

CFBC Hymns Class 42

Keith (1953-1982) and Melody (1946-Present) Green



***“The only music minister to whom the Lord will say,
'Well done, thy good and faithful servant,' is the one
whose life proves what their lyrics are saying...
And to whom music is the least important part of their life.
Glorifying the only Worthy One
has to be a minister's most important goal!”***

Keith Green

The Life of Keith Green (from the Last Days Ministries website)

Keith was born in New York near Brooklyn. His mom had been a singer with the Big Bands, his dad a schoolteacher. Before he was two his mom said Keith had perfect pitch as he sang his baby songs. A year later his family moved to CA and settled into the newly developed orchards of the San Fernando Valley, just a short drive to Hollywood, which would play a significant role in Keith's future.

Keith's parents made sure he learned how to play guitar and piano at a young age. He liked piano best, but got bored playing the long classical pieces. So instead of learning to read sheet music, he'd memorize each piece, then pretend to be sight reading when his teacher was there. But his grandfather, who started Jaguar Records, the first rock and roll label, taught Keith how to play chords on the piano... and was the end of classical music for him. From that moment on Keith began writing and singing his own songs. He was only 6 years old at the time.

When he was 11 Keith signed a recording contract with Decca Records, singing his own songs. Although his pictures were in the Teen Magazines and his single had some minor success, the industry didn't know how market with such a young artist. Keith was very disappointed and at 14, felt like a total failure, a 'has been' which was very difficult for someone who had been groomed all his life to be a pop star.

Keith was 15 the first time he ran away from home. He started a journal that very day and for years as he looked for musical adventure and spiritual truth, he wrote his journey down. Keith had a Jewish background, but he grew up reading the New Testament. He called it "a confusing combination" that left him deeply unsatisfied. His journey led him to drugs, eastern mysticism, and free love.

When Keith was 19 he met a fellow seeker/musician named Melody. They were inseparable and got married a year later...now he had a partner as his spiritual quest continued. Then when he had nearly given up hope, Keith found the truth he had been looking for. He now was 21 and never looked back.

Keith had grown up reading about Jesus in the Bible, but was confused when he figured out he was Jewish, a fact his family had hidden from him. But now what once confused him made sense as Keith proudly told the world, "I'm a Jewish Christian." As soon as Keith opened his heart to Jesus, he and Melody opened their home. Anyone with a need, or who wanted to kick drugs, or get off the street, was welcome. Of course, they always heard plenty about Jesus at what fondly became known as "The Greenhouse."

Not only did Keith's life take a radical turn, but by then he was a highly skilled musician and songwriter, and so all of his songs changed too. His quest for stardom had ended. And now his songs reflected the absolute thrill of finding Jesus and seeing his own life radically changed. Keith's spiritual intensity not only took him beyond most people's comfort zones, but it constantly drove him even beyond his own places of content.

Somewhat reluctantly, Keith was thrust into a "John the Baptist" type ministry—calling believers to wake up, repent, and live a life that looked like what they said they believed...He made audiences squirm by saying, "If you praise and worship Jesus with your mouth, and your life does not praise and worship him, there's something wrong!" The radical commitment Keith preached was also the kind of faith he wanted his own life to display...

Keith's songs were often birthed during his own spiritual struggles. When he pointed his finger at hypocrisy, he knew he had four fingers pointing back at himself. He penned honest and vulnerable lyrics, but left room for God to convict the rest of us too. He knew the journey to Heaven often twists through rocky valleys, and saw no value in portraying his journey as otherwise.

With Keith's honesty, he would have chafed against a glossed-over reading of his own life. After all, Keith was in the spotlight as he grew in Jesus. So when he made mistakes, he would talk about them to portray his life honestly. He believed we miss something essential when we overlook the frailty and humanity of others as well as ourselves.

He knew he was far from perfect, but he passionately hungered and thirsted after righteousness.

Keith was constantly praying, asking the Holy Spirit, “Please change my heart, and convict me of my sin.” And when he was convicted, he took action. If he needed to repent, he repented. If he needed to phone someone to ask forgiveness, he made the call.

