

Christ in Prophecy

Special 15: The Revolution in Christian Music

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: Are you aware of the fact that a revolution occurred in Christian music in the late 1960's and early 1970's? And are you aware of the fact that it ultimately impacted churches all across America? Stay tuned for the fascinating story.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Blessed Hope, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. I want to talk with you today about the revolution that occurred in Christian music back in the late 1960's and early 1970's. And I want to introduce you to some of the people who were involved in that revolution, people who became pioneers of Contemporary Christian Music. I don't know if you were around in the late 1960's, but it was a very exciting time in the history of modern day Christianity. Shortly after the Six Day War in Israel in 1968, the Holy Spirit began to move mightily on the hearts of young people all across this nation, including young Jews in their teens and twenties. The result was a massive wave of evangelism that resulted in tens of thousands of young people giving their lives to Jesus. This mighty move of the Spirit came to be called The Jesus Movement. It ultimately impacted churches of all kinds all across America. Worship music before that time was provided almost exclusively by pianos and organs.

Suddenly, churches started introducing other instruments like guitars and, horror of all horrors, drums. Unfortunately, this led to church splits when some people dug in their heels and said, "You are going to introduce guitars over my dead body!" Here's a cartoon from that era that shows an old-timer standing up in the congregation to give a message from the Lord. And what is the message? "I just got a word from the Lord. He says he's sick to death of guitars and tambourines."

Part 2

Dr. Reagan: Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy and our discussion of the revolution in Christian music that took place in the late 1960's and the early 1970's. One of the Christian leaders who saw the significance of the Jesus Movement and seized onto it at its early stages was Chuck Smith, the founder of the Calvary Chapel Churches in California. He began reaching out to the thousands of Hippies who had migrated to California and started telling them that the greatest high in life was not drugs but a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. They responded with enthusiasm, and he began holding huge baptismal services on the beaches of the Pacific Ocean. Many of these young people had great musical talents, and they were eager to use those talents to praise the Lord. One of those persons was the featured musician at our 2016 Bible Conference. He is a living example of the amazing, and miraculous power of God to change lives. The person I am talking about is Chuck Girard, a legendary figure in Christian music.

Chuck is a singer, songwriter, recording artist, and worship leader. He was also one of the pioneers of Contemporary Christian Music. When he appeared on the scene in the late 1960's, there were basically only two forms of Christian music. There were the Southern Gospel Quartet groups like The Blackwood Brothers. And there were individual singers like George Beverly Shea who specialized in singing hymns. Chuck was born in Los Angeles. He was raised in a legalistic denomination and had burned out on religion by the age of 15. That's when he discovered rock and roll and decided to devote his life to it. In his teens, he formed a group called The Castells, which had two national top 20 hits.

This led to a successful career as a studio singer and musician which included singing the lead vocals on The Hondells first two albums and their biggest hit, "Little Honda." Aren't these a cool bunch of dudes? In his early twenties Chuck became disillusioned with life, and like so many of his generation, he began experimenting with drugs. This led to a five-year search for God through LSD, eastern religion, and a committed hippie lifestyle. His search ended in 1970 at Calvary Chapel of Costa Mesa where he found true spiritual reality through accepting Jesus Christ as his Savior. His band members came along with him on this spiritual journey. Previously playing night clubs, preaching peace and love, and LSD they now had a new way to find God. They now had a new message, and with this change helped blaze the path for the beginnings of what would become known as The Jesus Movement and Contemporary Christian Music. The group was called Love Song, and Chuck sang with them for three years before launching a solo career with the first album simply titled, "Chuck Girard." It was this album that contained his most renowned song "Sometimes Alleluia." Here is his spiritual mentor, Chuck Smith, telling how he came in contact with Chuck Girard and his band.

Chuck Smith Introduction of Chuck and his band

Chuck Smith: Back in 1970 when we were over in the little chapel. And the Lord was working, so many young people were coming out. These hippies came in, long hair, beards. And they said, "We have a--"

Chuck Girard: He basically said, "Can I help you?"

Chuck Smith: And they said, "We're musicians and we got saved here just a short time ago. And the Lord has been giving us some Christian songs. And we would like to share them if we could here for the young people." And I looked at them and I thought, "Saved just a few weeks?" And uh. So, I wanted to be sort of safe and so I said, "Could you play something for me?" And so they went out to the old van, and a Volkswagen van and they brought in their guitars and all and they started to play. And as they started to play the Spirit--the Spirit just touched my heart. And I said, "Tonight we've got, this is Monday night we've got a young people's gathering tonight. And how about tonight?" And so, they said, "Well one of our guys is doing weekends in jail for a marijuana rap."

