

Life Story of Keith Green - Part 2

by Melody Green

Keith Green's journey from secular music to Christian music, and his commitment to living a radical faith and sharing the message of Jesus with others.

Duration: 1:11:19

Scripture: Isaiah 29:13, Hosea 10:12, Amos 5:21-23, Matthew 19:16-22, Luke 9:23, Ephesians 4:30, James 4:14

Topics: "Keith Green"

Description

In the sermon transcripts, Keith shares his burden for revival and the need for more people to come forward and experience a true transformation in their faith. He emphasizes the importance of putting our focus on Jesus Christ rather than on pastors or Christian music. Keith also talks about the urgency of using music to draw the lost and preach the gospel, highlighting the shortness of life and the responsibility of Christians to reach out to every nation. He concludes by discussing the lack of workers in the world compared to the abundance of the gospel in the United States, urging Christians to obey the command to go and make disciples.

Transcript

Word about Keith's music ministry quickly spread through our friends in the Christian music world. By the end of 1975, Keith was being asked to do concerts in some of the churches in Southern California. It was a whole new world.

Playing in churches posed some new challenges and interesting transitions for us. Our first big question was about money. How much do you ask from a church that invites you to do a concert? In the secular world, everyone struggles to make more money, and the amount you receive is a yardstick for worth and popularity.

Even though Keith was never in it just for the money, it was his trade and it paid our bills, and we had big household expenses. But what were the biblical principles about charging for concerts? Where were they found in the Bible? Other Christian musicians were all over the map when it came to this matter. Some sold tickets, some asked for a certain amount up front, still others went for love offerings.

Now that we were Christians, we instinctively knew the money rules had changed in some way. Keith's music was no longer a career. He considered himself a minister, and we wanted to see people come to the Lord.

As a minister, should Keith even care about how much he made? Our real concern about finances was centered in the fact that our home was beginning to look like a halfway house. Everywhere we turned, we met desperate and hurting people who needed help. Could we keep bringing them home with us if we didn't have enough money to take care of them? Even with these questions, our excitement about Jesus continued to grow and touch every area of our lives, especially our music.

There were a few songs that Keith wrote right away to express his own pure joy at finally finding the truth that set him free. Now Keith was shining a light that drew people to the Lord. He wrote, Because of you, to tell God whenever anyone asked why he looked so happy, he had the honor of pointing the way to the source of that light.

Another song Keith wrote talked about God's supernatural touch in his life. You put this love in my heart, express Keith's gratitude for that miraculous touch. Probably the greatest boost to our growth as songwriters was meeting other Christian musicians.

Keith's first Christian recording session was playing piano on the Growing Pains album by Jamie Owens. Through Jamie, Keith met Terry Talbot. Keith and Terry hit it off immediately.

Terry and his brother John had been in a famous rock band called Mason Prophet, and Terry was working on a musical called Firewind. He asked Keith to sing the lead vocal on a song called Walk and Talk, which was to be a duet with Barry McGuire. Barry had made such an impression on us a few years ago, and now Keith was going to sing his first recorded Christian song with him.

Keith was excited about this recording session because he was going to get to meet so many other Christian artists. Before Annie Herring from the second chapter of Acts came to the session, Jamie Owens had told her, wait till you meet Keith. He's so filled with energy, and his heart is full of the Lord.

You're going to love him. I actually heard Keith before I met Keith. I was walking into the studio, and I heard this man singing away going, all right, this is where I want you to punch.

I'll write in between this line and then into this line. He starts singing away with all of his heart. Where I want to go, Lord, is with you.

Punch. Right with you, Lord. God, punch.

And he was really emphatic about where he wanted the engineer to punch. And I thought, gosh, I love the energy in his voice, and I could hardly wait to turn around the corner to see what he looked like. And as I turned the corner, I saw this curly-headed guy just singing away with all of his heart, and you could tell just by looking at him that he was just sold out to the Lord.

A week later, Keith met Annie's husband, Buck Herring, who was a producer for second chapter. Buck and Annie had only been married a few years when her dad died, and Annie's younger brother and sister, Matt and Nellie, came to live with them. A short time later, they discovered they could sing together.

The first time I met second chapter, I was so new to Christian music that I'd never even heard of them. Keith took me to their house in Northridge. When we walked in, Buck was listening to one of their albums.

I was blown away. I walked into the kitchen, and Annie was standing at the sink with an apron on, doing dishes. I was in awe of this beautiful woman with the elegant high cheekbones and dark dancing eyes, this

woman of God who sang like an angel and did dishes like a normal person.

And I was standing in her kitchen. I wasn't sure how to act. Meanwhile, Keith and Buck were off in the corner talking about music, producing, and making albums.

Well, right away, Keith came over to me because he knew that I was involved in recording music and making music, and that was very much on his mind at that time. He wanted to do an album. He had music in his heart and in his mind.

He wanted to do an album, but he didn't want to do an album just for Christians. He said, I want to do music. He said, I want to go out and really evangelize people, to draw them to Jesus.

And I told him that God gave us music for other reasons than just for evangelism. Music was used for many purposes in God's kingdom, not just evangelism. And of course, I had some relationships with secular record companies doing Christian music for a secular record company, and I found that it just didn't work.

So I tried to share that with him, but he was still pondering what he was supposed to do. And I told him, well, you just seek God and he'll let you know. Later that evening, as we drove home, Keith was in deep thought.

I could tell his conversation with Buck didn't convince him. Keith wanted to reach people outside the church. I knew he wouldn't rest until the question was settled.

