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# DISCERNMENT NEWSLETTER

“...how is it that ye do not discern this time?” Luke 12:56

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## CCM: The Seduction of Our Youth

by Carol Guffey

Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) is being used as an initiation for our youth into the occult. If you haven't listened, read or watched the CCM industry recently, you're in for a shock.

Right under our noses we are witnessing a wholesale deception of the church of magnanimous proportions. Bibles are tossed aside in favor of myth. Churches are practicing witchcraft – lusting for hidden knowledge and the secret things of divination. Masses are accepting a different gospel, a purpose-driven, creature- and community-centered, all-faith, global, inclusive, one-world religion. Most alarming, and least noticed, is the massive seduction and captivity of sincere, God-seeking youth.

We have a nation of youth desperately seeking truth, hungering to know God – and the church is giving them fables, The Gospel According to the Simpsons, The Gospel of Buffy, The Gospel According to Bono, The Gospel of Bob, (Rick Warren calls him “The Great Theologian Bob Dylan,” [Video 2, *40 Days*]). We have a nation of youth in despair, longing to be free from bondage and death – and the church is giving them Death Metal. The world looks to the church and finds but a reflection of itself.

How can this be happening? When Christians turn from the clear dictates of the Word of God and walk according to the desires of their own heart, they are in rebellion. As rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and idolatry it does not take long before our youth are clasping hands with pagans, adopting eastern ways, and pleasing themselves with the children of strangers (Is. 2:6). Knowing that “the king of Babylon stands at the parting of the way, at the head of the two ways, to use divination” (Ezek. 21:21), it shouldn't be a shock to see that major evils are flooding the youth in the church.

### The Power of the Drum

I awoke this morning at 4 a.m. with CCM superstar John Reuben's lyrics playing in my head, “DO NOT tell me what I can and cannot do when I rock! DO NOT tell me what I can and cannot do when I rock!” Over and over it played, demanding front and center, defying my ability to stop it. Is this my music? Do I listen to this stuff? No! I had listened to rapper Reuben's tune three days earlier for a mere thirty seconds. Here it is, three days later, usurping the place in my mind normally reserved for the Lord – a message of rebellion sown right into my spirit.

Behold the power of rhythm. As Leonard Bernstein said, “Music doesn't have to pass through the censor of the brain before it can reach the heart. An F sharp doesn't have to be considered in the mind; it is a direct hit, and therefore all the more powerful!” The power of music goes on long after the song has ended. Music enters the soul and does not leave! Thirty years down the road a few bars of a song have the ability to reawaken powerful emotions and attitudes stored with that song.

It used to be unthinkable for a Christian young person to attend rock concerts. Lewd, rebellious, drug-infested and satanic – they stood for everything a Christian was not. Applauding, endorsing,

and encouraging such philosophy and lifestyle was considered major compromise. No true Christian would think of blending with the world. God demanded that His people be separated unto Him and holy. God gave restrictions to His people for their own good, to protect them from demonic harm. Most people have very little awareness of the demonic realm – demonstrated in that we so flippantly partake of things God has specifically forbidden. Our parents warned us the destruction this music and lifestyle would bring. They were right, as many of us who followed the music right into drugs, sex, and rebellion found out. But fast forward to today – those warnings have disappeared. We not only send our children with our blessing, but pastors and leaders accompany children to rock concerts and call them “Christian” Rock Concerts!

Far from being a mere pastime or preference of youth, rock and roll is a powerful force for subversive cultural, social, political and spiritual change. We witnessed a complete revolt against authority and moral restraint in the '60s and '70s. When it came into the church the floodgates were opened. The walls have come down. No boundaries exist between the world and the church. When you question, “What do you consider compromise?” there is no answer. Nothing is considered compromise anymore.

Back to the power of the drum: “Playing the drum has stimulated certain changes in my consciousness – instead of blood it feels like some other juice is pumping through my veins. Ten, twenty minutes of drumming – something curious would happen. I'd feel myself becoming lighter, I'd lose track of time. I realize now, I was becoming entranced, but at the age of 15, I had no idea what was going on. I learned drums were intimately connected with altered states of consciousness. Percussion is a tool for transition.” The above quote is from Mickey Hart, drummer for the Grateful Dead, who spent an entire lifetime researching drums back to the earliest times, traveling the world to visit ancient tribes and shamans. He learned different spirits are invoked by different rhythms. It's like calling them by name.