Not to point him out, they've all done it you know. They've all been arrested. But they said, "He gets off at noon, so we probably could play tonight." So, that was the beginning of the music. But the song that they played that just really touched my heart was, "Welcome Back."

Dr. Reagan: I love that story, and I love the great heart of Chuck Smith who has gone home to be with the Lord. I asked Chuck Girard to sing that song, "Welcome Back," for us at our Bible conference, and he agreed to do so. Here now, is Chuck Girard singing his song, "Welcome Back."

Chuck Girard Sings *Welcome Back*.

Welcome back
Welcome back
Welcome back
Welcome back

Welcome back to the things that you once believed in
Welcome back to what you knew was right from the start
All you had to do was to be what you always have wanted to be
Welcome back to the love that is in your heart

I know that you thought you could turn your back
And no one could see in your mind
But I can see that you know better now
You never were the untruthful kind
Yeah, and I'm so happy now to welcome you back

Wooo-ahaa, ahhh-hah-ahh-ahh-ahh-ahh
Wooo-ahaa, ahhh-hah-ahh-ahh-ahh-ahh
Sometimes you just don't know what you're missing
'Til you leave it for awhile
Wooh-Welcome back

Welcome back
Welcome back, Welcome back to Jesus
HMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM
Welcome back

Part 3

Dr. Reagan: Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy and our discussion of the revolution in Christian music that took place in the late 1960's and the early 1970's. While Chuck Girard and others like him who had come out of the Hippie Movement were creating new forms of Christian music in California, the same thing was happening in the central United States in Cincinnati, Ohio where young hippie Jews were accepting Jesus, or Yeshua as they called Him as their Messiah. One of those young Jews was Joel Chernoff who was a very gifted song writer and singer. He and a Jewish friend of his formed a group called Lamb, and Joel began to create a whole new genre of music called Messianic. I had the privilege of interviewing Joel back in 2007, and in that interview, he told about how the great move of the Holy Spirit occurred in the late 1960's following the Six Day War in 1967. Here is an excerpt from that interview.

Interview with Joel Chernoff

Dr. Reagan: How do you explain this sudden explosion of Messianic Judaism after the Six Day War in that period of time? Was there a change in the way that people began to approach Jews to try to bring them to Yeshua? Why so many Jews suddenly coming to Yeshua?

Joel Chernoff: Well, you know, there is something called Christ in prophecy. Prophecy, which is this show, this is what this show is all about. The latter days, the Scripture says the prophets say, a couple of major things would tell us we have passed into the period called the end of days. The restoration of physical Israel which took place in '48, 1948. And then God prophesied through many of his prophets, God, He would pour out His Spirit once again upon the dry bones of Israel. My people's bones. And that started to happen in 1967. Dave, nobody can take any credit for it. There wasn't any grand plan by any ministry or any great speaker that simply lit the fire. No. It was simply time in God's plan, the latter days, before He comes back to begin to pour out His Spirit. Because doesn't the Scripture say that the Messiah isn't coming back until the Jewish people say, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of God, the Lord."

Dr. Reagan: Absolutely. Jesus Himself said that.

Joel Chernoff: He said that must happen.

Dr. Reagan: Jesus Himself said that.

Joel Chernoff: That's exactly right.

Dr. Reagan: I will not come back until they say "Baruch haba B'shem Adonai. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord."

Joel Chernoff: That's exactly right. So that must happen first. And that began in '67. God just out of nowhere, in the Jesus people revival of that time. Very quietly. That was the most important outpouring of the Spirit since the First Century.

Dr. Reagan: Absolutely.

Joel Chernoff: Why? Because it included our people, by the tens of thousands.

Dr. Reagan: Well, Joel, you remind me of the prophecy in Joel 2 verse 28, the book named after you.

Joel Chernoff: That's right. In fact I'm named after it.

Dr. Reagan: It says, "And it will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions, even on the male and female servants and I will pour out my Spirit in those days." But the key is, that it will come about after this, well, after what? You back up and the rest of the thing is talking about the return of the Jews to the land and the reestablishment of their state. And it says, "After that I'm going to pour out my Spirit."