Our musical family kept growing as we met people like Chuck Gerard, Phil Keggy, Mike and Kathy Dacey, Kelly Willard, Karen Lafferty, and Andre Crouch. We were impressed that they'd given their talent to sing only for the Lord, yet we were still torn over what path Keith's musical ministry might take. It seemed like the Lord was starting to tie some loose ends together, and we were hoping the next thing God would tie together would be Keith's music.

The dream of making it musically was not dead. It just had a different slant to it now. Keith continued to make demos of his songs and run them all over town, still trying to get a record deal with a secular label.

And then it seemed like our dream was going to take off. One afternoon, Keith raced in. Mel, Arista Records, wants to send me to New York next week.

They want me to meet with Clive Davis, straight to the top. They're paying my way out and everything. This might be it.

Maybe God is going to open some doors after all. Once Keith arrived in New York, he settled into his hotel room, anticipating his big meeting with Arista the next day. Keith later wrote in his journal, Clive Davis kept me waiting for almost two hours.

It was a failure, but I took it so well I couldn't believe it. I kept telling myself that the Lord wanted me to do a Christian album. It depressed me, but I kept my chin up.

The following afternoon, my phone rang. Keith was calling from New York. How'd it go, I asked.

My interview was a flop, he said. I was really upset at first, but I'm kind of starting to feel relieved now. At least I finally have a clear answer from the Lord.

Hey, do you want me to bring a New York pizza home for you? The dream was dead. The one that had been in Keith's heart since he was a child. Some dreams are so deep, they seem to become a part of the very fabric of your being.

When they die, a part of you dies too. After the initial depression lifted, Keith was actually excited. His prayers had finally been answered.

Now Keith knew why things had never fully come together with his secular music. He saw more clearly how his life plans needed to be anchored in the reality of God's will. Otherwise, they would never be anything but fantasy.

A song Keith had written just a few months earlier with Randy and Todd now had an even deeper meaning. Like a foolish dreamer trying to build a highway to the sky. All my hopes would come tumbling down and I never knew just why.

Until today, when you pulled away the clouds that hung like curtains on my eyes, well I've been blind for years and I thought I was so wise, but then you took me by surprise. Like waking up from the longest dream, how rare it seemed. I've been lost in a fantasy.

Keith was sure at last that the Lord wanted him to sing his music to Christians, even make a Christian album. Now he was wondering what God might want him to say. A lot of people were going to church and to Christian concerts, but not many of them seemed excited about Jesus.

And Keith's heart was heavy whenever he thought about that. You know, God loves radical faith. He loves radical faith.

He doesn't have too much fondness over lukewarm faith. There's a little scripture in the Bible about if you're lukewarm, you'll get spit out of Jesus' mouth. I explain theologically, I don't particularly know what the consequences of being spit out of Jesus' mouth is, except it does not sound appetizing and I don't want to be having it done to me.

So I'm going to make sure I'm on fire for the Lord, come heaven or high water. By the spring of 1976, Keith was ready to go out on the road doing church concerts up and down the West Coast. He had a lot of different kinds of songs, serious, funny, inspiring, but the question of what to charge for a concert was becoming a pressing issue.

We tried several approaches. Sometimes a church wanted to take a love offering for Keith. Others wanted him to tell them how much he'd charged to come.

In these instances, Keith set a small fee for going. At least then he knew what he'd be getting and wouldn't have to worry about scanty offerings. On the other hand, an offering gave the Lord a chance to bless you, whereas a set fee didn't.

Besides that, Keith was trying to figure out where the boundaries were. Did you not go to minister somewhere because they couldn't pay you enough? And how much was enough? In some ways, the Christian music ministry was looking more and more like the secular business we had just stepped out of. Record companies, contracts, concert tours.

We were even beginning to see a sort of pecking order of artist popularity. And when you were invited somewhere, what should you expect to receive in return? Some churches were obviously wealthy. Others were poor.

How do you deal with the differences? Keith said, I can't imagine Paul telling the Corinthian church, sorry guys, I can't come unless you promise me 5,000 shekels and two first-class chariot fares. Nevertheless, the money issue was not going to immobilize Keith from delivering the things in his heart. The message seemed too urgent.

Early in 1977, Keith was offered a record deal by Billy Ray Hearn of Sparrow Records. Keith was playing at the Vineyard's new rented church building. Billy Ray slipped in unannounced.

I made it a point not to call ahead and say I was coming because I wanted Keith to play without him knowing really whether I was there or not. By the time I got there, the place was jammed with people and I remember I had to crawl over them just to find a place on the floor in the aisle. But there was so much talk about Keith, I wanted to see what it was all about.

And I wanted to see what was drawing so many people. He was electrifying. The old upright piano sounded like an orchestra.

The ministry was so powerful. After what I heard and saw, I knew Keith was going to be something very special. It was a wonderful night of music and ministry.

Billy Ray was more than mildly interested and that kicked off a long process of conversations and negotiations with Keith and his father over the proposed contract. Earlier, Keith had asked Buck Herring to produce him, but Buck figured that he and Keith were both too intense to try working together. Instead, a young man named Bill Maxwell was suggested.

Keith played all his demos for Bill and then played some songs on the piano for him. Bill's response was direct. The first thing I noticed when Keith played me songs on the piano was that he sounded a lot better on piano than he did on his demos.

He sounded better just sitting in a room with a piano than he had in a recording studio working on something. Keith said to me, yeah, I know I don't think I sound as good as I should on the demos, but I don't know what's missing. So I went to see him a couple of times in concert and it was really powerful.

