

Five Amazing Songs I First Heard On TV Episodes

It is a beautiful thing when I am watching a TV show and a song I don't know plays behind a significant moment, especially a climax, and I am so blown away by it that I immediately look it up on the internet. It's cool when music and TV scenes come together with marvelous synergy and it's a song I already know. Yet when I do not know the song it is even better, as I love being introduced to new music. And when this collision of an unfamiliar song overlaying a TV moment rocks my world, the two will forever be linked in my mind. The song then becomes more than music and lyrics; it becomes part of TV lore.

This has happened dozens of times in my life. Here are five that rise to the top of the list.

[Note: There are major spoilers revealed in these scenes.]

"Not As We" (Alanis Morissette)

TV Episode: *House M.D.* 04:03 "97 Seconds"

This is my favorite *House* episode as it chronicles House's argument against the idea of an afterlife. His mind is not changed after he goes to extreme lengths to find the truth but the fact Wilson cleverly and articulately pushes back against House is a huge part of why I loved this show.

The song itself plays when House, after being told by a man who was legally dead for 97 seconds that there is something amazing on the other side, tries to replicate this experience by electrocuting himself in the hospital. Where he knows he will be revived quickly but not immediately. Honestly, the song lyrics do not match the scene to me and would play far

better behind a person trying to move on after an intense break-up or a death. But the music does match the tone of the episode and I'm sure that is why they chose it.

The song reaches deep in its emotion and really pulls me in. Alanis Morissette did this for a lot of people many times over, especially women. This one time she got me as well. I've listened to it dozens of times.

"One October Song" (Nico Stai)

TV Episodes: *Chuck* 03.18 "Chuck vs. the Subway" and 04.07 "Chuck vs. the Fistfight"

Chuck is a sleeper show to me, one that doesn't have a huge following in my circles but was surprisingly good and very versatile. An action-comedy at heart, it had plenty of romance and drama and heartstring-pulling. It also had some epic guest spots that gave tribute to the 80s, including Dolph Lundgren in a one-off and Linda Hamilton and Scott Bakula in recurring roles as Chuck's parents.

Perhaps the most tear-jerking plot development in the series is when Stephen suddenly gets killed by Shaw at the end of Season 3. This song plays alongside that moment and enhances the emotion and has compelled me to listen to it over and over again. Which in turn lets me relive this *Chuck* episode. The song plays again at the end of a Season 4 episode and compliments it as well.

"Boston" (Augustana)

TV Episode: *Scrubs* 05:19 "His Story III"

The Janitor on *Scrubs* had a pretty simple role on the show: to give J.D. an extremely hard time and to make super weird off the cuff comments that bordered on disturbing. So when we got

a chance to peel back the curtain a little and see him as a human being, as we do in this episode, it is special. Make no mistake—the ending moment with the song is set up by the Janitor kidnapping J.D. and making a bunch of random hilarious declarations to a man in the hospital who needed a computer to talk but could not for a while as his computer was broken.

Since no one else would talk to him and because everyone else was busy insulting the janitor for having a menial job, the janitor utilizes this man's forced silence to vent to him. And, as a result, to bond with him. It's very subtle and doesn't really pay off until the very end the conversation when Dr. Cox comes in with the sick man's new computer and the first thing the man says is "Thank you". After Dr. Cox accepts his gratitude the man says, "I wasn't talking to you," before the camera pans to the Janitor mopping up the floor with a look of humble satisfaction at this small victory in his monotonous work life. At that very moment, the line from this song, "No one knows my name" is heard. Which is just perfect, since the Janitor's name is never given in this show and since the whole point of this subplot was to highlight his invisible job in a place where the most important life or death jobs are on display.

Honorable mentions for *Scrubs* would include "Closer" by Joshua Radkin and "Waiting for My Real Life to Begin" by Colin Hay. This show mastered music and climaxes so well I had my own "Scrubs" playlist on iTunes.

"I Go To The Barn Because I Like The" (Band of Horses)

TV Episode: *Psych* 04.16 "Mr. Yin Presents"

This is my favorite TV episode of all time, of any genre, and this song helps it achieve that lofty accolade.

The Yang trilogy is truly exceptional entertainment, from the heightened stakes, to the villain's acumen, to Mary's

presence, to everything that Shawn and Gus say and do. And at the climax of the second part—the episode that honors film Part 2s like *Empire Strikes Back* and *Godfather II* by being the apex of the series—we get a mind-blowing and goosebump-shattering cliffhanger. And the song that James Roday chose to play along with it was, in his words, the only song he could have chosen that would work for this ending.

It begins with Abigail telling Shawn that unless he can give up Psych and having psychopaths wanting to hurt the people he loves, she can no longer be with him. Then it cuts to a series of poignant scenes without words that melt my heart every time: Juliet finally breaks down in Lassiter's arms after trying to hold it together after her traumatic experience, Henry cleans the paint off of the Psych office door that Yin used to taunt Shawn, Shawn and Gus attend Mary's funeral dressed in full racquetball attire, Yang stares ahead from her padded cell and Yin comes home as the camera pans to a picture on his table of....Yang and young Shawn? WHAT???

Just a phenomenal three minutes of TV. It messed with my head for days. And I quickly found the song on iTunes, put it on my iPod Nano and listened to it 50 times the next few days.

“Easier to Lie” (Aqualung)

TV Episode: *Lie to Me* 01:01 “Pilot”

Lie To Me didn't have the best series premiere of any show ever (*Lost* and *Friday Night Lights* would be shows on that short list) but it was still excellent. And after a twist ending where Cal lies to get a girl to tell the truth, this song helps close the episode over a montage of scenes that gave me chill bumps and let me know this was going to be my kind of show. I also love the added touch of Dr. Lightman telling Rita: “Believe what you want to believe. Everyone else does.” This has never been more obvious than in the social

media age.

So that is my list. What are some of yours?

REO Radio

If you have paid any attention to REO, you know we love music. All kinds of music, in fact. I've lost track of how many articles we have published that revolve around music and song. We've published multiple [playlists](#), a series on the forgotten history of Christian rock, and many, many other [articles](#) that are inspired by our love and appreciation of all the [wonderful music](#) that has been and is being created.

I love listening to the radio. It's always fun to hear a song you love play over the airwaves. At least, it is for me. I love Christian music – CCM. I have since childhood. While I love secular music as well, my first love will always be grounded in songs that are infused with a sense of faith, grace, and redemption. You can find that kind of music in the secular world, but you might have to wade through a lot of garbage as well. So naturally, my heart turns toward music that is created by believers.