Does our God answer to the beat of a drum? Does He come and grace us with His Spirit when He hears certain rhythms? Drums have always been a part of pagan worship and a means to access the spirit realm in every tribe and culture until the present time. Parent, if you have purchased drums for your child you need to be aware, as Mickey says, “The drum has carried me to an open door into another world. When the shaman reaches that door, he sings his songs and the spirit allies come, taking up abode in his drum or using the body of the drummer. When the rhythm is right, you feel it with all your senses; your mind is turned off, your judgment wholly emotional. One of the first laws of rhythm is repetition. Science knows one big thing about rhythm, something it calls the Law of Entertainment. I can entertain an auditorium of people in about 15 minutes. Rhythmic entertainment enables us to actually move into this spirit world. Get a group of musicians vibrating harmoniously together and you have one of the most powerful emotional experiences on the planet, one that would be impossible if we hadn't learned to entertain ourselves rhythmically.” (*Drumming on the Edge of Magic: A Journey into the Spirit of Percussion*, Mickey Hart.)

Mickey warns, "Shamans are drummers, 'technicians of ecstasy,' they're trance masters who have understood something fundamental about the nature of the drum. Drumming is used to summon the spirits or the gods down into the body of someone other than the drummer.... this is known as possession trance."

I have hundreds of photos from "Christian" Rock Festivals where the sea of faces are completely blank, emotionally flat, no smiles, no joy, no life – entranced. Brain-warping levels of noise 17 hours a day, 5 days straight, combined with sleep deprivation, have produced a state identical to a weeklong cocaine binge. The souls of our youth have been raped.

Talking Drum Publications says that "singing and drumming are extremely powerful tools for invoking or paying homage to spirit beings and deities. Shamanic drumming is a simple and effective way to induce this profound state of consciousness."

"Drumming was an integral part of the men's movement. However, many men and women don't understand the purpose and meaning of drumming... the age-old method of evoking deep emotion and creating ritual time and space through the pulsing rhythms of a community of drums. Drumming creates a sense of community that makes men feel more at home, members of the same tribe. Nothing brings us together faster and more effectively than drumming. The drum is like having a magical being among us. Drumming forms a bridge between the ordinary space and time of the world and the ritual space and time we seek to create for our sacred talking. It is amazing power to transport us into states of feeling that would be impossible without the vehicle of the drum. As the master drummer and storyteller, a mythologist, well versed in the mythic tradition of a variety of cultures, would begin, hundreds of men were transfixed by the rhythms of the drumming and the evocative images and plot of the story. I was so taken with the story accompanied by the drumming that the boundary between imagination and reality began to melt." (*The Voice of the Drum*, by George A Parks, PhD) This evidence should give us strong warning.

### **"Christian" Music Festivals**

When you think "Christian Music Festival" do you envision hillsides full of radiant, wholesome young people swaying in the breeze to "I Could Sing of Your Love Forever," loving and worshipping Jesus? How I wish that were so! Some young people come innocent, fresh-faced from rural areas, never having been exposed to the influences of the hardcore world of MTV, and they leave tattooed, pierced, and spiked because punk rock, metalhead, hard, grungy, pierced, spiked, tattooed and defiant is the new "Christian" role model.

Cornerstone Festival boasts: "The independent spirit has always been a main theme and characteristic of the Cornerstone Experience. The music represents everything from power-pop to hippie folk, techno pop to glam-worship, punk rock to classic metal grinding and churning... raging hardcore to death-metal and anything else that is mind-blowing and skull-crushing." Cornerstone features 14 main stages and over 150 bands. "An entire night was given over to ethnic, tribal and world-beat sounds at Wycliffe World Music Night. The Wycliffe Maloca Tent featured some amazing drum workshops and seminars involving ethnomusicology." (Cornerstone Festival website) Did you get that? Wycliffe is teaching shamanistic circle drumming! I saw leaders in a circle learning shamanistic drumming!

In all fairness, some people are sincere – they lack discernment and do not see it for what it is. They follow the leader. But some leaders will defend this music to the death. Why? Because they love it. One animated youth leader in his late 30s told me with breathless excitement, "Oh, it's wonderful. Heavy metal is my music."

Haven't we merely figured out a way to keep our idols by slapping a "Christian" label on it? One of ten to whom I show quotes and videos are alarmed, the other nine will make excuses: "This is what the kids like." We used to make choices determined by what God likes, but I'm told, "You're just old-fashioned," or "This is just a tool to reach them."

So we must dress like Satan, sound like Satan to attract the world? We must put forth darkness to attract darkness to the Light? It all makes no sense. I know one thing – if the foundation is Jesus, the shape of all that rises will look and sound like Jesus!