It was tremendous the effect he had on kids and how good he sounded. So we built a little booth around the piano and baffled off the piano, put a mic on him and we went in and recorded the first album with essentially all the vocals live while he was playing. If he messed something up, we would punch in the vocal and the piano at the same time because they were both leaking together.

And that's that's the way we did keep all the time. Together, Bill and Keith were capturing Keith's raw energy, emotions and spiritual heart cry. When you listened, you had an uncanny sense that you were hearing from someone other than just Keith Green.

By the summer of 1977, Keith's debut album, *For Him Who Has Ears to Hear*, was in the bookstores. We had a big mailing party at our house to send out the albums to the six thousand people who had pre-ordered it at concerts over the past several months. Rather than throw away the names of so many people, Keith said, let's keep in touch with all these people and put together a little newsletter to

encourage them in their walk with the Lord.

And the last day's newsletter was born. Just before Keith's album was released, he started working with Steve Gryson, who was engaged to Nellie Ward of Second Chapter Vax. As usual, Keith had big ideas.

I want to tour the whole country this summer, Keith directed Steve. He set up a 52 city tour and off we went. And what a tour.

Keith's album had just been released, so he was still unknown. He ended up singing to a lot of built-in audiences at coffee houses, youth group meetings, and regular church services. Some nights the promised housing didn't happen, and we had to rent our own rooms.

And it seemed adequate sound systems and tuned pianos were rare commodities. Overall, the audiences were sparse, and some nights we'd make little or nothing. We'd learned at the vineyard that every trial was an opportunity to grow, and we certainly grew on that nine-week tour.

We were growing at home too. Now there were over a dozen new Christians living with us. So as money came in from Keith's concerts, studio sessions, and album sales, it was poured back into helping the people who had come to live with us.

And we still kept meeting people who needed a place to stay so they could escape a bad situation and get grounded in their new faith in Jesus. These were powerful yet innocent times. We just did what was in our hearts to do.

Keith closed the year by playing at the Daisy. He was only about 12 feet away from me, so I could see him clearly. The spotlight was bright white.

His eyes were aching, as he sang, overflowing with unspoken feelings as he poured out his soul. But he wasn't looking at the audience. He was looking up into the light as though he were looking directly at God.

He seemed transfixed in time. His eyes were the bluest of blue, sparkling, yet crying out. He looked like a little boy, but his eyes, his eyes were haunting as he looked up into the light.

As I sat and watched, I was captured by that moment and thought, Keith Green, you're not long for this earth. In the spring of 1978, while Keith's Ears to Hear album had skyrocketed to number one on the charts, we were in and out of the studio recording Keith's second album. Our only problem was we didn't have a title.

Then one day when Keith was looking through all the song lyrics, he glanced at me with excitement. Hey Mel, what about these words in your song? He quoted, make my life a prayer to you. I want to do what you want me to.

No empty words and no white lies. No token prayers, no compromise. No token prayers, no compromise, he repeated.

Let's just call the album No Compromise. It seemed to capture the heart of what Keith wanted to say to other Christians. Quit compromising.

Stop listening to the voice of the world. Start living committed lives. Keith was so convinced of the urgency of this message that as with the first album, people were rallied to pray.

We had rented a second house and filled it with new believers. So during each session, day or night, there were people from our growing community in the studio with their heads constantly bowed in prayer. As always, I was right at Keith's side.

It was one big happy family. And speaking of family, I was very pregnant with our first child. That summer, Keith was invited to sing at the Jesus Northwest Festival in Oregon.

An estimated 35,000 people were there. The campsites were overflowing and Keith and I thought it looked like a mini Woodstock. On the last evening of the event, several of us gathered to pray before Keith went on stage.

Our friend Winky Prattney was there with his wife, Faye, because Winky had been a main speaker. Winky was like an older brother to Keith and their spirits seemed to mesh. Just now, they were both troubled.

The place was packed, but some were saying that there had been no real move of God, that it was just a big party. Keith and Winky felt strongly that if nothing happened, it would be a waste of a festival. When Keith walked into the spotlight, the crowd burst into a roar of applause and cheers.

Keith sat at the piano, adjusted the microphone, and waited for things to settle down a bit. Turning to the crowd, he started talking. Have you ever felt the Lord was sad? Tonight I was praying and I kind of felt the Lord inside me, weeping.

So I started to cry. The crowd was restless. They were waiting for Keith to sing, but the song he opened with was anything but lighthearted.

As soon as he finished, he started talking again. The Old Testament says, these people draw near with their words and honor me with their lips, but they remove their hearts far from me. I don't want you to go away from here under condemnation, but I want you to get broken before God.

The crowd was quiet now. Keith continued, this scripture is from Amos. Thus saith the Lord, I hate, I reject your festivals, nor do I delight in your solemn assemblies.

Even though you offer up to me burnt offerings, I will not accept them. Take away from me the noise of your songs. The crowd sat in stunned silence.

Keith continued, as for me, I repent of ever having made a record or sung a song unless it's provoked people to follow Jesus. It doesn't cost you much to follow Jesus, just everything. He sang a few more songs which underscored his hard-hitting message, then turned back to the crowd.

The rich young ruler would be accepted in any church today, but Jesus would not accept him because he had an idol in his life. Do you know who the Christian idols are? I happen to be one of them. You can even idolize your pastor.

This was tough stuff. Keith continued, I challenge everybody who calls himself a Christian to live as Jesus did, or else sometime somebody might say, I never knew you. Weeping and loud crying was breaking out all across the field.

I could hear people sobbing and choking prayers out to God. Keith called Winky, Fay, and me up onto the stage, and we all led worship with Keith for about half an hour, and that's the way the festival ended. As we were driving back to our hotel, we saw people still out in the fields praying.