Unfortunately, most Christian radio these days is stuck in an endless loop of recency bias. Christian radio stations play the same handful of songs, all of which have released in the last year or so, and they play them repeatedly. (We dealt with this idea in more depth on our Christian Rock series – you can read those starting [here](#).) Based on the popularity of those

articles and playlists, I know we are not alone in our desire to hear songs from every generation and multiple styles and genres.

That is where this playlist comes in. We have been putting this together for some time. We've spent hours selecting the songs, sequencing the order, and doing our best to find the right blend of sounds, artists, and styles. If you are familiar with secular radio stations that play hits from various eras and genres, this is that, only featuring Christian music. We tried very hard to include as much variety as possible. If you have any history with CCM, you will be familiar with a lot of these songs though I'm sure there will be some new songs to just about everyone – that is intentional. While we focused on including artists and songs that would be easily recognizable to as many people as possible, we also wanted to do our best to introduce our readers/listeners to some music that they might have missed. And for those that love the newest Christian music, don't worry. We included plenty of those songs and artists as well.

So, without any more delay, we present to you *REO Radio*. The playlist is 150 songs. We recommend that you follow it on Spotify and listen to it in the order we created – though that is not an absolute necessity. We think you could easily put this playlist on in the morning when you get to work and listen to it all day and you will not repeat a song. We hope it will serve as a journey through the varied textures, styles, and sounds of Christian music. We hope it's a journey that many of you will take and enjoy. We know we enjoyed putting it together. Thanks for reading and thanks for listening. Feel free to share this playlist with your likeminded friends. Oh, and this playlist will evolve over time. We will continue to tweak it, adding and subtracting songs as they come to mind.

Five Very Cool Songs Written For TV Plots

Music and television go together like music and weddings, or music and long road trips, or music and...just about anything. Between [TV opening themes](#), songs playing behind dramatic climaxes and the topic I'm covering today, TV has wowed me with music too many times to count.

One unique thing I've really come to appreciate from my thousands of hours of TV watching over 40 years is when a TV show doesn't simply rely on an already popular song to help advance a plotline, but they actually write from scratch and perform it as part of the episodes' plot. This organic approach makes TV more real to me. Today I want to discuss some of my favorites.

Just to set the criteria clearly, I am not speaking to the aforementioned TV theme songs, though there are dozens of those that are awesome and you can read our take on the Top 10 ever here. Also, I will be writing about songs that have lyrics, to help narrow it down (if I only did music and not lyrics, *LOST* would dominate this list). So without further ado, here are five amazing songs that were written especially for TV episode plots:

"The Pit" [Mouse Rat, *Parks and Rec*]

"Bye-Bye, Lil' Sebastian (5,000 Candles in the Wind)" is probably the better song and the standard for all other songs in this odd category, but there is something special about this Andy Dwyer original. First, it's quintessential Andy.

Pure, unadulterated, lovable idiot Andy. Second, I think the fact it ties into a huge PnR storyline makes it memorable. Additionally, it's lyrically simple but that is part of the appeal I think. Lastly, it got a huge bump in my mind when April played it for Andy as an apology for not respecting his band. But I can't lie, a huge reason above all others that I love this song is because its guitar music takes me back to 1991. Back when I cared a lot more about music and riffs than lyrics and content. I could listen to this 90 seconds on repeat many days.



“If I Didn’t Have You (Bernadette’s Song)” [Howard Wolowitz, *The Big Bang Theory*]

Originally written by the modern comedic musical duo Garfunkel and Oates (both of whom you probably have seen in multiple TV shows or movies, including *The Big Bang Theory*), Simon Helberg used his real world talent to kill this scene as Howard playing and singing an A+ romantic number to his wife. It is perfectly written for the show's quirky, nerdy-yet-cool personality, summing up the committed relationship between the

two scientists by referencing everything from binary code to isotopes to *Doctor Who* and the TARDIS. And it has a line in Klingon! LOL. It is a song that touches the brain and the heart at the same time, supremely endearing and deeply emotive. BBT will never be my favorite sitcom but this original song is among the best ever on TV to me.



“That’s An Adventure” (Main Cast, *Community*)

In all of *Community*’s outrageous episode premises, having a muppet episode did my heart good, having been a huge fan of Kermit, Miss Piggy, et. al growing up, and feeling a deep kinship to Gonzo especially. Even to adulthood.

But what really brought this episode home was that it was, like the Jim Henson Muppet movies, a musical. And the magnum opus of the cast was a jolly, joyful jaunt of a tune called “That’s An Adventure,” that I affectionately refer to as “The Hot Air Balloon Song”. My wife can testify that no song originally written for a TV has gotten to me like this one.

The gang feels like they’re in a rut and they need something original to do together to shake up the doldrums. They need an

expedition. They go through some ideas that they disagree about as the song begins before Annie satisfies all of their criteria by suggesting a hot air balloon ride. “Yes! That’s an adventure!” And so one of the most lyrically hilarious, musically magical songs I’ve ever heard takes off.

I’ve actually listened to this song many times while working out and I doubt I have gone more than a month of time without listening to it since I first heard it in August 2017. That’s how much I love this song. It never, ever fails to put me in a good mood.



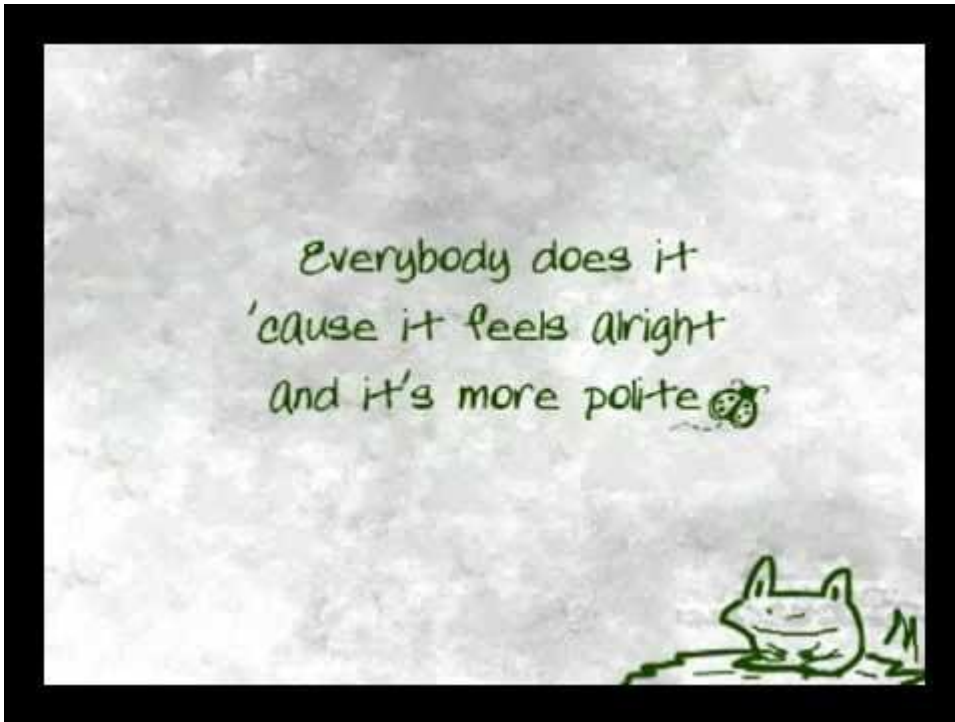
“White Lie” (Eli Loker, *Lie To Me*)

Unlike the rest of the songs on this list, this one was from a drama and not a comedy. Yet the song is amusing and compliments the show extremely well.