Keith’s views on many subjects were often controversial, especially when it came to charging for his ministry. With his albums at the top of industry charts. Keith decided to give his albums away for whatever people could afford, even for free. Keith’s heart was to make sure those who could not afford to buy his music could get it. Since Keith and Melody felt their songs were musical ministry messages and they did not want anyone left out due to lack of funds. At last count at least 15 years ago over 200,000 albums were sent into prisons and to the poor, without charge.

The same issue arose with Keith’s concerts, which he felt were nights of ministry. After a few years of trying different ways of funding his concerts there was just one idea that gave him peace. He decided his concerts would be free so anyone who wanted could come. The ministry would rent a hall or stadium and Keith took one offering for LDM to help cover the expenses. He and Melody did not receive any of the offerings because they were able to support themselves with their music royalties.

Doing free concerts along with Keith’s new album policy were moves that sent shockwaves through the Christian music industry, causing, some record labels, bookstores, or other artists to question his motives. Some thought he wanted to undercut the system and make others look bad. But that wasn’t his heart at all and in the end it was understood he was just following his convictions.

The Lord had taken Keith from concerts of 20 or less, to stadiums of 12,000 people. At his concerts Keith always gave an altar call and led thousands upon thousands to the Lord, and just as many firmly recommitted their lives fully to serve the Lord...

For Keith, meeting Jesus was one thing. Becoming more like Him was another. He struggled with the same things we all do...developing self discipline, deadlines, bad attitudes, selfishness, and ministry issues screaming for attention. He was also trying to disciple the 70 new believers who had come to be part of LDM, which by now had moved to East Texas. Besides all this, Keith still had music to write, articles to finish, and a growing family and wife to take care of.

After striving for years to measure up to God’s holiness, at times even questioning his own salvation, Keith came into a deeper understanding of the sacrifice Jesus made on the cross — both to forgive his sins, and to clothe him in His righteousness. It was like a huge weight had been lifted off of his chest. It wasn’t that Keith became less concerned with purity and holiness. But now he was more motivated by love and less by fear in His pursuit of Jesus. He learned so much more about God’s grace and the importance of pausing simply to behold His glory and enjoy His presence. That is perhaps, what Keith loved most.

On July 28, 1982, there was a small plane crash and Keith went home to be with Jesus. The crash also took the life of his three-year-old son Josiah, and his two year old daughter, Bethany. Melody was home with their one year old, Rebekah, and was also six weeks pregnant with their fourth child, Rachel. Keith was only 28 years old.

Although Keith is now with Jesus, his life and ministry is still making a huge impact around the world...Keith once said, "When I die I just want to be remembered as a Christian." It's safe to say he reached his goal, and perhaps, a bit more.

Keith Green was simply a man of conviction. When his convictions led him to an eternally worthy object in the person of Jesus he sold all that he had—ambitions, possessions, and dreams—to possess His love. In so doing he became a man of devotion. He also became a man remembered, and still missed, by millions around the world.

From the Last Days Ministries website

The Life of Melody Green (from the Last Days Ministries website)

Melody is probably most loved for the songs she's written, notably "There Is A Redeemer"...She has also composed many other standards including, "Make My Life A Prayer To You," "You Are The One," "Rushing Wind," and "The Lord Is My Shepherd."..

Her best selling book, "*No Compromise. The Life Story of Keith Green*" has become a must-read classic, translated into numerous languages. Melody's "ministry articles" are distributed as LDM WiseTracts by the multi-millions, especially her groundbreaking Pro-Life message, "*Children...Things We Throw Away*" which at last count, 10 years ago, over 20 million had been distributed.

Looking back, although Melody was born in Hollywood, she came into this world quietly and without fanfare. She grew up in Venice, CA in a funky little apartment facing an alley, called Speedway. With no safe place to play, and the beach just a few hundred feet away, the sand became her only playground. As a young girl who always watched the shifting tides, the star patterns, and the sunsets, Melody realized there must be a Creator for such perpetual beauty, universal order, and symmetry to exist.