Shortly after we returned home from Jesus Northwest, Keith decided to take a sabbatical from touring, to get into the word of God more, and as Keith put it, figure some things out. It was nice to have Keith at home as my September due date approached. We were both excited about raising our child in a busy ministry.

When our son was born, we named him Josiah David, after two great kings. Meanwhile, our other family was growing too. By now we had incorporated, and we were calling ourselves Last Days Ministries.

Although we were experimenting with community living, Keith and I were underwriting almost 100% of the expenses with our own money, but God was blessing us financially, and we wanted to bless him by pouring it back into the ministry. More and more people were pouring in. We bought the house next door to us and rented several others.

Within a short space of time, we went from 25 people in three houses to 70 people in seven houses. Early in October 1978, Richard, a dear friend of ours who had taught us so much about Jesus, was on his way home from a conference late at night, sleeping in the passenger side of his friend's car. A truck coming in the opposite direction slammed into them head-on.

The doctor said Richard never knew what hit him. When my time comes, that's the way I want to go, Keith said with a snap of his fingers. Earth to heaven in an instant.

I tucked the blanket around Josiah as we headed out the door for Richard's memorial service. There would come a day when Keith's words would come back to me. God's Holy Spirit is here to heal, and you'll know if you're healed, don't worry.

You'll find out. And he's here to heal. He's here to take that frightening thing inside your mind that's been bothering you, that fear that Satan's been preying upon.

Because Satan always attacks us when we're weakest, and our fear is a very weak point. Now he's here to heal your fears. Anybody who wants their fears healed, just lift your hands up and receive it.

Anybody who wants memories from their past healed, lift your hands up, receive it. Anybody who wants their families healed, their relatives saved and coming into the kingdom, lift your hands up and receive the promise of the Holy Spirit. Early one morning in February of 1979, our community was buzzing with curiosity.

It seemed like all 70 of us were there, crammed into the living room, anxiously waiting to find out what was going on. When Keith walked into the room and everyone saw his face, they knew something had happened to him. You know, I've been struggling with a lot of questions about my ministry and the Lord's will for my life, he began.

I was up all night, and God showed me so much sin in my life that I couldn't believe that I spent the whole night weeping and crying out to him. I told the Lord I wasn't leaving until I had a breakthrough, no matter how long it took. Finally it happened.

I had a touch from the Lord like I've never had in my whole life, and I know I just got saved. I just got saved last night. Keith's words stunned everyone.

I wanted to ask him, what have you been if you haven't been saved? But Keith just kept talking. Last night I was reading Charles Finney, and I couldn't get past the chapter called Breaking Up the Fallow Ground. God convicted me of so much fallow ground in my life, ground that's hard and crusty and needs to be broken up for him.

He went on for several minutes, pouring his heart out, confessing areas of sin and weakness, and crying. Then Keith read a scripture to us from Hosea. Break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the Lord.

And picking up the Finney book, Keith read the whole chapter out loud to us. It was a real outline for a point by point examination of our own hearts. I believe God wants to do something powerful in all of our lives.

I believe we need to have a breakthrough with God, Keith said. I feel like we all need to pray right now. Keith began praying a very powerful prayer.

The hush fell over the whole room. Suddenly one of the women burst into tears. Her whole body was heaving with deep, uncontrollable sobs.

A few others started to weep, and the next thing we knew we were all on our faces, crying and calling out to God. Some of us could do little more than moan. It was a gut-wrenching time of conviction and soul-searching.

After a long time, Keith asked everyone to go and spend some time alone with God. We gathered together later that evening, and again over the next few days, day and night. We had hours of prayer, weeping, and humble open confession.

There was such an awesome sense of God's presence in the room. Sometimes it was overwhelming. Meanwhile, word was getting out locally, and some people from the vineyard showed up at our ongoing meetings.

Even some neighbors came by, all with the same results, deep conviction of sin and a fresh touch from the Lord. After several days, when the intensity of it all subsided, it seemed that the Lord had drawn near to our community in an incredible way. Later on, we would refer to that time as the revival.

Charles Finney defined revival as a new beginning of obedience to God. It was a life-changing time for all of us. Keith knew that his statements about him just getting saved came from his black and white way of looking at things.

He had glimpsed a walk with God that required such a deeper commitment. For him, it was almost as if he had never given his heart to the Lord before. He felt like he was getting born again, again.

Keith believed the Lord wanted the spirit of revival we'd just experienced to sweep the nation. The next concert Keith had scheduled was at the end of March in Tulsa at Oral Roberts University, the best-known Christian university in America. During the revival, Keith had also found his answer to our long-standing question about finances.

He said, Mel, we're just going to go wherever God sends us and not worry about money. We're not going to worry about how much of an offering or an honorarium we get, or even if we get one at all. In fact, I feel like God is telling me that we need to pay our own way into these cities and not ask for anything from the

churches.

The first person Keith phoned in Tulsa was the ORU student body president who had invited him. Keith explained to him what he'd felt God's new direction was, that we were to come for a week for free. So it was arranged for Keith to preach in the ORU chapel for a week.

Keith sent an advance team to Tulsa to meet with the local pastors so they could get ready and start praying. After they'd been in Tulsa for almost a week, Keith received a call from the team leader saying ORU didn't want Keith to come. The student body president that had invited Keith had neglected to go through the proper channels with the administration.

Keith wasn't convinced that the decision reflected the Lord's heart. He was going to pursue getting it reversed, but when he couldn't, he felt the Lord told him to go to Tulsa anyway. But Keith did have some misgivings.