While some festivals are more hardcore than others, they all feature the same bands; there is no distinguishing between the holy and the unholy. All is served up in the name of Christ. In fact, many CCM bands tour with some of the most vile, God-hating bands out there. P.O.D. plays the OzzFest. They also performed the Halloween Night 2003 Voodoo Fest in New Orleans alongside the evil Marilyn Manson, ordained minister of Church of Satan, self-declared antichrist whose show includes ripping pages out of the Bible and spitting with incredible hatred "This is what I think of your Christian God." P.O.D. states they have nothing but respect for Manson. Hello?!

"Faith-based bands talk about being a light in the darkness, but into exactly how dark a place should a band go? For Tampa-based rockers Underoath, the darker the better. The past 2 years they have played "Hellfest." "Hellfest is a three-day, hardcore fest... it's insane," explains guitarist Tim McTague. "It's funny because it was at the same time last year as Cornerstone, so Norma Jean, Beloved, and our band went straight there after 'Cornerstone'. The big joke was that all the Christian bands were playing 'Hellfest' on Sunday. It seems like a lame joke, but it's kind of funny if you look at it." (*CCM Mag*)

People will argue that the so-called Christian rock festival is a bridge or means of reaching the world for Christ. But the exact opposite is occurring!! Pastors, youth leaders, and parents are giving Satan access to our children allowing the wholesale introduction of our youth to the kingdom of darkness. When you hear the term "bridge" your discernment should signal "Watch out." A bridge is a means of linking two separated pieces of land, types of peoples, opposite and contrary belief systems or religions that otherwise are inaccessible to each other, allowing passage and free flow between the two, blurring and tearing down of boundaries, eventually the two becoming one.

Christian music festivals have been springing up across this land for years – their scope is gigantic. Well over a hundred major 3 to 5 day "Christian Rock Music Festivals" are held annually across the United States alone. Festivals often boast 20,000 kids and up. At \$80-\$125 a person ticket price, plus an average \$20-\$40 per person spent on CD's, hats, gear – we are looking at big bucks. CCAuthority online reported 1,219 artists currently on tour in April of 2003. Each band tours anywhere between 15 to 25 days a month. Do the math. Huge bucks and huge numbers of Christian youth are being influenced.

Despite the fact that God commands that we should not worship after the manner of the pagans, Christian festivals are held across the land, under every spreading tree. Festivals have pagan origins and can be traced to the beginning of time. Festivals were celebrations, always accompanied by frenzied dancing, singing, and revelry, to the gods and goddesses of love, sexual rapture, nature, intoxication, witchcraft, and the goddess of the crossroads. One historian writes of the downfall of an empire, "The Bacchanalian rites were the only way to effect the ruin of the youth."

Some bands start with good intentions and truly do have a relationship with the Lord. They want to see kids come to Christ. However; the bands quickly become molded into the image of the world as a result of pressure from the recording companies to sell records, and from a desire to gain popularity. It's not long before the wholesome image morphs into a hard, defiant countenance. The majority of bands make no pretense of knowing the Lord. Others allude to "you know, what I believe." A mere casting of a vote for Jesus, a "yeah, the dude died for your sins, he loves everybody," does not make a Christian. I have scoured hundreds of interviews, websites, videos, photos, album covers, and lyrics, and there is evidence of only a handful of changed lives, of true born-again Christians who radiate the glory of our Lord. Instead, occult symbols, death, flames, blood, skulls, goat horns, hopelessness, confusion, anger, despair, rebellion, foolishness, positivism, and partying characterize this music, their logos, and their album covers.

Despite the carefully designed promo videos, it is imperative that you check out the videos of the bands themselves! Log onto MTV.com, VHS1.com, YahooLaunch.com. Pull up P.O.D., Pillar, Project 86, As I Lay Dying, Blindside, Lifehouse, etc. Watch the crowds, the thousands of Christian youth, hands stretched towards the stage, some making the sign of the devil. The shock and horror of seeing what is presented in the Name of Christ will cut you to the heart. The music has nothing to do with Christ. Our Holy God is not glorified; rather it is the Prince of Darkness who is honored.

*Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness, that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! (Isaiah 5:20)*

## The Drug Connection

The drug culture exists under the level of awareness of most people outside. Through the use of double-speak and coded words, people identify and talk with each other without outsiders knowing. For instance, a young man gave us his email address. Snowmaster420. I immediately said to my husband, "Wow, that is a bit obvious." My husband said, "What do you mean? He's a snowboarder." Having spent too many years in the drug world, I said, "Honey, Snowmaster means he is a dealer or user of cocaine! 420 is a reference to marijuana!" Yet, if I were to question or accuse the young man of doing drugs, he'd reply, "What, are you crazy? I'm a boarder. 420 are just numbers." That is how it works.

