

# activated

CHANGE YOUR LIFE. CHANGE YOUR WORLD.

## OUT OF THE BLUE

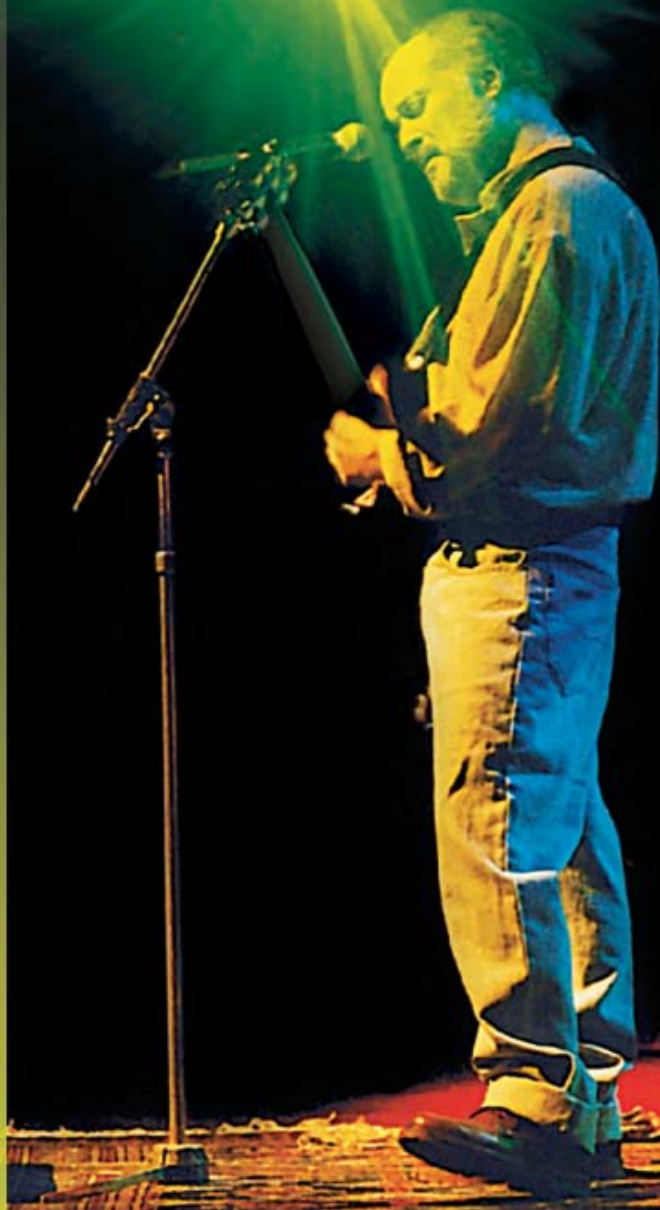
Legendary blues slide guitarist Jeremy Spencer talks about music and life

## MUSICAL KEY

There's more to music than meets the ear

## THE COMING HEAVENLY LIFE OF LOVE

What heaven will really be like



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## personally speaking



In their '60s hit "Can't Buy Me Love," the Beatles capitalized on a simple, well-worn truth. They could just as well have sung, "Money can't buy me truth or happiness or peace of mind." Those things weren't for sale either, and they're still not. You'd think we'd learn, but it seems that few of us do.

You can hardly blame people, though, considering that nearly everywhere they turn some new product or personality vies for their attention and part of their paycheck with the same hollow promise: "This is *it*—the key to happiness at last!" And you can't blame the hawkers, either. In our money-driven world, everybody has got to sell something to survive, whether it's a song, a product, a service, or—God forbid—a soul.

All the while, a little voice inside each of us keeps telling us there has to be more to life. The things of this world can bring momentary pleasure and comfort, but they can never truly satisfy the inner self. Only God can do that with His love, and He wants to and He will. In fact, that's why God created us with that empty place deep inside: so we would reach out for Him.

While some people get caught up in the pursuit of momentary happiness and pay little or no attention to that little voice, others can't ignore it. They seek more. In one of this issue's feature articles, slide guitarist Jeremy Spencer of Fleetwood Mac fame tells of his search. He had the things that most people think would make them happy—fame, fortune, friends, and a beautiful and loving wife—but it wasn't enough. Then he found something that was.

May you find that answer too, and share it with others.

*Keith Phillips*

Keith Phillips

For the *Activated* family

# WEALTH, SUCCESS AND LOVE

A WOMAN SAW THREE STRANGERS in front of her house and invited them in to have something to eat.

“We can’t go in together,” they told her.

“Why not?” she asked.

“His name is Wealth,” one of them explained, pointing to one of his friends, “and he is Success,” pointing to the other. “I am Love.” Then Love added, “Now go in and decide with the rest of your family which one of us you want in your home.”

The woman went in and explained the whole thing to her husband, who was overjoyed at the prospects. “Let’s invite Wealth. Let him come and fill our home with wealth! How nice!”