He wondered if he'd really heard from God about going. He didn't want to be propelled by any false desire of his own to bring a fiery message to Tulsa. In the end, Keith received what he felt to be confirmation from the Lord and the vineyard sent us out with their blessings.

We loaded up about 25 of our last day's family and drove to Tulsa. We immediately set up a 24-hour prayer chain and a series of meetings with the ORU administration who were shocked that Keith actually came after being told not to. In the meantime, some of the local pastors were open to Keith.

On Sunday morning, Keith preached at a local Baptist church. That night, Keith was given the evening service at Tulsa Christian Fellowship. His message and songs centered on God's broken heart over lukewarm Christianity.

He'd come with the burden to shake the congregation into a confrontation with themselves and with God, and I knew he was about to pull out all the stops. You don't like it, do you, he said. You came to hear a concert, and now you're getting cornered.

The Christian walk is a bunch of squirming flesh getting nailed down to a cross. We want a padded cross, but the gospel is a no-compromise, absolute sellout for Jesus, 100% walk. Keith was definitely pulling out the stops.

He was pacing the floor as he continued to speak. I hate to say this to you folks. I really love you, but... And then turning to the congregation, Keith pointed and said in a booming voice, you brood of vipers and snakes who call yourselves Christians and half-heartedly serve him.

Instant shock ran through the whole place. Even I couldn't believe my ears. But suddenly, it didn't seem to matter.

Keith had gone back to the piano, and as he began a song, he prayed. Lord, you know the heart you've put in me that hates sin and hypocrisy and compromising. You know how much I love these people and want to see them turn into blazing, glowing Christians.

Oh God, please bring a revival, and let it begin with me. Without hesitation, people started rushing forward to the altar rail, weeping and sobbing as they came and fell on their faces. The pastor joined Keith, and together they led everyone in a powerful time of personal and corporate repentance.

It seemed that revival was indeed going to break out in Tulsa. On Monday afternoon, Keith got the verdict from ORU. Not only was the administration going to let us have the Mabee Center for free, they were going to officially sponsor the evening concerts.

On top of that, they were going to provide housing for us and let us eat our meals in their cafeteria. It was the miracle we had been praying for. Keith had come to Tulsa with the attitude that he didn't want to take anything from the people of this city.

He had a strong conviction that the gospel was supposed to be free, whether it was a gospel concert, a recording, or a tract. Keith felt he couldn't deny anyone just because they might not have money. Keith had brought \$8,000 worth of his own albums to town, and they were not for sale.

They were only to give away at the concerts. We were determined not to take any offerings, and in addition, Keith and I had paraphrased the Breaking Up the Fallow Ground chapter in the Finney book and had it printed to give to people at the concerts as an outline for repentance. Keith's basic theme the first two nights was the same, getting Christians saved.

He talked about how not to grieve away the Holy Spirit. He centered on how often we ignore the things God wants us to do. He doesn't need any of us, Keith said, but he wants to use all of us to our fullest potential.

The greatest argument against Christianity is Christians. The world is tired of hearing praise the Lord. They want to see it.

Keith fasted and prayed all day Saturday. He knew he would talk about holiness that night, and nearly 4,500 people gathered for the concert. Tonight it's time for us to stare our sin in the eye with the light and grace of God, Keith began.

We can't walk around with this spiritual whitewashed hallelujah praise the Lord cover-up anymore. Keith went on to compare sin to venereal disease. The first symptoms are subtle and almost painless.

It incubates in your system, but eventually drives you mad, blind, and finally dead. He encouraged everyone to quit playing deadly games with God. Keith asked those who felt they needed to commit their life to Jesus to come forward.

He also called forward those whom God was dealing with about sin. He called out, come and repent of your sexual sins, your homosexuality, your self-gratification, your bitterness, cheating, lying, gossip, rebellion, pride, and your vain attempts at being religious. He pleaded with them.

People from every part of the arena were streaming forward. The stage area was filled, and people started lying in the aisles and across the front of the stage. It looked like a bomb had gone off.

There were bodies everywhere, people on their knees or on their faces, broken and weeping. The response had been tremendous. It looked like over 2,500 people had come forward, but Keith's burden was for more.

He believed God wanted to bring revival, and as Keith poured out his heart in a tearful, pleading prayer, the night seemed to ignite with an even stronger sense of God's presence. Then he said, I feel there is someone here that the Lord has told to share with this body. Come now and do it.

It seemed like an eternity before the first person made his way slowly to the microphone to say, God has shown me tonight that I'm not really a Christian. I've gone to church all my life, but it's been a farce, no real commitment. I had everyone fooled except God.

As this one shared, more people made their way to the front, picking their way over everyone on the floor. For the next half hour or more, the confession started getting more and more serious and more personal. The students were weeping harder as they shared, perhaps because some of the things they shared were grounds for expulsion.

Over and above this, though, it felt like the Spirit of God had settled on us in a thick cloud. It was apparent that we were just coming into the deeper levels of humility and breaking we'd been praying for. The Holy Spirit had been raining on us all night, first in a gentle sprinkle and then in a steady shower.

Now it felt like the floodgates of heaven were about to burst open. And then I saw one of the men in pastoral responsibility at ORU threading his way across the stage toward the young man who was still sharing. He came alongside of him and put his arm around his shoulder, then gave some guidelines for the rest of the meeting, saying, in essence, we feel things like this are to be confessed privately.

We don't think it's a good idea for any of you to share personal sins openly. It seemed like a good principle, and it was given in a loving way. But the change in atmosphere was so immediate it was staggering.