Many of the names of CCM bands are slang words for drugs. For instance, one of the most influential and popular bands goes by the name of P.O.D. On the street, POD is a name for marijuana. Popular reefer band Bone Thugs and Harmony have a song entitled "P.O.D." "Let's get P.O.D.'ded, P.O.D.'ded, P.O.D.'ded, so high, so high am I." In the drug world getting P.O.D.'ded means getting "wasted" on pot, Passed Over Dosed. P.O.D. is also an acronym

for Prince of Darkness. But the band tells us that the name stands for Payable on Death, although they admit to being heavy marijuana smokers at one time, and are big followers of the antichrist, dope-smoking, Rastafarian prophet Bob Marley. And although many of their lyrics are allusions to being high on drugs, guess we'll just have to take their word for it. Yet, how else can you interpret this line from "Snuff the Punk" – "P.O.D. hit one more time for those that don't be knowing, Merrily, merrily, merrily down the stream is how I'm flowing." Guitarist Marcos, who left the band in 2003, testified that P.O.D. is a party band and he was tired of pretending to be one thing for the fans and then acting differently behind the scenes. He challenged fans who think the members of P.O.D live godly lives: "Dude, what do you think P.O.D. does behind the scenes? Do you think they're angels?"

Some CCM bands on the line-up for Cornerstone Festival, have names with alternate drug meanings: *Grits* – "crack" cocaine; *Reliant K* – Ketamine; *Ace Troubleshooter* – "Ace" =marijuana, PCP; *Acid Head* – LSD user; *Beauty to Ashes* – "ashes"=marijuana; *Blaster the Rocketman* – "rocket" is a marijuana cigarette; *Rock House* – place where crack is sold and smoked; *Dirt* – "heroin;" *Dogie Style* – sexual position or heroin; *Dizmas-* "dizz" is marijuana; *Fire When Ready* – "fire" means inject a drug like crack or meth; *Fire it up* – smoke pot; *Fighting Jacks* – "jack" is to steal someone else's drugs; *Red & Gold* – types of marijuana or crack; *Kryptonite* – "crack" cocaine; *L.A. Symphony* – long-acting amphetamine; *Los Lobos* ("The Wolves") – "lobo" is marijuana; *Love Drug* – "MDMA;" *Number one gun* – "number 1" is cocaine, "gun" is to inject a drug; *Red Orchestra* – "reds" are depressants; *Slingshot57* – "slinging" is dealing drugs, "shot" is to inject a drug; *xlookingforwardx* – "x" is marijuana, MDMA or amphetamines; *Running* – MDMA; *Topgun* – "crack" cocaine; *Tools* – equipment used for injecting drugs; *White Cross* – amphetamine or methamphetamine.

Am I saying all these bands have intentionally chosen drug-related names? Not at all! Is it likely that some are drug-related? Absolutely! – If nothing more than to look "cool" in the eyes of the world. Don't forget: To this generation "pot" (marijuana) is not considered a drug. It is no big deal. In fact they will quote Gen. 1:12 to argue that God gave us pot.

## What is Their Message?

CCM has become an umbrella term for anything with faith-based lyrics. I wish I had space to go into the hundreds of lyrics and quotes I have. Bands write about life experience, girlfriends, their feelings and struggles – rarely a strong Christian message. Names like "Self-minded" and albums entitled "Truthless Heroes" give us a clue. Some bands flat out deny affiliation with the Lord Jesus Christ. Antinomianism and dualism are predominant beliefs. So is rejection of Bible-based Christianity and parents. A tolerant, all-faith spirituality that doesn't require holy living is expressed: "We're turning away from that, we were raised wrong, we aren't under any restrictions. Dude, Jesus loves all of us, all that matters is that we give a positive message and love our brother."

**Creed** – "We cannot say this enough. We are not a 'Christian' band. We have no agenda to lead others to believe in our specific beliefs. Drug use is allowed in the band, but nothing more than you could grow in your own back yard. And I love women." (*USA Weekend*, 2002.)