## PRAYER FOR THE DAY

Thank You, Jesus, for Your unfailing love. No matter what, I always have that. When things are going great for me I know that’s because You’re looking out for me, answering my prayers, and blessing me in more ways than I probably even realize. And when things aren’t going my way, it helps me keep things in perspective so I appreciate You and Your love all the more. Through all life’s ups and downs, You’re always there for me. What more could I ask?



His wife disagreed. “Why don’t we invite Success? We would be the envy of everyone in town.”

Their little girl overheard the discussion and piped in. “Wouldn’t it be better to invite Love? Then our home will be filled with love!”

The husband and wife finally decided to heed their daughter’s advice, so the wife invited Love in.

Wealth and Success were soon invited in by other families. Of course, they didn’t stay long before moving on again. They never do.

Not so with Love. Love is forever.

And so our little family lived happily ever after.

Sure, there were a few rough spots, but they hardly noticed them. Love saw to that.

They weren’t the wealthiest or most successful family in town, but they were the happiest. Love saw to that too.

*Author unknown, adapted*

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A man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.

—Jesus, Luke 12:15 NIV

∴

The kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

—Jesus, Matthew 13:45–46

# OUT OF THE BLUE

By **Jeremy  
Spencer,**  
guitarist and singer  
for Fleetwood Mac  
from 1967–71



## I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT LOVE WAS...

What a show! Never mind that the solo performer was his own audience, singing in front of a mirror, pretending to play what was in fact a piece of cardboard cut to the shape of a guitar. As a kid, I could do that for hours!

When I was fifteen, a friend lent me his acoustic guitar and I learned a bunch of songs. Then my dad bought me a secondhand Spanish guitar, and I spent most of my spare time learning to play it.

A year later, I went to art college (art was something besides music that interested me), and that's where I played on stage for the first time. After leaving art school, some friends and I formed a

band, and we got some gigs in local pubs and clubs. Then I learned to play slide guitar, which gave me a way to sing and echo the lyrics with “answers” on the guitar.

Around this time I also met Fiona, who later became my wife. While we were dating she would talk to me about God and Jesus. I also knew she prayed for me. I had had a Church of England upbringing, but didn't understand why Jesus had died. I didn't even understand what love was, except in romantic terms.

## THE MUSIC SCENE

Coming up on the music scene in England at this time (1966–67), along with the budding flower-power movement, was a renewed interest in blues. Blues bands were

popping up all over the place, and a well-established record producer was looking for new musicians. A friend told him about me, and he came to hear our band.

This producer introduced us to Peter Green, who was trying to form his own band but needed another guitarist. Peter asked me to join his new band. I was thrilled! Peter decided to call the band “Fleetwood Mac,” after two of the other band members, Mick Fleetwood and John MacVie. After two practice sessions, we were ready to play the 1967 Windsor Jazz and Blues Festival.

Then came Fleetwood Mac's first U.S. tour. We arrived in California, where the hippy movement was well underway, and it was here that we were told that drugs had revolutionized the music

and artistic creativity of artists such as the Beatles, Cream, Jimi Hendrix, Peter Fonda, and others. It was also there that we were introduced to the “hip new drug” LSD.

I took a “trip,” and at first it felt really good—blissful, even. I felt like I was finally starting to understand love and began philosophizing about loving people. Then the good feelings stopped and suddenly I felt so alone. I looked at myself in the mirror and freaked out because I looked so sad. I started thinking about death, and sensed a light above me, shining through the darkness. *Is that Heaven?* I wondered. *Does Heaven even exist?* That trip left me with three things: belief in the spirit world, awareness that life was short, and the question, “What am I doing with my life?” I turned to spiritual books for answers.

## THE SEARCH

Our third album, *Then Play On*, was a big seller in Europe and established Fleetwood Mac in the U.S. The instrumental “Albatross” sold over a million copies. In January ’69 we did another tour of major cities in the U.S. The rigors of touring—flying from city to city and keeping irregular hours—were interspersed with “rap sessions” in our marijuana smoke-filled hotel and dressing rooms. It was from these discussions that I started to

see the injustices of society and understand the disillusionment of its youth—kids who looked to rock stars like us for answers.

Before a concert in San Francisco, another musician, Glen Schwartz, of a band called “Pacific Gas and Electric,” asked me if I believed in Jesus. I said I did—and I guess I actually did, in a mental sort of way. “Then say something about Jesus on stage tonight,” Glen said. “It would make Him happy.”