Something had changed, but it wasn't clear what. There was a tangible sense of a loss of conviction, and no one else got up to share. It seemed the Holy Spirit had been quenched in some way, and there was nothing that could be done to whip it up or bring it back.

I felt a sense of terrible loss, like something great had almost happened. Keith closed with the Easter song, went straight to his dressing room, and fell to the floor, sobbing. There was a knock at the door.

The ORU administration wanted to talk, so Keith and Winky met with him backstage. The administration expressed their appreciation for what they said were wonderful meetings, but they didn't think they should go any further. It was over.

Do you see? Do you see all the people sinking down? Don't you care? Don't you care? Are you gonna let them drown? How can you be so numb not to care if they come? You close your eyes and pretend the job's done. End of part three. Our mood was a bit glum as we left Tulsa and headed to east Texas.

We were in need of a little rest and an encouraging word, so we decided to visit Winky on our way back to California. As we headed toward Lindale, 80 miles east of Dallas, the interstate was bordered with vistas of open green fields. We were amazed that Texas was so lush.

Several ministries had chosen to put down roots in this area. Youth with a Mission, David Wilkerson and World Challenge, Dallas Home and His Band Praise, the Agape Forest, and Calvary Commission. Leonard Ravenhill lived out here too, as well as Barry McGuire.

We didn't know if God had some kind of master plan for the area, but we were interested in making the rounds. We went to meet Leonard Ravenhill. After reading his books and talking to him on the phone, we couldn't wait to meet him face to face.

When he invited us into his living room, Keith stepped right up to him and gave him a big bear hug. We sat on the sofa and Keith began to pour out his heart to me right away. He was very upset over the incident at ORU, and I could tell it had been brewing inside of him.

He was very agitated as he recounted the details. I told him that when he was at ORU, he had bared his heart to them, and that the ones that God was working on in that meeting will never forget that night. That night when God spoke, and men began to confess sin and to make repentance.

By now some shockwaves from Keith's time at ORU had started to fan out across the nation. The Tulsa World newspaper ran a report on the last night of Keith's ministry. Christian magazines would run reports too, and some were labeling Keith as a fiery young prophet.

But for now, all Keith wanted was to put ORU behind him and enjoy the fellowship of all the wonderful people we were meeting in Lyndale. On August 3, 1979, Keith wrote in his journal, we're moving in about a month to Texas. While we were visiting, we'd seen some property, and now God had confirmed his will.

But where would we get the money? We knew if the Lord wanted us to move, he would provide the money by the time we needed it. In the meantime, God began to lead many in our community out and on to their next steps with him. But even as he pared down our ministry family, he was adding to our family.

I had now discovered I was pregnant with our second child. While we were trying to raise money, we'd also been fasting and praying for a miracle. At a special prayer meeting, the Lord seemed to speak to Keith out of the book of Malachi.

Test me now in this, if I will not open for you the windows of heaven. Over the next few days, the Lord did fulfill his promise to provide. To our surprise, some of our good friends became part of the answer to our prayers.

Buck and Annie, Matthew Ward, and Sparrow Records. What generosity! Sure enough, the Lord had supplied the full amount. Finally, it was goodbye to our house in California.

All 25 of us arrived in Texas 1,500 miles later and poured into the ranch house on our new property. Ranch living was light years away from suburban living. As city folks, we had a lot to learn.

The neighbors didn't take kindly to people who didn't tend their land, and mowing 140 acres was no small chore. We quickly acquired some ranch machinery. The land was planted in hay, and Keith loved to get out there and cut and bale.

We were having a great time living in the country, but we knew that God had brought us here for greater purposes. In early 1980, Keith was ready to record his third album. As the February due date for our second child approached, so did the date Keith and I were scheduled to go to Los Angeles and work with Bill Maxwell.

As it turned out, our baby happily arrived nine days early, while we were right in the middle of making the album. Bethany Grace was born on February 5, 1980. My delivery was much easier than with Josiah.

I left the hospital within a few hours, and that night Keith and I even went out to dinner. One night at the recording studio, I was sitting in a beanbag chair cuddling Bethany Grace. It was an average night until Bob Dylan showed up to play harmonica on Keith's song, I Pledge My Head to Heaven.

We'd met Bob through an elder at the vineyard sometime after the revival. Although he was one of the most well-known musicians in the world, he was the same as anyone who wanted to know more about God. Keith loved him deeply, and they talked a lot.

Once, however, Keith felt he went too far in trying to make a point. Later in his journal, he wrote with regret, tried to be the Holy Spirit to Bob Dylan today. Keith and Bob had kept in contact after we moved to Texas.

When Keith asked him to play on this album, we were thrilled when he said yes. After about two months in California, the album was finished, and we were all ready to go back to Texas. Earlier, the Lord had led Keith to start a record label under the auspices of last day's ministries for the purpose of giving away his third album.

By May of 1980, the album, *So You Want to Go Back to Egypt*, had been mastered, and we were out on the road. At the end of his concerts, Keith would make his announcements specific. Those that don't have anything can get an album for nothing, and those that have a little can get it for a little.

We believe the gospel's been getting a little too commercial. In an interview with *Contemporary Christian Music Magazine*, Keith said, My whole reason for giving the album away is that I love people. Of course I don't want to see 50,000 people send in nothing.

At the same time, I don't want people to feel that I'm doing this to get a donation or that they have to send in a donation. Keith started taking some non-traditional steps with his concerts that summer too. Concerts were usually sponsored by a local church, and often before a concert, Keith would be approached by someone in authority who would tell him things like, We invited you to sing, but we don't want you to preach, or don't give an altar call, or don't talk about healing.