“We’ve always just had a positive message. I grew up listening to Slayer, Celtic Frost and Metallica. The last thing I ever thought was people would say I was in a Christian band. After a while of us going, No, we’re not... no, we’re not... no, we’re not, it got to a point there was not much more we could say or do aside from coming out with satanic T-shirts onstage.” (*Rolling Stone*)

Rebelling against his Christian upbringing, Scott Stapp says “God wasn’t revealed to me for 17 years of my life. God was revealed to me when I went away from that and had my own experiences. God was revealed to me through humanity and nature and everything that’s around us.” Stapp says he has “settled into a religious belief system with which he feels comfortable. There’s no guilt anymore. No condemnation anymore.”

Last year, four fans sued Creed alleging that Stapp was so intoxicated and/or medicated that he couldn’t perform; that he rolled around on the stage as if in pain. At one point he appeared to pass out. Stapp denied allegations stating he was offering an over-the-top gesture meant to convey the difficulties he was facing in his personal life at the time. (*MTV News*)

**Lifhouse** – “I don’t even like the word religion. My music is spiritually based, but we don’t want to be labeled as a ‘Christian’ band, all of a sudden people’s walls come up, they won’t listen to your music and what you have to say. We have a positive message of hope. We’re not trying to blatantly preach. It all comes down to love.” (Jason Wade has reportedly saved some of his more overt spiritual material [the ones that mention the Deity by name] for a so-called “worship record” which he intends to release under a different band moniker.) (*Rolling Stone* 01)

**Audio Adrenaline** – say of Church Punks: “This is a call to save the church and reshape and reform ideas... to not be afraid to stand up and challenge fundamental thoughts.” (Interview, *CCMplanet*, 2/25/03)

**Bad Religion** – **Decapolis**: “You currently have several bands taking a stance saying they are members of a certain faith, be it Christian, Muslim, Hare Krishna, and so on. Is there a place in punk rock for those types of bands?” **Brian**: “There was always a place for that. I mean, the whole point of this punk rock thing was individuality. Just within the six people in my band, some people believe in God, some people do not... There is absolutely nothing wrong with people who find peace and value in religion. This crossbuster logo and this Bad Religion name really represent anti-dogmatic thinking.” (*Decapolis* interview)

**MPX** – **Mike Herrera**: “I don’t think it should matter where you’re playing, or who you’re playing with, because people are people. I think with Christian music, it’s a reflection of what mainstream music really is, it’s just not as good. There’s tons of bands out there, they don’t really care about the music they just want to get signed, they want to get famous.” (*Decapolis*)

**Steve** – “I’m always open for new cultures. The whole part of Steve... has not come from listening to Christian music. If we, as Christians, embrace the culture, we give something back to God. That’s something special.” (*CCMplanet*, 2002)

**The Elms** – “God gave Rock and Roll to you. The idea that Rock and Roll is from the devil, we just don’t buy it. Our band’s goal has always been to just play to rock fans. And you know, not be exclusive to this, this (pointing to the festival) people or that. We

probably feel less exclusive to Christians because we’ve been out in the general market tours.” (Live interview from Alive Fest, 04).

**Apt. Core** – “My hope is that the record would stir up a desire in each individual to explore God’s creation themselves and support all forms of creativity in other people.” (*CCM Mag*, 2003)

**12 Stones** – “We’re not out there to preach to anyone, and we’re just hoping they can get something positive in any form that’s necessary.” (*Hitparader*)

**P.O.D.** – This is one of the most alarming bands on the Christian circuit. This band is *not* a Christian band! They worship the Rastafarian pagan god Jah. They sing of the Messenjah. Occult symbols saturate their albums. Excellent research is at [www.av1611.org/crock/pod\\_sym.html](http://www.av1611.org/crock/pod_sym.html).

**Grits** – mixed in the rippling thuds of the lewd Beyonce, profane Snoop Dogg, and Outkast. “It proved these guys are plugged into the MTV generation. Such a bold move gave the guys credibility when they took time out for prayer and witnessing.” (*CCM Mag*, 2/05)

**Jars of Clay** – “We don’t have a specific audience in mind...we’re not writing songs that are intentionally geared for a Christian audience versus a regular mainstream audience. There’s an understanding that when people say ‘Christian,’ and some of it’s just Western civilization, that there’s an agenda that will come along with that and there’s a guideline and a standard and people can expect to be served something that they are going to have to digest on some level.” (*CNN Entertainment*)

**Project 86** – Isn’t about to let its love for Christ get in the way of secular punk-metal glory. “The songs are about looking inside myself and at the world around me. At the same time, they’re very much open to a wide range of interpretations.” Hardcore! (Ad, *Sound & Spirit*)

**Skillet** – Music often compared to Marilyn Manson and Nine Inch Nails. “A large percentage of Christian youth are ready for a revolution,” lead singer John Cooper told *Campus Life* (Jan./Feb. 2002).