So we played number after number and finally,

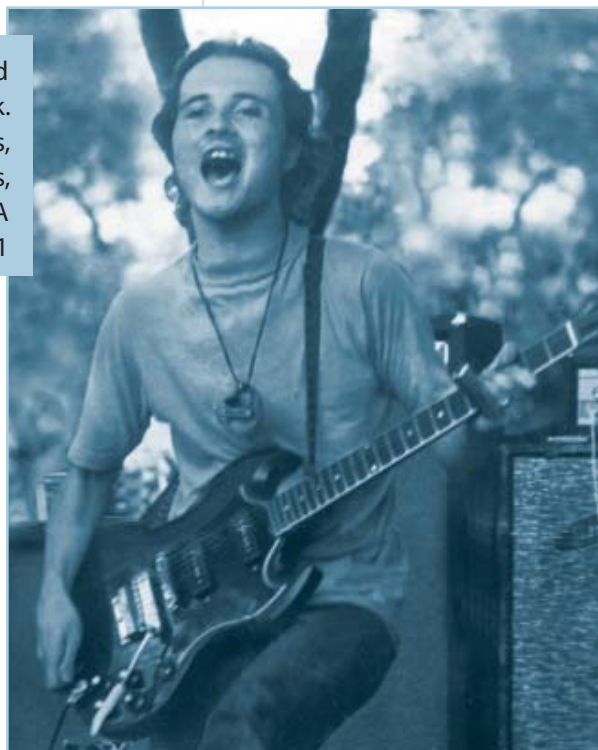
before one song, I said, “I want to say something about Jesus! ...Yes, just read what He has to say.” It wasn’t much, but I didn’t know what else to say. After all, I was still searching myself.

After the concert Glen told me, “You just need to ask Jesus into your heart.” I had never heard that before.

Something in Glen’s eyes convinced me that he had found what I was looking for. That night in my hotel room I prayed for Jesus to come into my heart. From that night, my attitudes about nearly everything started to change.

As we took more drugs, Peter Green and Danny Kirwan’s music moved out of the blues framework. It became more inventive, but retained a feeling of brooding hopelessness in both music and lyrics. I was, however, at a loss for inspiration or ideas. I felt completely dried up, so

Gifford  
Park.  
Dallas,  
Texas,  
USA  
.1971



my contributions musically were minimal.

Like other artists at the top, where there is so much competition to get and stay there, it seemed necessary to

get in tune with some unseen and sometimes unnamed spiritual force to produce captivating music. Fleetwood Mac made #1 on the *New Musical Express* polls as the top band of '69, putting The Beatles at #2 for the first time in six years.

About that time, I started to sense that there was something sinister behind it all. God existed, but so did an evil for which I could only find one name that seemed unreasonably simple at the time—the Devil. I tried to pass off such thoughts as superstition or hallucination, but couldn't. I was desperate to find someone to explain it all to me.

## THE ROAD

Alone in a hotel room in Switzerland one night, I heard a voice inside me say, "Do you believe that I am risen?" I knew it was Jesus, and I was shocked! I always carried a New Testament, so I read the chapters in the gospels about the Resurrection.

That night I had a vivid dream: I was walking along a road with a heavy ache in my heart. Something inside me said that if I would turn around and go the other way, the burden would be lifted, but I kept walking the same direction until finally I couldn't stand it any longer. I turned around, and immediately I had peace in my heart. As I walked the other way, I felt lighter. Coming towards

me were Fiona and Peter. They glanced at me as they passed, so I turned around, and caught up with them. I tapped Fiona on the shoulder and said, "Come on. We're going the other direction now!"

I awoke and immediately understood what the dream meant: The road represented my life, and turning to go the other direction meant leaving the band to follow Jesus.

True to my dream, from that night on, life couldn't have seemed harder or heavier. Some of the spiritual books I read only further muddled my mind with an underlying subtlety that



London  
1973

denied the power of God and prayer, and the divinity of Jesus. I also checked out a lot of the gurus of the time, but soon found they weren't what I was looking for. Other people told me that the answer was in music, but the music that was coming out then only left me feeling claustrophobic and depressed.

## AT LAST—THE ANSWER!

In January '71 we toured the U.S. again. My body was in Los Angeles, but my mind and heart were elsewhere, still searching. "Please, God," I prayed, "I've got to have an answer soon!"

The next day, as I left a Sunset Boulevard bookstore with yet more books, a young hippy with frizzy blond hair, carrying a guitar, asked me if I'd like to hear a song. He seemed sincere, so I stopped to listen. We sat down in front of a store, and even before he started singing I knew the song was going to be about Jesus.

Afterwards he asked me if I wanted to pray for Jesus to come into my heart. I didn't yet understand that Jesus comes in to stay forever the first time someone asks Him to, so I prayed that prayer again, right there on the street.

The hippy invited me to meet his friends, and even before we got there, I knew

I wasn't going to play with Fleetwood Mac again. His friends—a bunch of young hippies like himself who would eventually become The Family—greeted me with happy faces. I felt like I'd met them all before, like I'd known them all my life! The one I had met first, who incidentally hadn't ever heard of Fleetwood Mac and couldn't have cared less that I was a rock star, talked with me for a long time. For each of my questions, he had an answer from the Bible.