Keith wanted to respect their wishes, yet he found it difficult to limit what he sent him to accomplish. From then on, whenever it seemed right, we paid our own way into different cities. We'd rent an arena and take an offering to cover our expenses.

There was still one thing that kept bothering Keith about his ministry, his growing celebrity status. For a long time, Keith just disappeared after his concerts and didn't talk to anyone because he was so upset by the hero worship he saw in people's eyes. He was so concerned about this issue that he'd written an article called *Music or Missions*, about churches full of starstruck Christians.

In fact, Keith felt he needed to focus on the Christian music industry itself. Keith knew they could well ask, What's the difference between a Christian plumber charging for his services and a singer or speaker charging for theirs? Didn't the Apostle Paul charge for his tents? To which Keith would respond, There is a difference between a man's vocation or skill and his ministry gift. If I was just an entertainer, I'd have no problem charging for concerts, but ministry is different.

In fact, Paul made tents for a living so he wouldn't have to charge for the gospel. Keith was also grieved by all the Christian merchandising going on. Everyday items like clocks, coasters, and wallets were selling for twice their usual price because someone stamped a dove or a fish on them.

In a Christian bookstore, we came across a handmade ceramic piggy bank with the words *Jesus Saved* engraved on the side. I was with Keith the day someone told us that at one Jesus festival, they sold over ninety-eight thousand dollars worth of Jesus junk. Jesus junk! Keith nearly fell over from hearing those two

words casually linked together.

As Keith was gearing up to spend a lot more time out on the road, he was very interested when he found out that the youth with the mission base nearby was thinking about putting in an airstrip. He said excitedly, Boy, an airstrip would save a lot of time and hassle. Maybe I can even get a pilot's license.

That idea wasn't well received by anyone, least of all me. While we were on the road, Keith brought the subject up with the pastor who had invited us. The pastor said, Keith, do you know why ministers have the highest rate of pilot's insurance? Because they take the most risks.

They think they're indestructible. They have the most accidents. Keith just shrugged his shoulders.

Well, I don't know what everyone's so worried about, he said. I'm not going to take any risks. Hey, do not put your eyes on us Christian music people.

Please, don't put them on your pastors. Don't put them on the teachers. Put them on Jesus Christ and you'll never go wrong.

The summer of 1981 brought the birth of our third beautiful child, Rebecca Joy, born on July 17th. One month later, in October, Keith did a family concert at Youth with a Mission's Twin Oaks Ranch. That night, he talked with a strange sense of urgency.

I want to use my music to draw the lost, he told the audience. Life is short. The Bible calls it a vapor.

I want to have a vision of heaven in my mind and the stench of hell in my nostrils as I go out to preach the gospel. There were huge changes going on inside this dear, loving, intense man I'd been married to for almost eight years. Later on, as we were making selections for Keith's fourth album, he felt God was telling him to do an album of songs that would inspire people to worship instead of another hard message album.

Keith wanted to record one of my songs called There is a Redeemer and I was thrilled. Keith loved the song but thought it might be a little too short. It began, There is a Redeemer, Jesus God's own son, precious lamb of God, Messiah, oh holy one.

Then the chorus offered a simple thanks to the father for giving us his son. Keith wanted to add another verse. He could pull words out of the air and in a few minutes he sang them for me.

When I stand in glory I will see his face and there I'll serve my king forever in that holy place. Thank you, oh my father, for giving us your son and leaving your spirit to the work. When the album was finished, Keith had some spring concerts planned.

This time we'd be flying to them in a small leased plane from our own backyard. The much talked about airstrip had become a reality. After the album and the spring crusades, we were exhausted.

We'd never taken a regular vacation before, so Keith wanted to bless me with a trip to Europe. The week before we were to leave, Keith dropped in to see Lille in Paris at Youth with a Mission or YWAM as it was commonly called. Don Stevens, the director for Europe, was with him in his office.

Don set up an itinerary so that Keith and I could see the YWAM bases in Europe and maybe teach in one or two of their schools. It was in Amsterdam that we realized there might be a different purpose for this trip. Amsterdam is considered the drug capital of Europe and there's open prostitution.

In fact, the YWAM base sits right on the corner of a world famous red light district. It was hard to miss the YWAM base. Across the top in lights were the words, Jesus loves you in English and Dutch.

There was something about Amsterdam that gave you the impression of two worlds existing side by side. Floyd McClung, the director of the center, took Keith and me on a walking tour after dark and I have to confess that even in this modern European city lit by streetlights, I felt very uncomfortable. It was not the same city we had seen by daylight.

As we headed south, Keith and I talked for a long time. We were moved by the who had dedicated their lives to serve, but also overwhelmed by seeing so many lost people with so few to reach them. It wasn't like America where there was a vibrant church on every corner.

As we traveled through Germany, Austria, and Italy, it was all the same. We kept asking the same question. How could there ever be a big enough movement to meet all the needs we were seeing? But we were excited about the vision, commitment, and sacrifice we saw in the Christians we'd met.

They totally shattered our image of what a missionary might be like. They were incredible people. Now we knew why Lauren Cunningham had given almost 20 years of his life building Youth with a Mission to lay a foundation to reach the whole world.

By this time, about 230,000 people were getting our last day's magazine and Keith was planning ways to reach all of them and those who came to his concerts as well. I thought of the prostitute I'd seen down a little side street in Amsterdam, one lost person on her way towards eternal separation from God, and the world was full of hurting people like her. After returning from Europe, Keith moved into action.

