



"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

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Program 43 "Last Kiss" © 1962 Wayne Cochran

When we consider life and lifespan, we all have expectations. That's why it's far more difficult to deal with the sudden loss of a young son or daughter, than it is when the elderly pass away. Although we read in the Bible about some people who lived hundreds of years, the Psalmist sets some expectations for us – "*The length of our days is 70 years, or 80 if we have the strength*" (Psalm 90:10, NIV). Further, one of the 10 Commandments indicates a promise for long life -- "*Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you*" (Exodus 20:12, NIV). But God tells us that "*He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous*" (Matthew 5:45, NIV). In other words, Christians are not indemnified from the effects of sin in this fallen world. Occasionally, I peruse the obituaries in our local newspaper to see if I recognize any names. But just looking at the ages of the decedents reminds me that we have no assurance that any of us will still be here tomorrow. Some die in infancy, and others in the prime of life. Reasons vary. Some die of fatal illness, and some from injuries sustained in a car accident...

The Song ¹ –

- Written by Wayne Cochran in 1962, recorded it with the CC Riders in 1963
- Cochran lived near a notoriously dangerous highway; began writing the song in 1956
 - Finished it years later based on an incident in which several teens were killed and two seriously injured when their car struck a flatbed logging truck in 1962 .
 - Dedicated I to a 16-year-old girl who died in the accident while on a date
 - Local gas station attendant helping recover the bodies didn't recognize his own daughter²
- Gold record -- reached #2 on *Hot 100* pop charts for J. Frank Wilson & the Cavaliers in '64
- Recorded by Pearl Jam in '98 – hit #2 on the *Billboard* charts – their most successful release
- Just one among a trend of songs about tragedies, including – e.g., "Teen Angel" ('59), "Tell Laura I Love Her" ('60), "Dead Man's Curve" ('64), and "Leader of the Pack" ('64) ³

The Group: J. Frank Wilson and the Cavaliers ^{2,4,5} –

- Singer J. Frank Wilson joined the Cavaliers in '62 after a tour with the Air Force in Texas
- The band charted with only 1 other song, *Hey, Little One*, which reached #85
- Wilson, with or without the Cavaliers, continued to release records at least through 1978.
 - Continued to tour and play, but never overcame frustration with his floundering career
 - Ironically, Wilson was involved in a head-on car crash in Ohio in the mid-'60s when the driver, his manager, fell asleep at the wheel. The manager was killed instantly. Wilson survived with a few broken ribs and a broken ankle, but proceeded with the tour (including a performance on crutches on American Bandstand), taking only a week off
 - Died in 1991 at age 49, from prolonged alcoholism
- Band underwent numerous personnel changes over the years
 - One member, Mike Hodges, plays with the Praise and Worship team at his church, Covenant Way Christian Center in Lebanon, Ohio

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

² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teen_Angel_%28song%29

³ <http://www.songfacts.com/detail.php?id=2323>

⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._Frank_Wilson

⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._Frank_Wilson_and_the_Cavaliers

Well, where, oh, where can my baby be?
The Lord took her away from me

God is the Giver of life (John 1:3,4)
Is He also the "Taker" of life? Consider this verse...

"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" – Mat 10:28, NIV

She's gone to Heaven so I got to be good
So that I can see my baby when I leave
This world

Does **everyone** go to Heaven when they die?

Do you know someone who believes that?

"Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life" – Revelation 21:27

Does "being good" get us into Heaven?

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast" – Ephesians 2:8,9

Then what do good works mean? See the next verse:

"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" – Ephesians 2:10

We were out on a date in my daddy's car
We hadn't driven very far
There in the road, straight ahead,
A car was stalled. The engine was dead.
I couldn't stop so I swerved to the right
I'll never forget the sound that night
The cryin' tires, the bustin' glass,
The painful scream that I heard last

(Chorus repeats)

Well, when I woke up,
the rain was pourin' down
There were people standing all around
Somethin' warm running in my eyes,
But I found my baby somehow that night
I raised her head and then she smiled and said,
"Hold me, darling, for a little while"
I held her close. I kissed her our last kiss.
I found the love that I knew I would miss,
But now she's gone even though I hold her tight.
I lost my love, my life, that night

(Chorus repeats)

Will we recognize friends and relatives in Heaven?
I believe we will. Consider this:

David pleaded for God to spare his infant son -- the first child from his union with Bathsheba. David fasted, and spent his nights lying on the ground. After a week of suffering, the child died. David then told his servants,
"While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept. I thought, 'Who knows? The LORD may be gracious to me and let the child live.' But now that he is dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me" – 2 Sam. 12:22,23.

What comfort could David have of being with his child again if he could not distinguish his child from any other?

Final thoughts:

Insurance companies label natural disasters as "acts of God". All too often, many are quick to blame God for bad things, but rarely credit Him for good things – the countless blessings that we enjoy. After a series of tragedies had decimated God's servant Job, we find the last recorded words of his wife, directed to her husband, essentially blamed God for their misfortune, as she shouted – *"...Curse God and die!"* (Job 2:9b, NIV).

But physical death, no matter the cause or how untimely, is not the end of any of us. The atheist who dies in sin, not believing in an afterlife, will not only be shocked to discover that he or she still exists, but also (in judgment) that he or she has knees that will bow as he confesses Jesus Christ is Lord! (see Philippians 2:9-11). The key for each of us is to accept Jesus and live for Him – always ready to meet Him at any time!