"Ours is a spiritual revolution for Jesus," he told me. "We have obeyed Jesus' commandments to forsake all else, follow Him, and preach the Gospel in all the world. Doing this means leaving everything else behind—family, friends, house, and job." That was just what I expected. I had known for a long time that was what Jesus wanted me to do. I just hadn't known how. I joined them then and there.

Four days later, the manager of our band finally tracked me down. "Don't worry about the tour, the money, or recording the next album," he said. "Just take four months off with Fiona. Go anywhere you like—all expenses paid. You're emotionally distraught. Take some time to logically evaluate all this."

But as he saw that I wasn't going for that approach, he became belligerent. In the end, he tried to tell me there

was no God, yelled profanities, and stormed out of the building. Fiona wholeheartedly agreed with my decision, and she and our two young children soon joined me in the States.

In the last thirty years, the road has taken us all over the world—the U.S., England, France, Brazil, Italy, Greece, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Japan.

Music? I've continued to play and write songs, and have even performed and recorded some. Over the years—even through painful experiences with a couple of ill-fated recording ventures—I learned (and am still learning!) that love and inspiration from God and the truth of His Word are essential to produce truly beautiful music, art, or literature. I also think there's a need for more of these qualities in the arts today, especially that which gives due credit to the Lord and acknowledges His kingdom.

That is why I am so thankful that He has given me an opportunity to use the musical and artistic talents He gave me to communicate His love

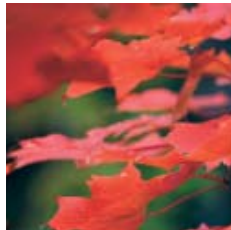
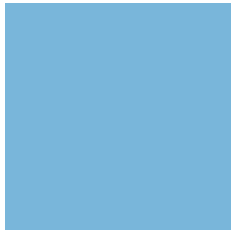
to the world. Actually, for the past fifteen years the Lord has used my drawing talent more than my musical talents. *[Note: For an example of Jeremy's artwork, see the back cover of this magazine.]* And speaking of literature, the Lord recently gave me a new talent—story-writing—which has become a source of great fulfillment and enjoyment for me.

Jesus said, "The harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are few" (Matthew 9:37, KJV). People thought I was crazy to leave Fleetwood Mac, but the rewards and fulfillment of a life for the Lord have far outweighed what I traded away. •



Benefit concert for the blind. Bombay, India. 2000

How do  
I tell the  
difference  
between the  
flowers and  
the weeds?



MUSIC—THE RIGHT KIND of music—can have a positive effect on your mind and spirit, but the wrong kind of music can be dangerous! Music is a highly spiritual medium; it has a psychological and spiritual effect on the listener.

It works almost like a touch-tone telephone: A combination of musical notes are like tone signals that work their way along the circuits and relays of your nervous system, into your mind and spirit. Certain notes played in the right sequence will prompt a certain response.

When I was a boy, I listened to classical music for hours at a time. My mother would come into the room and be amazed to find me weeping because the music got through to me so. I couldn't control the emotion or restrain the tears. I was lifted into another world, the realm of the spirit.

Music links the heart of the listener with the heart of the composer. Music transports the listener into the world of the spirit, where the composer is guide. Their spirits are united, in a sense, and both experience the same things. The spiritual world is far more real than the physical, and music is a vehicle to take us there.

Some composers were divinely inspired when they wrote their best music. They were as human as any of us, but when they tuned in to the Lord in the spirit, they were able to hear His music and capture it for us.

What kind of music composers write depends on whose channel they're tuned to, as well as their own mood—whether they're in a positive, believing mood and tuned to the Lord, or they're in a doubting, despondent mood and tuned to the Devil and his signals. When com-

# MUSICALKEY

By David Brandt Berg



posers are inspired, when they really tune in to their source, whether it be the Lord or the Devil, they get the music with its underlying spiritual message. And if the listeners are tuned in, they get the spiritual message too, even subconsciously.

Thousands and thousands of musical notes make up a symphony. When they're all put together, they paint a picture that can be gorgeous or horrific or anything in between, depending on the source. They can convey a heavenly message or a hellish one, and therefore have that effect on the audience, be it individuals or whole nations—like the effect Wagner's music had on Hitler's Germany.

Wagner's music was inspired, but I'm afraid that most of the time it seems to have been inspired by the Devil. Hitler was practically hypnotized by Wagner's music, and he got the message. Hitler added the words and bombs and bullets to Wagner's tunes, and brought hell on earth! But other composers who were inspired by the Lord give us God's music and God's message, like Handel did when he wrote his oratorio *Messiah*.

If it's effective music, whether good or bad, it will inspire you to action; it will move you. It will create emotions that put you in motion to do something. God's music makes you want to love Him and His and do the kinds of things that are pleasing to Him. The Devil's music makes you attracted to him and his kind, and fascinated by their evil works.

