Thing → Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) → Chicago
 - Final name change responded to a lawsuit threatened by the actual CTA
- Was the leading U.S. singles charting group during the 1970s
- One of the longest running and most successful U.S. pop/rock and roll groups
- Sold 120+ million albums worldwide: 22 gold, 18 platinum, and 8 multi-platinum
- Charted five #1 albums and 21 top ten hits
- Other hits (not otherwise mentioned above) include: “Does Anybody Really Know What Time It Is?”, “Beginnings”, “Questions 67 and 68”, “25 or 6 to 4”, “I’m A Man”, “Saturday In The Park”, “Wishing You Were Here” (with background vocals by the Beach Boys), “If You Leave Me Now”, “Harry Truman”, “Baby, What A Big Surprise”, “Hard to Say I’m Sorry/Get Away”, “Love Me Tomorrow”, “You’re The Inspiration”, “Hard Habit To Break”, “Will You Still Love Me?”, “What Kind Of Man Would I Be?”, “Look Away”, and “No Tell Lover”
- Guitarist / singer/ songwriter and group co-founder Terry Kath died accidentally in ‘78
 - Self-inflicted gunshot wound (reportedly incurred while cleaning his gun)
 - His last words: “Don’t worry, guys. It isn’t even loaded. See?”
- Still together after 4 decades, with 4 of its 6 founding members
- One of a few major groups that has never disbanded or taken an extended hiatus

¹ [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/\(I%27ve_Been\)_Searchin%27_So_Long](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/(I%27ve_Been)_Searchin%27_So_Long)

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

³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Pankow

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

⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chicago_discography

As my life goes on I believe
Somehow something's changed
Something deep inside -- Ooh a part of me

There's a strange new light in my eyes
Things I've never known
Changin' my life, changin' me

I've been searchin' so long to find an answer
Now I know my life has meaning, Ow oh

Now I see myself as I am feeling very free
Life is everything, Ooh it's meant to be
When my tears have come to an end
I will understand what I left behind
Part of me

I've been searching so long to find an answer
Now I know my life has meaning, woah woah

Searching
Don't you know I'm h___ yeah
For an answer to the question
Oh yeah for our minds
Baby, baby it's true
It's only natural, it's only natural baby, yeah
Good things in life take a long time
yeah yeah

- Life is filled with changes – some good, some bad
 - Childhood, school years, working years, retirement
 - Illness, aging, broken relationships, shattered dreams
- What might have changed the songwriter's life?
- What change does Jesus offer us?
"... if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" – 2 Cor. 5:17

The song does not tell us...

- where the writer has been looking for an answer
- what "...things I've never known" are changing him

See notes for Program 73 – "Three Wooden Crosses" for discussion of what we leave behind

We can seek and find life's meaning in a relationship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ!

"You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart" – Jeremiah 29:13, NIV

- As the lyrics close, the singer let's us know (with an expletive) that he's **still searching**
 - He's convinced that his life has meaning, but doesn't clearly grasp what it is
 - Are you searching for God? How do you know you have "...a long time" to find Him?

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future"
– Jeremiah 29:11, NIV

Final Thoughts –

There's a popular country song from 1980 that laments, "I was looking for love in all the wrong places...". Unfortunately, that pattern too often holds true for those searching for their life's purpose. The Bible tells us that Christians hold this treasure in jars of clay (see 2 Corinthians 4:7). What treasure? The prior verse tells us -- it is *"...the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ"*. That's what people are searching for, and that's what followers of Jesus are called to share with those who have yet to find the answer!

* * * * *