**Sixpense None the Richer** – Frontwoman Leigh Nash says she’s “really fed up with being pigeonholed as ‘that Jesus band.’ The Christian thing doesn’t follow Creed or Lifhouse around, does it? It’s so irritating – 80% of the articles written about us, ‘Christian’ is in there somewhere. It’s always a banner, and we just don’t wanna carry that around anymore. People with all their religious claims and all their c-p — it just gets old. I don’t wanna read their books and I don’t wanna hear ‘em talk. I just wanna know what I believe, and try and quietly nurture that, so I can be a little stronger when I go out and face the world again.” (Tom Lanham, *The Examiner*, 6/23/03)

**Evanescence** – Shot to number one on the Christian music charts. Singer Amy Lee says, “There are people hell-bent on the idea that we’re a Christian band in disguise, that we have some secret message. We have no spiritual affiliation with this music. It’s simply about life experience. We’re actually high on the Christian charts and I’m like, what the f-k are we even doing there? I guarantee that if the Christian bookstore owners listened to some of those songs they wouldn’t sell the CD.” Finally, one Christian bookstore owner pulled their CD’s. “We had a lot of complaints about the lyrics and the sex and drugs.” (More Goth Than Gospel, *Guardian Unlimited*, UK)

## Christian Festival & Youth Leadership Training Conferences

Leaders will argue, "But kids are growing in Christ." I ask you to consider the following and answer how anyone could grow in Christ when the Bible is discarded, and myth, Hollywood movies, and U2 lyrics are served to kids. Familiar evangelical leader names on the Christian Youth Festival circuit include Josh McDowell, Ron Luce, Greg Laurie, and Luis Palau. Let's look at key note speaker onboard for Spirit West Coast 2005:

**Erwin McManus** – Futurist, international speaker on church growth, organizational change, postmodern culture, and urban and global issues, states: "The greatest enemy to the movement of Jesus Christ is 'Christianity.'" He pastors Mosaic Church, L.A. Services, a creative mix of spirituality, visual and performing arts. Borrowing from non-Western cultures, sometimes services begin with an East Indian musical prelude, continue with exuberant dancing, a skit, thumping hard rock praise and worship songs, and tranquil Japanese koto music during the offering. "We don't sing hymns. 'European' songs have no relevance in a multiethnic, multicultural urban church of revolutionaries. We're trying to turn Christianity upside down." (*Los Angeles Times*, Oct. 9, 2004.) In *An Unstoppable Force*, McManus calls for "a church that is active and engaged with its community" that "dares to cut itself free from atrophied practices... to flourish in creative and compelling worship. Where teachers of the Word risk reaching out to our multi-sensory, multi-layered culture with music, the arts and other unique expressions of love and faith." It should come as no surprise that Rick Warren wrote the Foreword, and the book is endorsed by Ralph D. Winter of Fuller Theological Seminary and Bill McCartney of Promise Keepers.

In an interview with FreshMinistry, McManus was asked: "What advice would you give preachers that want to minister in the postmodern age?" He replied: "First, The sermons that are changing the world are the ones where the pastor is real – sharing his journey with the congregation. Second, stop preaching sermons and start telling stories. Third, break though the pressure to be a great preacher and become a great leader."

### Cornerstone Festival 2003 Featured Speakers

Read more about this at [www.cornerstonemag.com/imaginarium/fest/2003/speakers.html](http://www.cornerstonemag.com/imaginarium/fest/2003/speakers.html). Sponsors of Cornerstone Festival include World Vision, Wycliffe, Tooth and Nail, Teen Mania, and Acquire the Fire.

**Verlyn Flieger** – "specialist in myth studies offers Celtic, Arthurian, Hindu, Native American, and Norse myth."

**Paul Leggett** – "pastor, author of *Terence Fisher: Horror, Myth and Religion*, will sketch the landscape of one of the most potent and meaningful myths of Modern man, Jekyll and Hyde, and the doubleness built into the human condition against a background of its Biblical roots, especially Romans Chapter 7."

**Rod Bennett** – "contributing lectures like 'God's Haunted House' and 'King Kong Died For Your Sins,' teaching us how to apply that Chestertonian sense of wonder and wry cultural criticism to such things as monster movies and T.V. His seminar on C.S.Lewis will look at the Great Man's addiction to pulp fiction to help listeners to carry away valuable lessons for Christians interacting with media."