So how do you decide what kind of music you should listen to? You can tell about music the same way you can tell about anything else—by the effect it has on your spirit. Is it inspiring or oppressive? Is it beautiful or ugly?

A boy once helped me clean up a garden, and he asked, "How do I tell the difference between the flowers and the weeds?" "I'm not a horticulturist," I answered, "but I can tell the difference between what is ugly and what is beautiful. If it's pretty, leave it. If it's ugly, pull it."

The Lord through the Holy Spirit gives us enough sense to know the difference between what's good and what's bad, between flowers and weeds, but then He leaves the choice to us—in this case the choice of what kind of music we're going to subject our spirits to.

Jesus said, "Every tree is known by its own fruit" (Luke 6:44). So if you want to know the difference between good music or bad music, spiritual food or spiritual poison, you can tell by whether its effects on your spirit are good or bad.

Does the music draw you closer to the Lord and inspire you to be good and do good things, to be loving and helpful and constructive? Or does it oppress you and make you feel rebellious, hateful, angry, and destructive? Does it lift your spirit, or drag you down? Is it so sad and depressing that it makes you want to quit, or is it so happy and inspiring that it makes you want to make others happy too?

Whether it's a simple lullaby, a love song, a sad sweet song that touches your heart and helps you feel another's heartbreak and sympathize, or the most intricately beautiful symphony, God-inspired music makes you want to be good and do good; it inspires you to higher things.

What kind of music are you listening to? Whose voice are you hearing? What does it do for you? What does it do *to* you?•

If it's  
effective  
music,  
whether  
good or  
bad, it will  
inspire you  
to action.



## THEVIEW

By Nyx Martinez

I STARED PAST THE RUSTY WINDOW FRAME, out of the bus. The day was off to a gloomy start and so was I. Lost in thought, recalling things that would have been better left forgotten, I sank into a dark mood. Sad, isn't it, how when we're feeling down we tend to busy our mind with thoughts that only waste our time and further sap our spirits?

The bus rolled to a halt. Again. Manila traffic. I glanced at my watch. 6 A.M. Too early for traffic to be moving this slowly. I had a deadline to meet and hadn't gotten much sleep the night before. Angrily, I turned back to the window.

A young street vendor was selling black boots that he had shined to a dazzling finish. I could almost read his mind, feel his hopes. Today would be good. Perhaps he'd earn a few more pesos than yesterday and have a better meal tonight. Just maybe.

A prospective buyer stopped. He wore faded jeans and a worn shirt. Slung over his shoulder was an imitation JanSport backpack. He held up a pair of boots and admired them. *Someday, maybe someday*, he seemed to be thinking, *I'll have enough money to buy some boots like these.*

I wondered what his daily earnings came to. Two hundred, maybe three hundred pesos?—About US\$6, tops. The boots cost twice that much. His money was needed elsewhere—lots of elsewhere. He probably had a family back home who needed to eat, and debts to get out from under. His money was spent before he earned it. The boots would have to wait.

The man looked wearily at the vendor. His eyes said it all. Not today. And probably not tomorrow. The two made small talk as if they were old friends. They laughed and shared another story before my bus inched

down the block and stopped again.

This time, I found myself staring at a wrinkled old lady selling candy. She sat on a low bench, half obstructing the sidewalk, as the thronging crowd moved around her. Her eyes—the part of them her sagging skin didn't shield—told of sadness. About what, I didn't know. Maybe the simple fact that today would be just like yesterday and the day before, like all the days that had turned into years, a day just like she knew tomorrow would be. She would sit on that stool from sunrise to sundown. A few people would buy bits of candy, but nobody would notice her.

After dropping coins into her callused hand they would hurry off, strangers still. The day would move on with them. The old lady would grow older and not any happier for it.

As I watched, the corners of her mouth fell even more. She stared off into the distance as a glistening drop formed in her eye and ran down her cheek. I had to look away.

A traffic controller was busy at the corner hurrying pedestrians across the intersection. Was he, too, carrying some unseen sorrow? Was he also haunted by thoughts that would have been better left forgotten? If something was bothering him, he couldn't afford to let it show. He had work to do today, traffic to move, order to keep.

A twenty-something woman crossed the street at his signal, and I tried to imagine the world through her eyes. What was her story? Where was she going? What was her name? ... Why did I even care?

My mind snapped back to my own situation and I realized that something had struck a chord inside,

against my own will it seemed. It was odd that I should be feeling someone else's emotion. Or was it? Was it okay to be calloused to the feelings of others, to go through my days as if all the nameless people in the crowds around me were mere props in *my* world? No. Each stranger was someone's mother, someone's child, someone's husband, someone's brother, someone's someone. And they all mattered.

As I thought back on my own problems, whatever had been bothering me before seemed trivial. I don't have a sad, hard life, living and working on the street, with pollution stinging my eyes and hardening my lungs. I don't have to worry every waking moment about how to make ends meet. Sure, I have problems of my own, but by comparison, life has been good to me. And from all indications it will continue that way.