Joel Chernoff: That's right.

Dr. Reagan: And in 1948, the state was reestablished. And you know, it's amazing to me that one year later in May of 1949, a young man that nobody had ever heard of was holding a tent revival in Los Angeles. And that revival grew every day, greater, and greater, and greater, until finally Randolph Hearst who drove by every day in his limousine couldn't stand it any longer, he said, "I gotta find out what this!" He's a newspaper man! So he goes in, sits on the back row and the next day he sends a telegram to the Hearst media which was the media of the United States and it said "puff Graham." That's all it said. The next day thousands of reporters descended on that tent and the ministry of Billy Graham took off like a rocket. Touching more people around the world than any ministry since that time. And here it is, after the Jews are established in the land.

Joel Chernoff: And there's been many, many, outpourings of the Spirit since then. But see this is good news, really.

Dr. Reagan: Absolutely.

Joel Chernoff: Because you know, if this is true. And it is of course, God is pouring out His Spirit upon us, the dry bones of Israel. God is breathing on us again. This is good news for all of the families of this earth because God says in the book of Joel, "I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh." Paul actually says that if by the cutting off of some of these natural branches all of this has happened, what will be the story when the natural branches are grafted back into their own tree. What did he say? Life from the dead.

Dr. Reagan: That's right.

Joel Chernoff: Hey, that's good news. That is good news. All of the nations can say hallelujah for that.

Dr. Reagan: So you're in effect saying that this great outpouring of the Holy Spirit and this, as evidenced in many ways, one way being a large number of Jewish people coming to Yeshua.

Joel Chernoff: Huge number yes.

Dr. Reagan: Is an evidence that we're living in the end times.

Joel Chernoff: Absolutely.

Dr. Reagan: It's an evidence of the soon return of the Messiah.

Joel Chernoff: Clear sign. That's a clear sign. The restoration of Israel spiritually was to only happen in the final days, the last days. This is an end game play here.

Part 4

Dr. Reagan: Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy and our discussion of the revolution in Christian music that occurred in the late 1960's and early 1970's when there was a great movement of the Holy Spirit among young people in this nation. A phenomenon that came to be known as the Jesus Movement. Joel Chernoff was not only one of the leaders of this revolution, he was also the inventor of modern day Messianic Music. When I interviewed him back in 2007, I asked him to tell me how that came about.

Joel Chernoff Interview

Joel Chernoff: So I took the pop sound of the day. Which was something I was very attached to. Loved it. And then I said, let's take some of the older Jewish feels, minor feels, and minor keys, and put that together with that feel. With the modern feel. And out came the first album, the Lamb album, and all the songs. I kind of wrote songs '69 and '70, and '71, and then in '72 the first album was actually done. And really Dave, we didn't know if anybody would even care. We didn't know. We didn't what it was.

Dr. Reagan: Well, how in the world did you ever find anybody to publish these songs? I mean.

Joel Chernoff: Well, it was crazy. We came out with the album, Rick and I, the other partner in the group.

Dr. Reagan: What was his name?

Joel Chernoff: Coghill. Rick Coghill. He's a guitarist, he played with James Brown.

Dr. Reagan: So Lamb was basically two of you?

Joel Chernoff: It was just two of us.

Dr. Reagan: And some studio musicians?

Joel Chernoff: That's right; I was the singer and the songwriter and so forth. And so we came out with this album. And we got an invitation in the Chicago area. And we came and we sang before 4,000 people, it was our first concert, our first thing.

Dr. Reagan: First concert? 4,000?

Joel Chernoff: I was scared to death, but there were 4,000 kids there. And we sang five or six of those songs off that first album. And bam, the kids went crazy. They practically bought all of our thousand albums out the first night. And we were the number one group in the Chicago area for weeks, and weeks, and weeks. And then it started to spread from there. And look, we didn't plan it, we were on WMBI, Moody's station.

Dr. Reagan: Right.

Joel Chernoff: And they just loved the "Sacrificed Lamb," and "Baruch Ha Shem," and it was going all over the place. So I mean, this was something God did. We did not plan it out. We did not have great agents and managers. And, no we didn't. This was a spontaneous move of God's Spirit. He just took whatever talent was there. And we came out with this sound. And that popularized the Messianic sound. For the next seven or eight years, we were in the top three or four groups in the country, Christian groups. And then here's this Messianic group in the top five. Our albums are always number two, number three, number four, in the country. There were kids all over the country catching onto it. They didn't know what it was. And they didn't know what that sound was, Hebrew, some of them thought it was tongues, some of them thought they didn't know, but they liked it.