Loker had to take care of some visiting kids during a crisis at the Lightman Group HQ and he entertains them with a song that goes along with what his company is about yet is suitable for children: white lies. It’s quite charming and always brings a smile to my face.

I confess I liked this show and was disappointed that FOX cancelled it after three seasons and that it never got picked

up elsewhere. This simple song is just a small piece of evidence of its originality that I enjoyed.



"Semi-Weirdo" (Gonzo, *Muppet Babies*)

The Muppets in their various variations dealt frequently with Gonzo's uniqueness. The movie *Muppets from Space* chronicles Gonzo trying to get in touch with his kind, who are from another planet. A book called "What's a Gonzo?" deals with Gonzo's confusion over not being a regular animal like Kermit or Piggy and trying to figure out what he is, and ends with him realizing 'You're a Gonzo' and "Isn't that enough?". They always dealt with this in a clever and healthy way.

This *Muppet Babies* episode is no different. They did plenty of musical type episodes and characters would break into song frequently. Here, Gonzo bemoans the fact he's odd with a contemplative song that starts melancholy but ends upbeat and, well, weird. It's a perfect way for Gonzo to express himself, starting off with self-doubt and ending with self-realization. If you think I'm reaching too deep with that, you're probably

not a Gonzo.



So there is my list. Do you have any you like? Please share below!

REO Presents: New Year's Recommendations

We write reviews often. We've also had a semi-consistent book review/recommendation series. (We really need to update that...) This will be a little different. Instead of focusing on one thing: movies, books, music, etc... we are going to try to paint a broad view of things we love that we think you should check out. These blurbs are going to be fast and furious – all around 200 words and all about things we think are pretty great. Consider them our New Year's gift to you.

Gowdy Cannon



TV Show – Chuck



This is not a popular show but my wife and I watched it this year on Amazon Prime Video. I was blown away. It's not like any other TV show I've watched. It defies any genre box. It may be a comedy at its heart but it has extremely well-executed action scenes and its most important story arc is romance. In a world full of Ross and Rachels it dared to give us Bartowski and Walker. This show reached deep and pulled

wonderful emotion from me often.

Levi, Stahovski, Gomez, and Baldwin are unforgettable as the main players and like any TV show worth watching the role players are dynamite, highlighted by Jeffster! and their hijinks and musical concerts (which were basically the same thing). It is also replete with unforgettable guest stars and if you loved the 80s as much as I did, you will probably get giddy with their choices.

It can be a tad campy and goofy at times, but that never bothered me. It is exceptional at its strengths and it was fantastic entertainment for five seasons.

Food – Bojangles



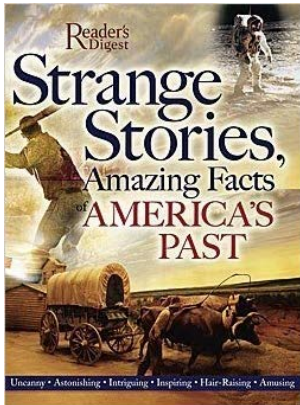
It's a shame that so often in America if you claim you like something, people sometimes interpret that to mean you do not like other similar things. I love Chick-Fil-A and think it is blessed by God, but I also eat and thoroughly enjoy KFC and Popeye's. And to me, the second best chicken place I've had in my life is Bojangles, which seems to be less known than these other three. Probably because it is so regional (though its regional fans are pretty passionate from what I can tell).

Whether sandwiches, strips, sides, or those glorious biscuits, Bojangles has excellent quality in taste. There used to be one in Turbeville, SC and any time I was down there visiting family and someone said, "Let's just pick up some Bojangles for lunch" I would get quite excited. No place has equaled CFA to me but this place is close. And it deserves a huge fanbase.

Ben Plunkett



Book – Strange Stories, Amazing Facts of America's Past



Throughout most of the second decade of my childhood (about 11-18) I was obsessed with what I called fact books (Most people know them as books of trivia, but I prefer fact books. I suppose they might not be useful for a person's day to day life, but is any information actually useless? I think not.)

Anyway, when I was 16 my parents got me this particular quality hardback fact book for Christmas. While I am no longer consumed with fact books and have sold most of them, I still have this one and still read portions of it now and then. This book does not attempt to cover all the important basics of American history. What it does do is to highlight fascinating stories about its history that are not discussed much or at all in history class. My edition was published by Reader's Digest in 1989. They published a new edition in 2007. I cannot comment on that edition since I have not read it yet.

TV Show – Better Call Saul



I realize this show is *fairly* popular but I don't understand why this show isn't more popular than it is. My guess is that people were disappointed that Better Call Saul, which serves as a prequel to Breaking Bad, wasn't a clone of its predecessor regarding its how the story plays out. It is true that the two shows have the same basic outer feel and framework. It is also abundantly clear that the two are part of the same universe (if you are familiar with both, that is). But the individual stories themselves are very different. Better Call Saul is less dark, intense than Breaking Bad. It is also basically an extremely well fleshed out legal story with multiple intriguing plotlines and angles. The show stars Bob Odenkirk who plays Jimmy McGill AKA Saul Goodman but also stars an amazing

ensemble cast. Odenkirk and every one of his co-stars bring it every episode. Forgive the hyperbole but most of them deserve every acting award in the history of mankind.

I will probably be destroyed for saying this, but I believe Better Call Saul is better than Break. In fact, it is in the running for my favorite show of all time. It had an extremely good first season and has been greater every season (It recently finished its fourth).