The bus eventually picked up speed and I got on with my day. But in those few glimpses out the bus window, God had given me something that I hope I never lose—empathy, a heart for what others are going through and a desire to help make their world a little brighter.

Out of life's window, my view may change every day, but there will always be someone in need passing there. What can I do for them? Real compassion doesn't just observe and then turn away. ... And neither should I. •

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You can always drop a little love into the hearts of those you pass by, even if only with a word, a smile, or a look of sympathy, and they will know that God has loved them that day. His Spirit will tell them so. A little bit of love goes such a long way! —David Brandt Berg

Real  
compassion  
doesn't just  
observe and  
then turn  
away.



Compiled from the writings of David Brandt Berg

# THE COMING HEAVENLY LIFE OF LOVE!

WHAT  
HEAVEN  
WILL  
REALLY BE  
LIKE

THE PLACE WHERE ALL OF GOD'S CHILDREN ARE GOING TO dwell with Him forever is not some fanciful dreamland way off in outer space somewhere, but an even more amazing dream city that's going to come down from God, out of space, to a new earth. And God is going to come down and live with us, and we with Him (Revelation 21:1–3). It's going to be such a literal down-to-earth Heaven that the last two chapters of the Bible, Revelation chapters 21 and 22, describe the heavenly city in detail—its exact measurements, design, colors, and materials.

But before God brings down His heavenly city, He is going to purify the surface of the earth with fire, destroy the atmospheric heavens, and re-create a beautiful new earth and new atmospheric heavens. It will be the same ball, the same planet, but with a beautiful renewed surface, like a beautiful Garden of Eden—the Paradise of God (Psalm 102:25–26; Isaiah 51:6; 2 Peter 3:7, 10, 12).

We don't know exactly how it is going to work or what everything is going to be like there, but we do know that it's going to be a better world than the present one. It will be a world without death, sorrow, pain, or any of the other problems of today (Revelation 21:4).

The inhabitants of Heaven are not going to be entirely different. They're even going to look much like they did in this life, just as Jesus still looked like Himself after His resurrection. In His supernatural body, after He was resurrected from the grave, Jesus could appear and disappear, walk through walls and locked doors, and move from place to place at the speed of thought. Yet He ate and drank, and His disciples could still see Him and touch Him (Luke 24:36–43; John 21:12–13). In Heaven, people are going to have new supernatural bodies like His, incorruptible, immortal. Their old, decaying, natural bodies will go back to the dust, and they will be given new resurrected bodies that will live forever

(Philippians 3:21; 1 John 3:2).

But if all there is to Heaven is sitting around on clouds and playing harps, it could get awfully boring! I'm convinced Heaven is not going to be like that at all. I believe it's going to include all the joys and beauties and pleasures of this life, but without the drawbacks—all the assets, and none of the liabilities. After all, why would God have created all this to abandon it? Heaven is going to be like the best of this world, only more so!

Due to the fall of man through sin when he was first placed on earth, we haven't really had a chance to enjoy life as God originally intended, but in Heaven we

In Heaven, people are going to have new supernatural bodies like His, incorruptible, immortal.

will—and I think the Scriptures corroborate this. Heaven is going to be an amplification and eternal continuation of what we who know and love Jesus already have in our hearts. It's going to be perfect and wonderful, thrilling and exciting, marvelous and beautiful—everything we have now, only in perfection.

Everyone there is going to be good and honest and loving and kind—the perfect society, in perfect fellowship with the Lord and each other. There'll be no hate or jealousy or selfishness or cruelty. We'll never grow old and decrepit, or be bound

by time. It will be absolutely wonderful!

Within the great heavenly city, all of God's saved children will live with Him forever (Revelation 21:24, 27). But outside there will still be others in various situations, some better off than others, according to the lives they lived, how much they received God's truth and were loving to others. And because there will be "no more sea" (Revelation 21:1), unlike our present planet which is four-fifths covered with water, there will be plenty of room for those living outside the heavenly city.

The whole creation will be the way God intended for it to be originally, without sin, war, pollution, or destruction. In a sense, it will be heaven on earth for everybody, even the unregenerated people who don't have the right to enter the city or walk its golden streets.

Inside the city, the River of Life will flow out of the throne of God and of Jesus. The river will be lined on both sides with Trees of Life that bear twelve different kinds of fruit, and the "leaves are for the healing of the nations" outside (Revelation 22:1–2). Perhaps these healing leaves are symbolic of the words of God, His truth. Surely the inhabitants of Heaven will go out and be teachers amongst the nations. They will still have a job to do when they get to Heaven.

We who receive Jesus now are going to be the inner circle and live in the city, the charmed city, living charmed lives as eternal super-beings in supernatural bodies. Are you ready? And are you going to take as many others with you as you can?

