

# Contemporary Worship

Tuesday, 01 January 2008

January

8, 1990&hellip; January 8, 2008

January

8th, 1990, was the very first day of broadcast for WBVN. Now, some 17 years later I'm sitting at my desk from a new studio

location, amazingly, looking out the window at the front of the Marion Cultural & Civic Center. We

have just completed our 108th concert. It, the NewSong Rescue Tour, is still wrapped around my mind. It's funny how one moment in time can be so imprinted on our brain. Sometimes I can be talking to friends about the NewSong concert and feel the same emotions as I felt that November night. Joy comes to mind when I think back to that night. I purposely capitalized Joy because I think it was the Joy that only

God can bring as opposed to the type of momentary happy the secular can give. That Joy lingers, stays

awhile and is part of the fruit-bearing of this ministry. I was talking to a friend about it and speculated with him that the reason I think that concert, or any of our concerts, are that terrific is

because we get to work with people in a unique way at those events. Most of the time we are 'soulful' folks. We lead our lives being led by how we feel, what we see, or use

'man-logic' to assess every moment. In the concerts, I think we have a rare opportunity to be under the leadership of our spirits for a change. We kind of quit using our brains so much and find ourselves using our

hearts more. It's very

attractive to do that. I

watched the crowd when NewSong began to play and saw how much the people had

such a good time from the very beginning. Then I saw a transformation when NewSong recognized that something special was happening. They began to 'get into it' with the crowd. It's thrilling when that happens at

our concerts. All of a sudden, you have the crowd responding to the band and the band responding to the crowd. That's

a special moment. That's one

heart, one mind, a unity of purpose and it's a powerful combination. It maximizes the encouragement and love between believers at that

moment in time, and I think it offers a glimpse into our future together.

WOW,  
 starting year number 18! What a  
 great testimony to the provision of God and the generosity of His believers. You know we started this ministry with simply  
 a vision for  
 encouraging Christians in our listening community. When we first started working on the effort to put WBVN on the air,  
 it was a time that two large, national ministries had been getting a lot of  
 negative press about their mistakes and failures. It was certainly not a time when people had a lot of confidence in  
 ministry leadership. Having  
 asked people's opinion about starting a listener supported radio station,  
 I remember the general feeling was that it was probably the worst time to  
 try and do that. Imagine asking  
 people to help us financially when so much had been printed and broadcast  
 about the huge failures of those national ministries. However, our hearts were so broken for declaring the Gospel  
 of Grace that we simply could not ignore our unction to share the Love of  
 God. It had been such an  
 important and life-changing part of our own lives. I've told people in the past, it was like being 10 months pregnant  
 with that message and needing to "deliver" what was on the inside to the  
 outside of us. Truly, during  
 that time, we were following our hearts rather than our heads.

We  
 never had any idea WBVN would necessarily last so long. There has been no grand plan of how to program the  
 station. We've just made that up as we went. We didn't know how to raise funds but we knew we wanted to  
 do it  
 with integrity and modesty. We  
 have never known what to do next in this ministry but God seems to always  
 give us a "picture in our hearts" of the next thing to bring to the  
 community of believers. I'm  
 working on events all the way into the fall of 2008, all with the  
 expectation that they will be meaningful and encouraging to the people who  
 attend.

We feel that we simply "follow the cloud by day and the fire by night". It's a daily prayer of ours that  
 we permit the Spirit of God to  
 accomplish something through us. We have no doctrine to force on folks, not even a new  
 tradition to establish. Actually  
 the possibility of being profound for our listeners is indirectly  
 proportional to how little a role we individually play. The less we are in control, the larger role the Spirit of God can  
 play in leading ministry through WBVN. That vision for the future is interesting to me. It doesn't come because we  
 are perfect or super spiritual people.  
 (Just ask my wife.) It is in  
 some way in spite of us, not because of us. Our vision seems to come because we are yielded to it; our  
 heart-attitudes are available for it. It  
 seems to be given from moment to moment. We wake up each morning expecting God to show us the next step, not  
 having already determined what we will do each day, but believing He will  
 guide us in ministry each day. While it doesn't really change very much at all, it still

has motion to it. It's like green always being green, but still having the ability to be olive, forest or lime but still be green. Much of the time, it surprises even me what we get to share with our listeners. I didn't think that we would be bringing in the concert we are preparing for in March. Yet, once that vision came alive in us, and I think it is alive because God gifts that to us, I've already started living that moment with all our listeners. It has been placed in our hearts for your sake. It's a part of how He wishes to bless WBVN listeners. This month Mark Schultz will be here, in February one of the founding artist in CCM, Randy Stonehill and a new artist with extraordinary talent. March brings us true Contemporary Worship and April leaves me speechless that we even have the opportunity for that event. All are very different and offer unique opportunities for believers to experience a touch of God. There will be some tears, some laughter, a little amazement and stories and songs to affirm our Faith. I'm stunned by the opportunity this small radio station has to have such talent and stories to share.

It is a great relief for us to know our purpose and to know the simplicity of God's will for this ministry. We have never had imaginations to grow for growth sake, never been preoccupied with success, as if through that we would prove anything about God. We are here simply to "paint a picture of the Love of God" using music and gathering together for the edification of the Gospel. To bring together artist and musicians to sing hymns and psalms about the Grace of God. A friend commented to me the other day that he no longer could distinguish between the ministry he heard over the radio and the ministry he experienced at the concerts. That excited me because that has been a prayer of ours for 17 years now! A ministry that no matter what it does is known for doing it for the right reasons and people finding it valuable in their lives. Hope to see you often in 2008! God Bless and Thanks for 17 wonderful years.