D.A. Speer



Board Game: Dropmix

One of the most off-the-radar board games right now sounds like something right out of the future. DropMix (created by Harmonix studios...you know, the same team that created Rock Band) has players placing cards onto an electronic, Bluetooth-powered board with six spaces for cards. Each card in the deck has a chip inside of it, and each card space is equipped with a wireless chip reader. When you place a card on the board, the game (which runs on a tablet or phone that sits at the front of the board) reads it, syncs it to BPM and the set key, and then incorporates the loop into the mix. There are cards

that have drum loops, vocal tracks, instrument tracks, or even custom-designed effects.

You can DJ your own set in “Freestyle” mode, go head to head in a VS mode, or even play a new Puzzle game based on a surprisingly interesting card game that is incorporated. The music source material is all over the place (electronic, rock, country, pop), and more expansion packs are coming out all the time. You can find the base set on sale frequently...I bought a new one for \$30! At the very least, check it out on YouTube and marvel at the technical genius:

Phill Lytle



Food – Aldi “Journey to India” Tikka Masala Simmer Sauce



In the past few years, my wife and I have fallen in love with Indian food. Unfortunately, it's cost-prohibitive to get it as often as we would like. Enter: Aldi and their amazing sauce in a jar. I was skeptical it would taste anywhere close to restaurant quality, but I was wrong. We keep things simple with some seasoned chicken we sauté in olive oil and some steamed veggies added to the sauce to make it a bit more “healthy.” We serve it over

white Basmati rice and we are good to go. It's moderately spicy so if that's not your thing, you shouldn't be eating Indian food anyway.

Comedian – Nate Bargatze

Maybe you've seen him on The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon. Maybe you've seen his special on Netflix. Perhaps you've just seen clips on YouTube. Or maybe, sadly, you've never heard of Nate Bargatze. Well, be sad no more! If you like your comedy clean (yet not lame), dry, and just a little bit odd, then Nate is the man for the job. He holds a special place in my heart because he graduated from the school where my wife teaches and my children attend ([Donelson Christian Academy](#)). If Nate came from DCA, then there is hope for my family as well.

The 5 Most Theologically Rich Christmas Songs

Thousands of Christmas songs and hymns have been written these past 2000 years. While many songs discuss sights of Santa and Rudolph, there have been others written to express the significance of God coming to earth and being born into a sinful world. These songs hold theological richness and can edify a group of believers during the Christmas season or any time of year.

Rather than reviewing every Christmas song that has been written since the time of Christ's birth, this list was limited to those Christmas songs that are familiar to most modern Christians. In assessing the most theologically rich Christmas songs, it was considered: 1) Whether the song does

more than cover the basics of the biblical story, digging into the deeper theological implications behind the story and; 2) Whether the song reveals these truths in a beautiful way that sincerely indicates the living presence of the Holy Spirit. Here are the five most theologically rich Christmas songs:



5. "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

Phillips Brooks penned the words to "O Little Town of Bethlehem" in 1868. The words came to him one night as he rode from Jerusalem to Bethlehem by horseback to deliver a Christmas Eve message.

Many people are very familiar with the first two verses of the song. However, the last two verses are exceptional and should not be forgotten. The third verse in this classic hymn is particularly noteworthy. It speaks of "the wondrous gift" that was given. The thing about a gift is that it is not something we earn; a gift is freely bestowed. This "wondrous gift" is Jesus, who God the Father gave as a living sacrifice for humanity (John 3:16). He came to be our living sacrifice and to give man spiritual knowledge (John 10). In this fallen world we all must humbly accept our fallenness and our need for divine help. Only then can we rightly choose His hand of salvation (James 1:21). When our "meek souls" receive Him, "Christ enters in." He has called us to eternal salvation through Himself. Will we listen?

*O little town of Bethlehem
How still we see thee lie
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light
The hopes and fears of all the years*

Are met in thee tonight

*For Christ is born of Mary
And gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love
O morning stars together
Proclaim the holy birth
And praises sing to God the King
And Peace to men on earth*

*How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him still,
The dear Christ enters in.*

*O holy Child of Bethlehem
Descend to us, we pray
Cast out our sin and enter in
Be born to us today
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell
O come to us, abide with us
Our Lord Emmanuel.*



4. "Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne"

Emily Elliot wrote "Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne" in 1864. The primary point of this song is the tremendous humility God expressed by lowering Himself for our benefit. He left His heavenly throne to come as a man to save us.

Echoing Philippians 2:7, the first two verses convey the awesome magnitude of His humiliation in becoming a lowly man. Jesus was born of a “lowly birth” and came in “great humility.” He did this for us—people who don’t deserve it.

The third verse alludes to Matthew 8:20, where Jesus stated that all earthly creatures had a place to rest—all except for Himself. He was saying His life was a difficult one and those who followed Him could expect the same.

The first four verses end with a refrain that declares we can now freely choose to make room for Jesus in our hearts forever. With our entire being, we fully trust Him as our eternal Savior (Romans 10:9). The fifth verse concludes with a declaration of victory, rejoicing that God has made room for us in His heavenly home!

*Thou didst leave Thy throne and Thy kingly crown,
When Thou camest to earth for me;
But in Bethlehem’s home was there found no room
For Thy holy nativity.
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus,
There is room in my heart for Thee.*

*Heaven’s arches rang when the angels sang,
Proclaiming Thy royal degree;
But of lowly birth didst Thou come to earth,
And in great humility.
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus,
There is room in my heart for Thee.*

*The foxes found rest, and the birds their nest
In the shade of the forest tree;
But Thy couch was the sod, O Thou Son of God,
In the deserts of Galilee.
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus,
There is room in my heart for Thee.*

Thou camest, O Lord, with the living word

*That should set Thy people free;
But with mocking scorn, and with crown of thorn,
They bore Thee to Calvary.
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus,
There is room in my heart for Thee.*

*When the heavens shall ring, and the angels sing,
At Thy coming to victory,
Let Thy voice call me home, saying "Yet there is room,
There is room at My side for thee."
My heart shall rejoice, Lord Jesus,
When Thou comest and callest for me.*



3. "O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel" was originally written in Latin, and many believe it dates back to the twelfth century. In 1851, John Mason Neale translated it into English. The English translation of the song contains several variations, and some versions include up to eight different verses.

It is easy to notice all the names and descriptions of Jesus presented in the song: Emmanuel (Immanuel), Dayspring, Wisdom from on High, Desire of Nations. These are all tremendous names and titles that describe the Messiah.

Each verse highlights one of them. What is traditionally viewed as the first verse highlights the name Emmanuel, which means "God with us." In Scripture, the name first occurs in Isaiah 7:14. This passage is quoted in Matthew 1:22 in specific reference to the infant Jesus who was God.