God bless you with His love, salvation, and Heaven, now and forever!•

# ANSWERS

## TO YOUR QUESTIONS

**Q:** WHEN I GET INTO CONVERSATIONS with people who are searching for the truth and meaning in life, they often ask tough questions like, “How can anyone really know that God exists, or if Jesus is who you say He is—‘the way, the truth, and the life?’” How do you answer that?

A lot of people who say they don’t believe in God aren’t really atheists. Many of them simply haven’t made a decision because they haven’t had a real chance to know the truth. But even if they have doubts or questions that need answering before they will be convinced, if they’re sincere and really want the answers, if they truly want to know God, He will show them the truth and reveal Himself to them. In fact, there’s a promise to that effect in the Bible, from Jesus’ own mouth: “Everyone who asks [of God] receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened” (Matthew 7:8).

If they even admit the *possibility* that God is real and that Jesus is who He said He is, then they’re giving God a chance; there’s a tiny spark of faith, and God will honor that faith by letting them see and feel and know the proof. Perhaps not immediately, but in some way, at some time.

So the next time you’re asked that question, try answering like

this: “You can put God in a test tube and prove He exists—and *you* are the test tube. Just put God in *you* and see what happens. If you’ll just sincerely pray for God to reveal Himself, He will—through His Son, Jesus.”

Most people who say they don’t believe in God also say they don’t know how to pray, but just the fact that you’re there talking to them about this is proof that they’ve been getting through to God and He’s trying to give them the answers they’ve been looking for. Show, quote, or even paraphrase for them Jesus’ promise in Revelation 3:20: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him.” Then offer to lead them in a simple prayer—something like the following:

*Dear God, I don’t know You, but I want to. And Jesus, I want to know You too. I open the door to my heart and invite You in, Jesus. Please forgive me for all the wrongs I have done, give me Your gifts of love and eternal life, and help me get to know You. Amen.*

Once they’ve prayed to receive Jesus, He will prove Himself to them by helping them experience His love, answering their prayers, and bringing about positive changes in their lives. •



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and prove  
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*You* are the  
test tube.

## HE'S ALL I NEED

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I asked God for strength, that I might achieve,  
I was made weak, that I might learn humbly to obey...  
I asked for health, that I might do greater things,  
I was given infirmity, that I might do better things...  
I asked for riches, that I might be happy,  
I was given poverty that I might be wise...  
I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men,  
I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God...  
I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life,  
I was given life, that I might enjoy all things...  
I got nothing that I asked for—but everything I had hoped for,  
Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered.  
I am among all men most richly blessed.

—By an unknown Confederate soldier during the  
American Civil War (1861–1865)

## FEEDING READING

### The search for God and His truth

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#### **Each of us has an inborn desire to know God.**

Psalm 42:1–2  
Psalm 63:1  
Psalm 84:2

#### **But some people reject God or put Him out of their minds.**

Psalm 14:1–3  
Psalm 10:4

#### **God reveals Himself to those who seek Him.**

Jeremiah 29:13  
Psalm 69:32b  
Psalm 145:18  
Proverbs 8:17  
Matthew 5:6  
Matthew 7:7–11  
Luke 6:21a  
James 4:8a  
Revelation 3:20

#### **But God doesn't reveal Himself to those who look for happiness elsewhere.**

Luke 1:53b  
Luke 6:25a  
1 John 2:15–17

#### **We find God by finding Jesus.**

1 John 5:20  
Luke 10:22  
John 1:18  
John 14:6  
John 17:6,26  
1 Timothy 2:5

#### **Special promises to those who continue to seek God.**

Matthew 6:33  
John 8:31–32  
Job 8:5,7  
Psalm 34:10

#### **Examples of seekers of God and His truth from the Bible.**

John 3:3–16  
John 4:5–24  
Acts 8:26–37  
Acts 17:22–32

## COMING NEXT ...

### THE GREATEST IS LOVE

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If I live in a house of spotless beauty with everything in its place, but have not love, I am a housekeeper, not a homemaker.

If I live for waxing, polishing, and decorative achievements, but have not love, my children learn cleanliness, not godliness.

Love leaves the dust in search of a child's laugh.

Love smiles at the tiny fingerprints on a newly cleaned window.

Love wipes away the tears before it wipes up the spilled milk.

Love picks up the child before it picks up the toys.

Love is present through the trials.

Love reprimands, reproves, and is responsive.

Love crawls with the baby, walks with the toddler, runs with the child; then stands aside to let the child walk into adulthood.

Love is the key that opens salvation's message to a child's heart.

Before I became a parent, I took glory in my house of perfection.

Now I glory in God's perfection of my children.

As a parent, there are many things I must teach my children, but the greatest of these is love.