**Terrence Wandtke** – of St. Louis International Film Festival's Interfaith Award. "His Seminar: 'Word, Image & Criticism: Is Talking About Film Like Dancing About Architecture?' Western aesthetics have always been troubled by a bias against the visual, a problem magnified by religious critics' tendency to baptize the privileging of word over the image. He proposes an alternate mode of viewing film distinctly influenced by Christian ideals and identifying transcendent truth in film."

**David Lavery** – author of: *Reading The X-Files, This Thing of Ours: Investigating*. "The Sopranos," seminar and "Rooting for Buffy: Why Buffy the Vampire Slayer Inspires Our Faith."

**Louis Markos** – a "humanist" Christian, believes in the incarnational nature of divine communication, seeking truth in all manner of imaginative works. Seminar: "The Discarded Image: Myth, Wonder & Incarnation," will demonstrate that ideas and desires too often dismissed as pagan and anti-Christian may mark the first step on a road to faith in Christ."

**John Morehead** – of Watchman Fellowship, *Sacred Tribes Journal*, *Journal of Christian Missions to New Religious Movements*, offers this Seminar: Pokemon, Yu-Gi-Oh and Fantasy Gaming. "Some religious believers equate the magic in these card games with occultism. Morehead takes a more comprehensive and levelheaded approach to popular gaming magic, in the process critically-engaging both these imaginative games and wrong-headed critiques."

### The National Youth Workers Convention

Consider the following seminars, featuring 31 CCM bands:

**Invitation To Solitude and Silence: Experiencing God's Transforming Presence**, Ruth Haley Barton, "teaching and guidance for your own practice of solitude and silence." (This is contemplative prayer, see <http://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com> for more information about this topic.)

**Labyrinth** – Meditative words and music guide you on a one-hour reflective journey. (More contemplative prayer.)

**Once Upon A Time...The Power of Story** – Spencer Burke and Mark Miller. "Revisit the power of ancient storytelling-experience and explore the tribal and techno use of story."

**The Revolutionary Voice** – Rob Bell. "We will explore the concepts of radar, buckets, chunks, and the all-important marinade, as we explore finding our own unique revolutionary voice."

**Reimagining Spiritual Formation**, Doug Pagitt. – **Emerging Worship: Moving Beyond Preaching & Singing**, Dan Kimball.

**Journeying into the Culture and Cultivating the Inward Journey**, Chris Hall and Duffy Robbins.

**Dick Staub**, CultureWatch – "key note speaker, teacher of Spiritual Formations at Seattle Pacific University, founder of the Center for Faith and Culture to help people understand and communicate their beliefs in the context of popular culture offers us such fare as "Reflections on King Kong's seductress; Theology of Sting's Sacred Love Album, Exegeting U2, What Would Buffy Do: The Vampire Slayer as Spiritual Guide."

*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. (2 Timothy 4:3-4)*

The *Sacramento Bee* reports Pastor Ron Vanderwell of The Gathering used heavy-metal band Metallica's lyrics alongside the gospel. "Metallica's lyrics provide the perfect conduit to the Bible," said Vanderwell, who paralleled lyrics, such as Metallica's hit 'Follow the God that Failed,' with Bible verses to make his point."

### CCM— A Bridge to All-Faiths

U2's Bono, social activist, Irish rocker, is the rising star and spokesman of "Christian" pop culture. He speaks on college campuses about building a Christian worldview. Promise Keepers brought him in years ago to lead worship at a big PK convention. Magazines like *Christianity Today*, *CCM Magazine*, *Relevant*, *Thunderstruck* have young Christians convinced that Bono is akin to modern day Jesus. [I have a picture of Bono French-kissing another man, ed.] Bono teaches astonishing lies and is redefining the gospel for youth across the land.

Bono says, "God's Spirit moves through us and the world at a pace that can never be constricted by any one religious paradigm.... There are 2,103 verses of Scripture pertaining to the poor. Jesus Christ only speaks of judgment once. It is not all about the things that the church bangs on about. It is not about sexual immorality, and it is not about megalomania, or vanity. It is about the poor." (*Thunderstruck*)

"Music is the language of the spirit. Its first function is praise to creation – praise to the beauty of the woman lying next to you, or the woman you would like to lie next to you." (*Beliefnet*2001) "U2 has often been seen as a Christian rock band." Bono: "We really f—ked that up, though. We really f—ked up our corner of the Christian market. I think carrying moral baggage is very dangerous for an artist." The crude rock star was the first person to use the "f" word on live T.V. He admits he has a problem with profanity and drunkenness.