Another verse highlights the name Dayspring, which indicates how the Light of Heaven has delivered us from spiritual darkness. This was a name proclaimed by Zechariah in Luke 1:78 under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

This song also gives Jesus the title Wisdom from on High. This

may be a reference to Isaiah 11:2. The entire book of Isaiah is full of prophecies of the coming Savior. Only through this wisdom from Heaven (Jesus) may we may exit our fallen life and enter a new life with God.

The writer of this song also described Jesus as the Desire of Nations, a reference to Haggai 2:7. This is another prophecy of Jesus in which God foretold that great glory would one day once again fill the temple. Because He has finally come in His glory, we are freed from living lives of isolation and discord.

There are even amazing additional/optional verses of the song that refer to names like "Lord of might," "Rod of Jesse's stem," and "Key of David.". As this incredible song mentions, Jesus Christ has opened wide our heavenly home and therefore we can rejoice.

*O come, O come, Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.*

*O come Thou Dayspring come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
And death's dark shadows put to flight
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.*

*Oh, come, our Wisdom from on high,
Who ordered all things mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show,
and teach us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.*

*Oh, come, Desire of nations, bind
In one the hearts of all mankind;
Oh, bid our sad divisions cease,
And be yourself our King of Peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.*

Additional/Optional verses:

*Oh, come, oh, come, our Lord of might,
Who to your tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient times gave holy law,
In cloud and majesty and awe.*

*Oh, come O Rod of Jesse's stem,
From every foe deliver them
That trust your mighty pow'r to save;
Bring them in victory through the grave.*

*Oh, come, O Key of David, come,
And open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.*



2. "O Holy Night"

The French poet Placide Cappeau wrote the words to "O Holy Night" in 1847. In 1855 John Sullivan Dwight, a Unitarian minister, translated it into English. It is considered one of the greatest and most popular Christmas songs of all time, and for good reason. Its theological greatness cannot be denied.

The first verse describes our plight. Original sin introduced mankind to death (1 Corinthians 15:21-23). All of humanity inwardly longed for a deliverer who would set us free from this plight. So long did humanity toil under this that our individual souls got used to being away from God and we "lay

in sin and error pining.” But then Jesus came with a message of hope and the “weary world” rejoiced. He did all of His saving work to retrieve each individual person (Luke 15:1-7).

The second verse makes us firsthand witnesses of the holy child. We are one with the wise men who, like us, followed a light by faith to find Jesus. Jesus would not be a mere prophet of God or just a good man. The baby in the manger was the “King of Kings.” He was and is the Son of God who is one with God the Father (John 5:16-18).

The third verse exalts in the implications of Jesus’ earthly ministry leading up to His death. He taught mankind “to love one another” (cf. John 13:34-35) and broke the chains of oppression. Like the first two verses, the third verses finalize the song with an exuberant call to praise God the Son for His wonderful salvific work. This time the call is for everyone to unite in a magnificent song of praise lauding the holy birth.

It is rare to find a song whose melody actually works with and bolsters its message quite this well. In my opinion, “O Holy Night” does that better than any other song under Heaven. The last refrain of each stanza is full of genuine passion, exalting in the beauty that is the incarnation of Jesus.

*O holy night! The stars are brightly shining,
It is the night of our dear Saviour’s birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
‘Til He appear’d and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.
Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born;
O night divine, O night, O night Divine.*

*Led by the light of Faith serenely beaming,
With glowing hearts by His cradle we stand.*

*So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming,
Here come the wise men from Orient land.
The King of Kings lay thus in lowly manger;
In all our trials born to be our friend.
He knows our need, to our weakness is no stranger,
Behold your King! Before Him lowly bend!
Behold your King, Before Him lowly bend!*

*Truly He taught us to love one another;
His law is love and His gospel is peace.
Chains shall He break for the slave is our brother;
And in His name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,
Let all within us praise His holy name.
Christ is the Lord! O praise His Name forever,
His power and glory evermore proclaim.
His power and glory evermore proclaim.*



1. "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

Charles Wesley wrote the words to "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" in 1739. This song is absolutely loaded to the brim with incredible theological meat!

The first verse reveals why the baby in the manger is so special. This is not just any king who has been born. Through this baby "God and sinners [are] reconciled" after a long separation (cf. 2 Corinthians 5:18). This makes very valid the call for "all ye nations rise" and joyfully rejoice!

The second verse explains how this "offspring of a virgin's womb" was qualified to do any divine reconciling. He was able to do this because He was the "Christ," which means, "anointed." In other words, He was the Messiah and king of mankind (Luke 23:2-3). But He was more than a mere human king. He was God in human form—"veiled in flesh" and the "incarnate

Deity." Jesus lowered Himself by taking on the complete form of a man (Philippians 2:5-7). Our God could have remained in His comfortable position in Heaven but He was "pleased as man with man to dwell." He was literally our Emmanuel—our God with us.

As a result of the work of Christ, the third verse calls us to praise Him for His infinitely gracious act. He is our "Prince of Peace" and our "Sun of Righteousness." God's Son came to give all men the truth of God's redeeming and life-giving grace. How did He do this? By being born. He did this so we could experience a second birth and be born again into a new life in Him, living forever in His kingdom.

The fourth verse in some of today's hymnals is a fusion of the original fourth and fifth verses. Since the fused version is the one many are most familiar with, that is what I am including here. It tells us that as a man, Jesus was physically born into a very humble home. Now that He has died for all mankind, we should invite Him to reside within us by confessing full belief in Him (Romans 10:9). Its last few lines hearken both to Genesis 3 and 1 Corinthians. In Genesis 3 we find the world-changing act of original sin. In this same chapter, God placed a distinct curse on each of the two human wrongdoers and all of their descendants. He also cursed the snake (Satan). His curse to the snake included a prophecy of Jesus' final victory over Satan (Genesis 3:15). This is a prophecy of the Son of God who would one day come to earth to die. In so doing He would finally "bruise . . . the serpent's head." Wesley lauded the beauty of this story. Jesus' work of atonement successfully displayed His saving power. It is in 1 Corinthians 15 that the first man and Jesus are famously referred to as the first and second Adam. Jesus, the second Adam from above, sacrificed Himself for all mankind, reuniting us with God.

Charles Wesley's beautifully penned words not only bring about a feeling of the Christmas spirit, but beautifully explain the

gospel message and give us reason to proclaim "glory to the newborn king!"

*Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the new-born King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild;
God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem."*

*Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord:
Late in time behold Him come,
Offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
Hail th' incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus our Immanuel.*

*Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Ris'n with healing in His wings:
Mild He lays His glory by,
Born that man no more may die;
Born to raise the sons of earth;
Born to give them second birth.*

*Come, Desire of nations, come!
Fix in us Thy humble home:
Rise, the woman's conqu'ring seed,
Bruise in us the serpent's head;
Adam's likeness now efface,
Stamp Thine image in its place:
Final Adam from above,
Reinstate us in Thy love.*

This article first appeared in *The Brink magazine*


The Season, the Music, the Resonance

For Western Christians, and quite possibly for all believers everywhere, music is inseparable from Christmas. I'm aware that some folks delight in reminding us that the angelic choir that appeared to the shepherds the night of Jesus' birth didn't sing. "And the angel said to them..." (Luke 2:10). Then it says there was a multitude "praising God and saying." (2:13)

That's all well and good, but I still think they sang. For one thing, he/they might have spoken and then sung those or other words. Also, Job 38:7 tells us the "sons of God sang for joy" at creation, and I'm thinking those were angels, not humans since presumably no humans were present at creation.

No matter. Much of Christianity down through the centuries has inseparably linked the celebration of the nativity with singing.

From the 5th century "Of the Father's Love Begotten," a piece so hauntingly beautiful that pastor Rob Morgan considers it one of his favorites, to Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley and their powerful all-time hymns "Joy to the World" and "Hark the Herald Angels Sing," to "Mary, Did You Know," we all have our favorites, and I haven't even scratched the surface.



Every year some song or songs resonate with me. Maybe something new, previously unknown. Maybe an old favorite. This year there are several:

1. The afore-mentioned "Of the Father's Love Begotten". I've listened to it several times and meditated on the poignant lyrics. The story of Christ retold in the 5th century. The Incarnation described in beautiful, ancient poetry. The recurring "evermore and evermore." By the way, if memory serves this was the lead-off song for the Welch choir project from several years ago, "Alpha and Omega."


2. "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus." Written by Charles Wesley. Wesley is one of my all-time favorite songwriters, and this hymn has become a favorite Christmas song of mine. It's the kind of song the ancients would have sung, had they known their Messiah's name. We do know and celebrate accordingly.

3. The country gospel classic "O Beautiful Star of Bethlehem." We sang it at our church a couple of weeks ago and the excitement was palpable, as "amens" were heard at the conclusion. Watching the Gaither video years ago as Ben Spear chokes with emotion as he sings the line "for Jesus is now that star divine, brighter and brighter He will shine," touches me, as does the whole song.

Just for good measure, I'm going to throw in a few more. They aren't really Christmas songs but are so fitting for the season. "I Call Him Lord," by Dottie Rambo, reminds us "but the angel called Him Jesus, born of a virgin, Mary called Him Jesus, but I Call Him Lord. That lyric enables me to celebrate just a little more worshipfully this Christmas.

And there's the old Fanny Crosby hymn "Tell Me the Story of Jesus." The first stanza has a powerful incarnation lyric "...Tell how the angels in chorus sang as they welcomed his birth, glory to God in the highest, peace and good tidings to earth.. "

Finally, an older song by Bill and Gloria Gaither, not so well-known. I've enjoyed hearing it again, as it tenderly breathes out its Christmas message: "love went on reaching, and love went on longing, right past the shackles of my mind, and the longing and the reaching became Mary's little son, and his love reached all the way to where I was."



Christmas and music. Christmas carols. The birthday of our King. Still, a few days to go. I hope we all make the time and find the way, or ways, to worship the Newborn King this Christmas season. Going through the Old Testament Messianic prophecies. Reading and studying Matthew 1-2, and Luke 1-2. Singing the old songs joyfully, and adding in some newer ones. Going to a Christmas concert or candlelight service. "Let every heart prepare him room, and Heaven and nature sing."

Now I need to listen to "Handel's "Messiah," and Andrew Peterson's "Behold the Lamb of God."

BREAKING: Christian Music Fans Can Earn a Masters of Theology by Listening to Their Favorite Radio Station

Nashville, TN – Bolstered by the unprecedented success of *The Most Enormous Small Group in the World*, WayLOVE (99.3 FM) is ready to introduce their latest spiritual growth innovation: The World's first Christian Radio Masters of Theology*. "We

are very excited about our new program,” said WayLOVE’s director of programming, Edward Barry. “Seekers and life-long learners will find that our program is incredibly comprehensive, robust, yet flexible enough for their busy schedules.”

How does this new Degree program work? Easy. You simply listen to your favorite Christian Radio station as often as possible and the music, the spiritual nourishment, and the unquestioned profundity of biblical truth will do the rest. “We knew we struck gold when we landed on this idea. Our music is many things: It is positive. It is encouraging. It is safe. Yet most importantly, it is also full of rich spiritual instruction and wisdom. What better way to study Soteriology than hearing Jeremy Camp’s monumental theological examination, “Jesus Saves?” Or how great is it to learn about the doctrine of Hamartiology by listening to “Fear is a Liar” by Zach Williams?”

WayLOVE’s listeners could not be more excited. Becky Culpepper is working on her third Master’s degree through the station even though the program has only been active for two weeks. “I am so totally thrilled about this, ya’ll! Not only do I get to listen to my favorite songs, which are 100% safe for my kids to listen to as well, I can get my education on while listening to Jamie Grace sing about ‘getting her worship on!’ It’s a win-win!” Scott Maroon, who is currently working on his dissertation, adds, “I had no idea that I could learn so much about the Incarnation or the Hypostatic union or even a little bit about Pneumatology by listening to what I thought were the pretty hackneyed lyrics of “You’re Not Alone” by Owl City and Britt Nicole. Evidently, you can, though. So that’s cool.”

If this new program is well received, WayLOVE hopes to roll out their Doctoral Program* in the fall of 2019.

*Neither program is accredited in any way, shape, or form.

Five Reasons to Meditate On Andrew Peterson's "Labor Of Love" This Christmas

We at REO join a mighty throng of Christians throughout the ages in celebrating the enormous catalog of worship-inspiring Christmas music we have in English, often highlighted by timeless beloved favorites like "O Holy Night" and "Hark the Herald Angels Sing." We have done [polls on our site](#) on this topic and have written about modern additions like ["Mary Did You Know?"](#)

Today we celebrate a very recent yet worthy song that has captivated a significant number of Christians for years, Andrew Peterson's "Labor of Love". From the very first phrase, this song undermines one of the most popular Christmas song titles of all time and sets a tone that is completely perpendicular to most of our favorite carols and church hymns this time of year. By doing so it does the modern church a huge favor in not allowing us to get too comfortable with the story of Jesus, but instead, by pushing back against some popular conceptions, it forces us to think about the truth, however uncomfortable it may be.

We highly recommend the entire concert and you can read Phill's [short review of it here](#). It is a true Bucket List type of experience for Christians. Today we give five reasons why this contribution to that concert is so special to us and why we recommend meditating on it this Christmas season (and beyond).