—Author unknown (an adaptation of 1 Corinthians chapter 13)

If you would like to know how you can have more of that kind of love in your family, don't miss the next issue of *Activated*.•

FROM JESUS WITH LOVE

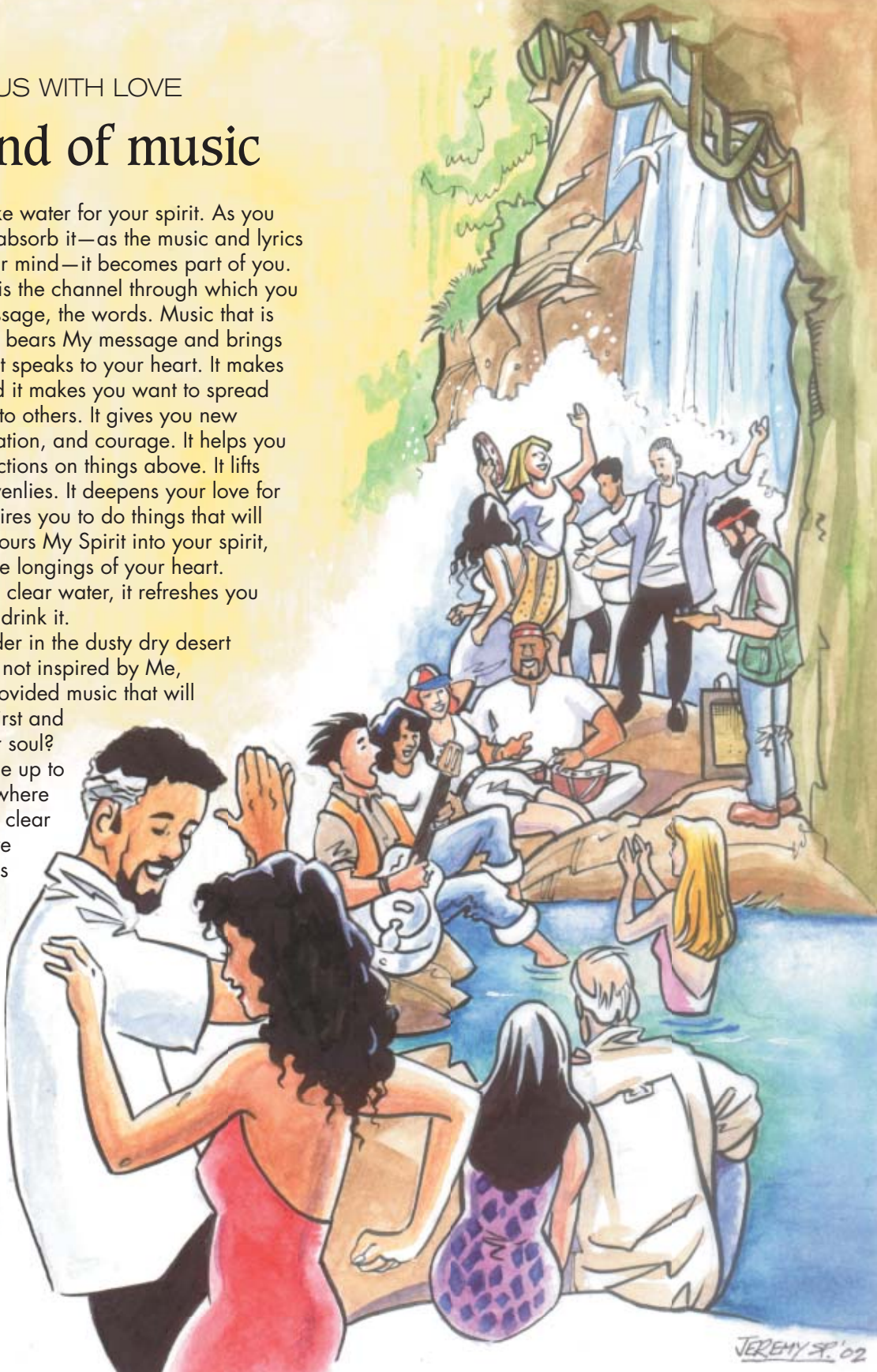
# My kind of music

Music is like water for your spirit. As you drink it in and absorb it—as the music and lyrics resonate in your mind—it becomes part of you.

The music is the channel through which you receive the message, the words. Music that is inspired by Me bears My message and brings life and hope. It speaks to your heart. It makes you happy, and it makes you want to spread that happiness to others. It gives you new strength, inspiration, and courage. It helps you to set your affections on things above. It lifts you to the heavenlies. It deepens your love for Me, and it inspires you to do things that will please Me. It pours My Spirit into your spirit, and answers the longings of your heart. Like cool, pure, clear water, it refreshes you every time you drink it.

Why wander in the dusty dry desert of music that is not inspired by Me, when I have provided music that will quench your thirst and rejuvenate your soul? Come up! Come up to the mountains where the streams are clear and fresh! Leave the things of this world behind you, and find thrills of the spirit that you never knew existed!

—Jesus



JEREMY S. '02