



"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

0709/08

Program 44 "Unanswered Prayers" © Garth Brooks, Pat Alger, Larry Bastian

I recently ran across a discussion on the internet where web-surfers commented on the following question: "Sometimes we don't get what we ask for in prayer why do you think that is so?" In response, one reader remarked, "Because if we got everything we prayed for, everybody would be married to a model and would have billions of dollars. God gives you what you need not what you want."¹ But the Bible explains...

"You want something but don't get it... you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures" – James 4:2a,3

You've no doubt heard it said that "Hindsight is 20-20", and that's probably an underlying theme to the story that unfolds in the lyrics of this song -- "Unanswered Prayer". It's great to know that God's foresight is 20-20. "...your Father knows what you need before you ask him" (Mat 6:8 NIV).

The Song ²

- Co-written by American Country Music artist Garth Brooks
- Reached #1 on the country billboard charts in 1990
- Story: A man runs into his high school sweetheart at a hometown football game. As he introduces her to his wife, he reminisces about that past relationship and how he had once prayed so fervently that this girl would be his forever. Now looks to his wife and realizes that God knew what He was doing all along

The Artist – Garth Brooks ³

- Troyal Garth Brooks -- country music singer-songwriter from Tulsa, Oklahoma
- Influenced by famous singer-songwriters, e.g., James Taylor (whom he idolized and named his first child after), Dan Fogelberg, Billy Joel and Bruce Springsteen
- His performances were noted for liveliness – influenced by rock group "KISS"
- One of the most successful careers in popular music history
 - 70+ hit singles, 15 charted albums, 130+ million albums sold in US alone
 - Sold more albums than any solo artist in recording history, and is the second-most selling in terms of album sales, behind only The Beatles
- His mother, Colleen Carroll, was a country music singer on the Capitol Records label in the 1950s and also a regular on the *Red Foley Show*
- Other noteworthy hits include -- "Friends in Low Places", "The Thunder Rolls", "Two of a Kind, Workin' on a Full House", and "If Tomorrow Never Comes"
- Amassed scores of music industry awards – many categories in double digits
- Inducted into Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2002
- Officially retired to spend time with family; but still performs to benefit charities
- Currently married to country music star Trisha Yearwood

¹ <http://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=2008052222417AAA9ns8>

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

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

Just the other night at a hometown football game
My wife and I ran into my old high school flame
And as I introduced them the past came back to me
And I couldn't help but think of the way things used to be

Have you ever attended a high school class reunion?

What changes did you notice in your classmates? What changes did they notice in you?

She was the one that I'd wanted for all times
And each night I'd spend prayin' that God would make her mine
And if he'd only grant me this wish I wished back then
I'd never ask for anything again

What have you prayed for that you never received?

Have you ever tried to "bargain" with God?

Sometimes I thank God for unanswered prayers
Remember when you're talkin' to the man upstairs
That just because he doesn't answer doesn't mean he don't care
Some of God's greatest gifts are unanswered prayers

If we don't receive what we pray for, what does this verse mean?...

"For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened" – Matthew 7:8

She wasn't quite the angel that I remembered in my dreams
And I could tell that time had changed me
In her eyes too it seemed
We tried to talk about the old days
There wasn't much we could recall
I guess the Lord knows what he's doin' after all

And as she walked away and I looked at my wife
And then and there I thanked the good Lord
For the gifts in my life

See "Final Thoughts" section below

(Chorus repeats)

Some of God's greatest gifts are all too often unanswered...
Some of God's greatest gifts are unanswered prayers

*"But if He chooses not to move
In the way we prayed He would
Confident He's working
all together for our good
I will stand behind His Word
For He is able" ⁴*

Final Thoughts –

One of the essay questions given to students seeking admission to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) is – *"Tell us about an experience which, at the time, really felt like the end of the world, but had it not happened, you would not be who you are today. Describe the process through which you discovered value in the negative."* Some of you may have experienced divorce, imprisonment, tragedy, abandonment or betrayal.

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose" – Romans 8:28, NIV

Who we are today is a product of our experiences – the good and the bad – the celebrations and the tragedies – what we have done, the decisions we have made, what others have done to us... If you have accepted, or will now accept Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord, you can rely upon the promise quoted above. No experience will be wasted. We do not have yesterday, but we have today and tomorrow. And God will use you and your testimony in His service!

⁴ From "He Is Able" by the group *Truth*