1. Great songs are worth celebrating, and this is a great song

Before we dive into the implications of what the song teaches us, we would be doing it a disservice to not talk about the song itself. I am not a musician. I do not pretend to understand all that goes into creating a song like this, but I do know when I am hearing something beautiful and unique. The first time I listened to Andrew Peterson's "Behold the Lamb of God", this was the song that captured my attention. I appreciated the rest of the album and eventually fell in love with all of it, but from the beginning, I loved "Labor of Love." It was so different from any Christmas song I had heard.

The song is deeply authentic – Jill Phillips sings with a passion that seems to channel the very emotions Mary felt that night. While other songs on the album go big with grand arrangements and productions, Peterson wisely opts to scale this song back to the basics – acoustic guitar, gentle piano, subtle rhythm section, and beautiful harmonies. It is not flashy. It is grounded and simple – which effectively complements the lyrics. This is, after all, a peek into a very human moment – the birth of a child. It is not about grandeur and glory. It is about a girl, who is away from her home, giving birth to her first baby. The only moment the song gives itself a little room to go big is when the lyrics focus on the Christ-child. It is a wonderfully constructed song, with every element working in tandem. Before you focus on what the song says, take some time to focus on how it says it.

2. It Creatively Helps Our Imagination With Details of That Night

Do we know for sure if Mary's mother was there or not to hold

her hand? No, but there is nothing wrong with using our imaginations to picture what happened that night. The image of Joseph holding her and praying while she is going through what was certainly the most traumatic event of her young life is a touching lyric.

Many details of that night are not for us to know, at least through Scripture. But we can imagine them and I think that is a good thing, especially through our art.

3. It cuts through the serene Christmas night imagery to communicate the harsh yet beautiful truth about the night Christ was born.

Let's be clear, our lives in 2018 are completely foreign to what Mary and Joseph experienced in first century Palestine. If you are reading these words right now, you have access to the internet, which means you probably have air conditioning, running water, and all sorts of other amazing technological and societal advancements. Their day-to-day lives would look impossibly hard to us. Yet that in no way should diminish what they went through leading up to the birth of Christ. The journey itself – over 90 miles. The lack of a place to stay – no room in the inn. Going into labor and giving birth in a foreign place. Regardless of what their lives were like back then, what they went through that night was uncommon, even for people of that time.

All those things are captured so effortlessly in this beautiful song. "It was not a silent night." It was difficult. It was uncomfortable. It was beautiful and wondrous and sacred. In a season justifiably filled with light, joy, and hope, it's good to be reminded that the event that is at the root of all it, was bloody, lonely, and very human.

4. It is an appropriate yet sobering testimony of Mary and Joseph

Mary and Joseph do not need to be exalted as their child was, but they do need to be celebrated as significant players in God's plan of redemption in history. We need to tell the world of their integrity and sacrifice. Those things can be messy in real life. For the plan to work how God intended, some young woman had to give birth, an undignified even if glorious experience, and suffer the pain it brings. Some man had to be the one who supported his wife even though the baby wasn't biologically his. And this song reflects what Matthew 1 and Luke 1-2 tell us about these two incredible servants of our God.

It is a song of worship and praise of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But we would be remiss if we didn't see it as a significant way to see it through Mary's eyes and ears. The title alone tells us that.

5. It magnificently contrasts Christ the Sovereign God with Christ the Helpless Baby.

This is a crucial aspect of our theology and this song nails it:

*For the baby in her womb
He was the maker of the moon
He was the author of the faith
That could make the mountains move*

He was 100% God—He created the world and everything in it and had the authority to move mountains, and to give that authority to us by faith; He was 100% Man—He existed as a flesh and blood baby, supernaturally conceived yet very

naturally carried and born. Amazing. That should never become something we fail to contemplate with awe. “Immanuel” is very much a Christmas name. God was with us, in humble baby form.

“Labor of Love” is a beautiful and genuine statement of faith and love in action. The focus shines on the role Mary and Joseph played in the story of redemption but wisely, and masterfully, ends with that focus shifting to the very source of our redemption – “the Author of the faith” that was in Mary’s womb. In a perfect world, “Labor of Love” would be a Christmas classic loved by believers everywhere.

Moments of Revelation

The bones of this article were written for my now defunct blog over ten years ago (January 2008.) A version of it was published by an online magazine called [The Brink](#) some time back as well. I keep coming back to it though. When I wrote it, I was only 30 years old. I had been married for less than ten years. I had two boys. I was less than two years into my job as a Disability Claims Examiner for the State of Tennessee.

Things have changed in the intervening ten years. I am 18 years into marriage with an amazing woman. I have three boys now – ages fifteen, fourteen, and nine. I’m a man. I’m 40! I have been at my Disability job for over 12 years. And I keep coming back to those things I wrote a decade ago. It is a

simple story and one that has repeated itself in my life more times than I can recall.

I was driving home from work one afternoon. The traffic was bad – as usual – though in retrospect, it was nothing compared to our current traffic problems in Nashville. The heater in my car was nearly dead, and needless to say, it was cold. Not surprisingly, I had a headache as well. I wouldn't describe my mood as good. It wasn't a horrible day – I wasn't angry or bitter or anything like that. In as simple terms as I can put it, I just wasn't "feeling" that Tuesday afternoon. Does that make sense? There are days where it is better for everyone to just turn the page and get to the next one. That was my reality that cold, January afternoon. I was ready to move on to Wednesday.

That all changed, though, while I was driving home. When I first wrote this article (or blog post), I had a catchy name for what happened to me. At least, I thought it was catchy, but as it didn't actually catch on, it was probably not nearly as catchy as I hoped. I had a "Moment of Revelation." I was 30 and full of vim and vigor so you have to grant me some grace in thinking that "Moment of Revelation" was going to revolutionize the world.

What exactly was my "Moment of Revelation?" God didn't audibly speak to me. I didn't get a vision from heaven. What did happen was that I caught a glimpse of something beyond me and my immediate circumstances. Scripture tells us that God has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; I am sure there are many different ways that verse can be interpreted or explained, but I am not going to exegete the passage. I know what that verse says to me; God has made everything beautiful in its time and he created humanity with an innate ability to appreciate truth and beauty. He did this so that we could and would recognize the Originator of that Truth and Beauty.