Dr. Reagan: All I knew is it made me want to dance, it really did. Every time I would hear your music it made me want to get up and dance.

Joel Chernoff: You're a dancer, aren't you? You're really a dancer.

Dr. Reagan: Well, I am very expressive in worship.

Joel Chernoff: Well that's good.

Dr. Reagan: And I just want to worship the Lord, you know.

Joel Chernoff: Well praise the Lord.

Dr. Reagan: And so Messianic Jewish music helps.

Joel Chernoff: It's a good thing.

Dr. Reagan: What makes music Messianic?

Joel Chernoff: Well, it's a couple of things. One is the actual sound of it.

Dr. Reagan: Yes, there's a certain rhythm to a lot of Jewish songs.

Joel Chernoff: Well, rhythm, the dance, eastern European dance. The Middle Eastern feels. Minor keys often times. And then sometimes it can just be the lyric--

Dr. Reagan: Yes.

Joel Chernoff: --is very Jewish in the place it's coming from. And so you feel like this is very, very Messianic even if the music is in a major key all the way through. But it feels, you kind of feel it coming out of the Scripture. And so there is different things that can cause it to be a part of it. But not every song I did was straight out Messianic, I was doing some rock and roll in there too. But as far as everybody was concerned, this was a new genre. They'd never heard this before.

Dr. Reagan: And folks, what a sound it was! Let me give you an example. Here is Joel Chernoff singing one the greatest songs he's ever written, *The Year of Jubilee*.

Joel Chernoff singing *The Year of Jubilee*

Sound the trumpet everywhere, all throughout the land,
Follow my decrees, you must obey my commands,
Gather with your families, come sing and clap your hands,
It is the Year of Jubilee
It is the Year of Jubilee
When the lame shall walk and the blind shall see,
When the Lord sets the captives free,
It is the year of Jubilee.

Sound the trumpet Israel, let all the people hear,
It is I the Lord your God, who draws you near,
I have not forsaken you, so have no fear
It is the Year of Jubilee

It is the Year of Jubilee
When the lame shall walk and the blind shall see,
When the Lord sets the captives free,
It is the Year of Jubilee.

Dai dai dai dai dai dai dai dai
Dai dai dai dai dai dai
Ohhhh dai dai dai dai
Dai dai dai dai dai dai

Sound the trumpet everywhere, let His praises ring,
Yeshua has redeemed mankind, salvation He brings,
For by His precious sacrifice are we standing free,
It is the Year of Jubilee
It is the Year of Jubilee
When the lame shall walk and the blind shall see,
When the Lord sets the captives free,
It is the year of Jubilee.

It is the Year of Jubilee
When the lame shall walk and the blind shall see,
When the Lord sets the captives free,
It is the Year of Jubilee.

It is the Year of Jubilee
When the lame shall walk and the blind shall see,
When the Lord sets the captives free,
It is the Year of Jubilee.

Part 6

Dr. Reagan: Well, folks, there you have it the story of how Contemporary Christian Music began in the late 1960's and early 1970's. There were, of course, many other individuals and groups involved people like: Andrae Crouch and the Disciples, The Archers, and The Pat Terry Group

And speaking of Pat Terry he wrote one of my favorite contemporary Christian music songs, called, "I Can't Wait!"

The words go like this:
I can't wait to see Jesus
In His glory as He bursts from the sky
I can't wait to be held in His arms, and see the glimmer in His eye
I can't wait to hear trumpets 'cause I know what they mean when they sound
I can't wait to cast off my burdens, and feel my feet leave the ground
I can't wait to see Heaven and to walk those streets of gold
I can't wait to check into my mansion, and get my sleeping bag unrolled
Tell me how it's gonna be, read it from the Bible again
I can't wait to see Jesus, 'cause Jesus is coming again

Well, folks that's our program for this week. I hope it has been a blessing to you, and I hope, the Lord willing, you will be back with us next week. Until then, this is Dave Reagan speaking for Lamb & Lion Ministries, saying, "Look up, be watchful, for our Redemption is drawing near!"