Her father was a WWII Navy Seal Veteran, a hunter and fisherman, and a factory worker by trade. Her mom worked at a CPA firm, and was raised in an Orthodox Jewish family, the child of Russian refugees. Melody's grandfather was a Rabbi, her grandmother, the child of a Grand Rabbi. Escaping Czarist persecution, her grandparents bundled up their five children and took a train to the shipyard in Odessa. Melody says, "It's a miracle I'm even alive! My family barely escaped death in Odessa, then on the train ride to the port they were ducking bullets shot at them through the windows. My precious grandparents put the kids on the floor and laid on top of them, covered with pillows for protection. They made it to the port and actually escaped on the very last ship that would allow fleeing refugees on board! My mom was their sixth child, but the very first child to be born in America."

As a child she'd gone to Sabbath School, but now she studied eastern philosophies, astrology, mysticism, and even went to Japan with a group of Buddhists, and for a short season she became an icon for them. But, like everything else, it was like sand slipping through her fingers. It didn't grip her spirit in a lasting way.

After college, Melody designed clothing in the famed Garment District of Los Angeles. Later she took a job at a Production Company. It was there that she met Keith Green, an aspiring musician who was on a very similar spiritual journey. Within a year they were married and continued their spiritual search together. Now Melody designed and made unique clothing for herself and Keith for his nightclub gigs in Hollywood and his record label auditions.

In 1975 they were invited to a small Bible study in upscale Bel Air and their lives were forever changed. Melody finally found the truth she'd been looking for, but in an unexpected Person. Both Melody and Keith now understood that in Jesus they had found their one and only true Messiah.

Calling herself a Jewish Christian, Melody decided to just do what the Bible said. So she and Keith opened the doors of their small home and took in kids with drug problems and surprise pregnancies, usually leading them to the Lord. They also had Pot Luck dinners and Bible studies for their whole neighborhood...going door to door to invite people. Before long more space was needed, so they bought or rented a total of six more homes, built triple high bunks, ate donated mystery food (cans without labels) and just kept on growing.

In 1979, feeling a need to leave "the city" because of the rehab work they were doing, they moved their flourishing ministry to a 120-acre ranch in East Texas. Melody still traveled on Keith's concert tours where she ran the soundboard, sold albums, and as always, she and Keith wrote music wherever they could. Back at the ranch she oversaw the "women's ministries," wrote hundreds of counseling letters, and took care of her young and growing family.

By 1982 the ministry had a worldwide impact, with nearly 100 people on staff. Melody was busy editing *The Last Days Magazine*, as well as writing many of its articles. Keith's music was at the top of the charts and new facilities were built and more were in the planning stages.

Then one day in July a tragic accident changed Melody's life forever

Keith and two of their young children, with some visiting friends, went for a short ride in a small plane. It was the LDM weekly fast day, and the ministry pilot had just returned. Keith met the pilot on the runway and everyone jumped into the plane. But the plane did not get the needed lift, and just 20 seconds later it crashed in a neighboring field and burst into flames. There were no survivors.

When Keith died he was just 28 years old. Melody's first born, Josiah, was almost four and Bethany was two years old. At the time, Melody was at home with their one year old daughter Rebekah Joy and six weeks pregnant with their fourth child. Melody says, "The rug was yanked out from under my whole world that day. Without the Lord and the support of my friends and the LDM community I never would have made it." But she did make it, pressing on to lead LDM through the crisis, while caring for her surviving daughter.

In March of 1983 Melody took some time off to give birth to her new daughter, Rachel Hope. Now Melody was a single mom with two little girls... and leading a large international ministry. It was at a time when women leaders were few and not readily accepted, but the Lord gave Melody great favor and continued to use both her and LDM in incredible ways.

In 1985 Melody became a forerunner in the tiny but budding Pro Life Movement...She launched *Americans Against Abortion* at a time when pastors rarely mentioned abortion or felt believers should even address it. But Melody put a fresh face and a non-stoppable energy into being Pro-Life...and she drove the message home, squarely into millions of evangelical hearts.

In this season Melody crossed the nation teaching the biblical perspective on caring for Life, and urging all believers to take a determined stand.

There is a Redeemer

There is a redeemer
Jesus, God's own Son
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah
Holy One

Jesus my redeemer
Name above all names
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah
Oh, for sinners slain

Refrain

Thank you, oh my Father
For giving us Your Son
And leaving Your Spirit
'Til the work on Earth is done

When I stand in Glory
I will see His face
And there I'll serve my King forever
In that Holy Place

Unpacking a “simple, but not simplistic” song

Redeemer...