That gets me back to my "Moment of Revelation." I wasn't thinking about anything in particular while I was driving, so I wasn't exactly searching for anything beautiful, but beauty found me anyway. I had the radio on one of those "We play whatever we want" stations. (Jack FM if you want me to be specific.) The volume was low because the song that had been playing was terrible. Due to the low volume, I missed the first couple of notes of the next song, U2's glorious *With or Without You*. Once I realized what song was on, I turned up the volume to a comfortably deafening level. ("Comfortably deafening" might seem contradictory, but if you are a big music fan, I think you know exactly what I mean.) I don't have the ability to describe the rush of emotions that hit me. I forgot I was cold. I forgot my headache. I forgot the crappy day I had at work. I forgot about the bumper-to-bumper traffic. I simply allowed the song to "minister" to me. I know that sounds preposterous and touchy-feely, but it happened.

My entire outlook for the day changed. That one song at that specific time was exactly what I needed. Before anyone chimes in about the song itself, I'll make a few things clear: I didn't/don't base my theology on this song, even though it probably captures the typical Christian experience better than just about any song on Christian radio any given year. I don't have to agree with everything an artist is expressing. I just need to be ready to catch a quick glimpse of the eternity that the artist may or may not have even intended.

I experienced this the first time I saw Bilbo Baggins and Gandalf the Grey hug on the big screen in *The Fellowship of the Ring*. I was hit over the head with it when Stephen Lawhead, in his magnificent *Pendragon Cycle*, wrote about Merlin holding a wounded Arthur in his arms as their small boat sails to Avalon. Every time I hear *The River Will Flow* by Whiteheart, my soul smiles. I think God smiles too. These "Moments of Revelation" are everywhere; we just have to be ready to receive them. Mind you, they are not just in the

arts. It could be a sunset. Laughing with a friend. Spending time with your family. I could go on for pages about the ways my kids help me experience it. My point is that we need to cultivate an appreciation for these moments that God gives us. There is a fundamental reason we have this ability; it points our eyes to our Creator. If we truly appreciate the beauty and truth we find in our lives, it will only nurture our love and devotion to the Source of that beauty and truth.

I look for these moments often though probably not as often as I should. I have even written about a few of these moments already for REO. ([Here](#), [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).) If your day, or week, is not really doing it for you, keep your eyes open. Maybe God has a moment prepared for you. Don't miss it because you are too busy stuck in your present circumstances.

Can you relate? Do you have these moments? We would love for you to tell us about them in the comment section below.

“Say What?”: Song Lyrics We Completely Misunderstood.

Everyone's done it. Whether as children or even as adults, we hear a song and our brain processes what we are hearing incorrectly. We substitute words or phrases in place of the actual lyrics and we proceed to sing nonsense. Sometimes, we get pretty close – (See Gowdy's "Africa" by Toto blunder below) and sometimes we aren't even in the same ballpark – “We built this city on sausage rolls” instead of “We build this city on rock and roll.” Seriously, that's a real thing.

In that spirit, here are five song lyrics we totally botched.

***Money For Nothing* by Dire Straits (Gowdy Cannon)**

I knew so many factual things about this song when it was released. I knew it was released in 1985. I knew there was a longer version of the song that would be extremely Non-PC today. I could recognize the song after two seconds of the drum intro, or if I had to from about one second of the opening guitar riff. This song played over and over in my life when I was seven and eight years old, including on rides to school in the back seat of my brother Tracy's T-top convertible.

But 7-year old Gowdy was badly, badly mistaken by the lyrics. I had no idea if it was "chicks for free" or "checks for free," but that is a common misunderstanding of the song, at least if the Google search bar on my computer is right when I type in "Money for nothing and my..." But even more embarrassing was that I thought the song was saying "Money for workin'." It was around 1989—four years later—that my future sister-in-law corrected me. I pretended I got it wrong on purpose but that was a lie.

Also, I just found out that in the song "Africa" by Toto it's "bless the rains" and not "miss the rains" but I forewent that one based on how I already displayed my ignorance about its lyrics in [another REO article on the 80s](#).

***Get on Your Knees and Fight Like a Man* by Petra (Phill Lytle)**

I don't have a lot of excuses here. The lyric I "misheard" is literally the title of the song, and yet, to this day, I can't hear it correctly. (In my defense, I was pretty young when

this album came out – 10 or so.) The entire song is about the power of prayer, something that Petra sang about often, and the lyrics were a great subversion of the world's idea of manliness and what Scripture says about it. I understood that even then, yet I still always heard (and sang along) to “Get on your knees, and cry like a man!” It made no sense to me, yet that is what I heard so that is what it was.

***We Three Kings* (Ben Plunkett)**

The first line of this song has always been a bit frustrating to me in that it is actually written to make it confusing. We three kings of *Orient Are*? It makes it even more frustrating that sometimes the song is actually called *We Three Kings of Orient Are*. (insert Tim “the tool man” Taylor question grunt). So I was a kid in church at Christmas time and I was always like, “Where is this magical land called *Orient Are*?”

Like many poetic type works, the blame is on the author awkwardly manipulating it for the sake of rhyming. I can't stand it when poets and songwriters do that. In this case, this little bit of manipulation madness was brought to you just so the author could rhyme “are” with “afar”. Just say “we are three kings of *Orient*” and end our misery. Come on! (Of course, that creates a little awkwardness in itself, but at least it's a starting point for a revision).

***Brother* by NEEDTOBREATHE (Michael Lytle)**

A few years ago the band NEEDTOBREATHE scored a hit with the song *Brother*. It's a great anthem on the theme of brotherly love. My family enjoyed the song, but one line in the chorus gave us some trouble. For those who are unfamiliar, the chorus says:

*Brother let me be your shelter
Never leave you all alone
I can be the one you call when you're low
Brother let me be your fortress
When the night winds are driving on
Be the one to light the way, bring you home*

The second to last line was the one we couldn't figure out. Various alternatives were suggested. My son was convinced it was "In the night with the diamond ore". My personal favorite was "When you might need a Tylenol". Eventually, we figured it out. Or maybe we just looked it up. Either way, we all can now sing "When the night winds are driving on" with confidence, and all is right with the world again.

Bringing in the Sheaves (Ben Plunkett)

It never crossed my young mind to wonder why they were singing "Bringing in the Cheese" on "The Little House On the Prairie" nor did it phase me when we sang it at church. Never mind that the rest of the song offers the biblical metaphor of harvesting. Actually, at that point in my life, it would not have mattered what food product they were bringing in, sheaves, cheese, beef steak, pizza. it was all the same to me. While sheaves alone really does fit best with the visual and biblical context of the rest of the song, I was a kid, I didn't give a hoot for context—so get off my back! Now I want some pizza. Bring in the cheese!

Now it's your turn. Tell us what song lyrics you have butchered – use the comment section below. And if you enjoy this article, please consider liking and sharing it on Facebook or Twitter. We appreciate the support!