"Preachers are Bono's No. 1 Fans," writes *Chicago Sun Times* religion writer Cathleen Falsani. Brian Walsh, a Christian Reformed minister at the University of Toronto, argues that "Bono's language in the song – invoking the adjective form of the gerund that got him in trouble with the FCC last year... is actually less harsh than the words used by the Hebrew psalmist."

*Get Up Off Your Knees, Preaching the U2 Catalogue* is a collection of 32 sermons inspired by U2 songs, written by Protestant and Catholic clergy. Author/minister Maynard writes, "Anybody who tries to help people engage with the Bible is always looking for meaningful life-connections. U2 lyrics come to mind when we are in search of good contemporary reference points for proclaiming the Gospel. Their work is a natural for culturally-aware preachers to draw on. U2 models a kind of thoughtful fresh engagement with spirituality. U2 are models for faith-engaging culture." Eugene Peterson of *The Message Bible* paraphrase, states in the book that U2 have essentially a prophetic call. (*Next-wave Mag*, 6/04)

*Relevant* magazine writes, "One myth often associated with contracting AIDS is that it stems from sexual irresponsibility... Bono states, 'Somewhere in the back of the religious mind is this idea that we reap what we sow (that) is missing the entire New Testament, and the concept of grace completely.'"

Jars of Clay, Michael W. Smith Join Bono in New D.A.T.A Initiative – "to launch the 'ONE' campaign. The ONE campaign will be promoted with the help of a diverse coalition of faith-based and antipoverty groups. World Vision is pleased to support the

ONE campaign. It is time for each of us to be ONE," said Rev. David Beckmann, President of Bread for the World.

Billy Graham's Crusade, Pasadena, Nov. 04, showcased hardcore metal bands Kutless, Jars of Clay, Third Day, and Tait.

Popular CCM musician Michael Card led the singing for the "Evening of Friendship" in Salt Lake City, Nov. 04. The crowd was composed of Mormons and "evangelical" Christians. The *Desert Morning News* wrote that "he doesn't see Mormonism and evangelical Christianity as opposed to each other; they are more like the two ends of a long chord – part of the same thing. Card said 'The older I get, I guess the more I want to integrate everything.' Card now has the distinction of having the greatest ecumenical reach of any of the CCM artists."

Friendship Fest – "A historic gathering between Christians and Muslims" will take place in Morocco, May. 6-8, 2005. NAE states "the goals of Friendship Fest are to make use the universal language of music to bridge cultures and make friends, to set a good example of religious tolerance by engaging in respectful dialogue." CCM Musicians from the U.S. and Morocco will be performing on the same stage in a collective celebration for peace and tolerance. Participating artists will be Newsboys, Stacie Orrico, Phil Keaggy, Delirious, Jeremy Camp, Out of Eden, and Rock and Roll Worship Circus. Event engineers: Creation Fest co-founder Harry Thomas, NAE's Richard Cizik, and National Clergy Council's Rob Schenck. "This 3-day high profile musical celebration Friendship Fest is part of a broader initiative to promote cross-cultural dialogue. Dialogue will focus on specific outcomes – common ground that can be established in the categories of religion, family life, education, humanitarian relief, human rights, and the media. Dialogue participants will be by 'invitation only,' with a limited number of 'observers' welcome to experience each exchange."

Toby Mac – Gearing up for their "Diverse City World Tour" with Third Day superstar Toby Mac comments, "This tour is about unity. A house divided against itself cannot stand. But when we come together and celebrate our diversity, we become a strong tower..." "Diverse City" catches that all-inclusive vibe... an ode to embracing racial and ethnic diversity – a favorite theme of Toby's." (*CCM Mag*)

Kirk Franklin and Toby Mac partner with The Message Bible and the E.R.A.C.E. Foundation on their latest touring effort, named after Dr. Martin Luther King's "I Have A Dream" speech. They are committed to "carrying on the meaning of the words and instilling the ideals of Dr. King to the youth of our country, hoping to teach youth to love and accept each other's differences, to let those kids know that what we have in common is greater than our differences, and that our differences are what make us beautiful."

In summary, it is evident things are not like they used to be. We are seeing an acceleration of interfaith services, programs, and dialogue. Our youth are being thoroughly prepared to accept a one world government and religion – and CCM leaders are key instruments in imparting the values of the world, preaching tolerance, inclusiveness, bridge building, and finding common ground with other religions.