Psalm 103:4... Bless the Lord, O my soul,
And all that is within me, *bless* His holy name

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
And forget none of His benefits;

Who pardons all your iniquities,
Who heals all your diseases;

Who redeems your life from the pit,
Who crowns you with lovingkindness and compassion;

Gal 4:3-5...So also we, while we were children, were held in bondage under the elemental things of the world. But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

Job 19:25...As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives,
And at the last He will take His stand on the earth.

Redemption...

Romans 3:24...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus

Ephesians 1:7...He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace

Colossians 1:14...For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Hebrews 9:12...But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, *He entered* through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption

Jesus...

Matthew 1:21...She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.

God's own Son...Given for us

Isaiah 9:6...For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us;
And the government will rest on His shoulders;
And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

John 3:16,17...For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

Precious...

1 Peter 1:17-21...If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay *on earth*; knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, *the blood* of Christ. For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

Lamb of God

Isaiah 53:7,8 (Acts 8:32)...He was oppressed and He was afflicted,
Yet He did not open His mouth;
Like a lamb that is led to slaughter,
And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers,
So He did not open His mouth.
By oppression and judgment He was taken away;
And as for His generation, who considered
That He was cut off out of the land of the living
For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke *was due*?

John 1:29...These things took place in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing. The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and *said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

Revelation 5:12...Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.”

Messiah...The Messiah, literally, “the anointed one,” which in Greek is *Christ*.

John 1:41...He found first his own brother Simon and *said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which translated means Christ).

A summary term which gathers up many strands of Old Testament expectations about a coming “Anointed One” who would lead, teach and save God’s people... especially the Great King and Savior in the line of David whom the Old Testament promised (2 Samuel 7; Psalm 110:1-4; Isaiah 9:6,7)

Holy One

Isaiah 54:5...your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, Who is called the God of all the earth.

Father...

Galatians 4:6,7...Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.

Romans 8:14-17...For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!” The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be glorified with *Him*.

Leaving Your Spirit...

John 14:26...But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

John 15:26...“When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, *that is* the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me, and you *will* testify also, because you have been with Me from the beginning. (cf Matthew 11:28-30; Acts 2)

Name above all names

Philippians 2:8-11...Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

For sinners slain...

Romans 5:8...But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

When I stand in glory, I will see His face

The “Beatific vision”...

Heaven is where Christ is. It is the eternal bliss of communion with the God-man. Jonathan Edwards, in trying to give voice to the joy believers will find in heaven writes that the saints will swim in the ocean of love, and be eternally swallowed up in the infinitely bright, and infinitely mild and sweet beams of divine love; eternally receiving the light, eternally full of it, and eternally compassed round with it, and everlastingly reflecting it back again to its fountain.

While the saints will delight in fellowship with their God and Savior, there is no reason to believe that they will not recognize and fellowship with saints they knew on earth. Heaven is the abode of all good things. . . .

The greatest joy of heaven is the beatific vision, seeing the face of God. This unspeakable joy, however, comes through the eyes of the soul. God is spirit, and in spirit the elect shall see Him. This is the reward, earned by Christ, enjoyed by His children.

from “Essential Truths of the Christian Faith” by R.C. Sproul

1 John 3:1-3...See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Serve my King forever in that holy place

What is most notable about heaven is what is absent from it as well as what is present in it. Things that will be absent include: (1) tears, (2) sorrow, (3) death, (4) pain, (5) darkness, (6) ungodly people, (7) sin, (8) temples, (9) the sun or moon, and (10) the curse from Adam's sin (see Genesis 3:14-19).

What will be present in heaven includes: (1) the saints, (2) the river of the water of life, (3) healing fruit, (4) the Lamb of God, (5) worship, (6) the wedding feast of the Lamb and His bride, (7) the unveiled face of God, and (8) the Sun of Righteousness.

from "Essential Truths of the Christian Faith" by R.C. Sproul

"No Compromise is what the whole Gospel of Jesus is all about... 'For I tell you...no man can serve two masters...' (Matt. 6:24). In a day when believers seem to be trying to please both the world and the Lord (which is an impossible thing), when people are far more concerned about offending their friends than offending God, there is only one answer...Deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Him!"

Keith Green, in the album, No Compromise (1978)