He planned large benefit concerts and a fall concert tour to bring a missions challenge to the Christians in America. By June, when Keith walked up on stage, he was filled with a new kind of excitement. He sat down at the piano and took a moment to talk about our international God.

God is not an American or even a Republican as some of us like to think. He loves everyone the same and his heart goes out to the masses, whether they are known or forgotten. He picked up his Bible.

There's a little command found in the Bible that says to go into all the nations and preach the gospel to every creature and make disciples of men. Keith was warming up now and had everyone's attention. Besides our recent trip, Keith was fueled by statistics that were shocking.

While in America there were over one million full-time workers or one for every 230 people, in the rest of the world there were only 85,000 workers or one for every 450,000 people. Keith continued, the world isn't being won today because we're not doing it. It's our fault.

This generation of Christians is responsible for this generation of souls on the earth. Nowhere in the world is the gospel so plentiful as in the United States. Nowhere.

There's a rule in the armed forces, always obey the last order you got until you get new orders from command headquarters. The last order I got in my Bible was go. Then Keith began to play a new song.

Even from the side of the stage I could see his eyes fill with compassion as he sang, Open Your Eyes. Open your eyes to the world not around you. Open your eyes, open your eyes.

This world is much more than the things that surround you. You must arise and open your eyes. Sometimes we're too busy to share.

But Jesus wants us to care, to care. Open your arms to the naked and she is brand new. After the concert we had a late night meal with John Dawson.

Besides being a leader in YWAM, John had become a close friend. I loved discussing things with Keith. I was always amazed at the way Keith grabbed a hold of something, something new and he went for it, gave it all that he had.

At that time Keith was learning and growing so fast he was asking questions about everything. I really sensed God was preparing him in a big way and I told him to get ready that God was going to use him to challenge a multitude of young people into missions. But he tended to be really black and white in the way he presented things.

I told him if he kept overstating the point he'd end up disqualifying his message completely. I knew his heart was bright but I knew he couldn't go on saying that 99% of Christians are called to leave America and everybody else is in sin. The thing about Keith is that he was very teachable.

He was absolutistic, he was bullheaded but he was desperately hungry for truth. He really wanted to make an impact on this generation. He would argue with you.

In fact I think he enjoyed confrontation but he wanted to learn and underneath that intensity really was a humble guy, uncompromising with his own weaknesses. That night we had a long discussion about presenting the truth in a wise way, in a way that wouldn't put guilt on people genuinely called to serve God here in America. We had asked Lauren Cunningham and his wife Darlene to join us at a beach house we'd rented for a week in Oxnard.

The first evening we sat up talking for a long time, sharing visions and dreams in the Lord. Keith and Lauren had ministered together a few times and Keith thought they made a great team. Lauren let's go across the nation together and get the word out about missions and challenge the people to go.

That sounds wonderful, Lauren agreed, and let's have a faith goal of seeing 100,000 people raised up for world missions. We all felt it was a special moment and we knew we needed to pray together and seal everything in the spirit. Lauren prayed about the vision as Keith was lying on the floor, face down before the Lord.

By the time we were through praying, our hearts were bonded together. For Keith it was even deeper. Lauren was so full of grace and Keith's high intensity didn't rattle him.

Lauren loved and accepted Keith and Keith knew it. As they embraced to say goodbye, there were tears in Keith's eyes. You're like a father to me, Keith whispered.

It was an awareness in both of their hearts, a rare and special relationship, a gift from the Lord. As we watched the Cunninghams drive off, we had such a rush of excitement in our hearts. How could any of us have known it wasn't meant to be? This generation of believers that you and me are a part of, we're responsible for this generation of souls all over the world.

We're responsible for them. We're responsible to pray daily for the needs of ministries around the world and ask God, how about me not sending my money this time? How about me going? Things were really going well. Keith's ministry was being widely received and Last Days Ministries was booming.

We'd built a large office facility and print shop and bought a six tower web press to print our Last Days magazine and we were just raising the beams on our new half million dollar cafeteria and worship center with bookstore, guest rooms and classrooms for the discipleship training school we'd begun. Even Keith's journal entries reflected the mood. We have so much to be grateful for.

The only thing we need is a closer walk with God. We have everything else a Christian couple could ever want and for this I'm eternally grateful Jesus. Then there was this other more vague feeling.

Keith was the one who voiced it. I just don't know what it is. Things are going too well.

I feel it's the calm before the storm, like something bad's going to happen. I was seeing a new kind of thoughtful maturity coming into Keith's life. In part, I could attribute it to some of the relationships Keith had developed with people like Winky, Leonard, John and Lauren.

Keith had gone through some of our tracks and rewritten them a bit. He said he wanted to take out some of the rough edges and barbs, keeping what's from Jesus and taking out what's from Keith. Keith said he wanted to strengthen, encourage and build up believers, not so much to shoot at things that are wrong, but to build up the areas that are right.

Grace, that was the operative word in Keith's life these days. He was also in the midst of writing letters of apology and making phone calls to different individuals whenever the Lord showed him there was something he needed to make right. On all fronts, Keith was feeling like he might have been too absolute in some areas.

In an article for The Last Days magazine, Keith wrote, so many people told me I was a prophet over the years. I believe they must be right. It's not that I no longer believe I'm called to do that.

It's just that now I see that every believer is called to do that. I'm not called to be a prophet. I'm called to be a Christian, a servant of the living God.

That is the highest calling that anyone can realize. I ought to be a lie to you, and dead to you. Oh, what can be done for an old heart like mine? Soften it up with oil and wine.

The oil is you, your spirit of love. Please wash me anew in the wine of your love. On July 28, 1982, I stepped out onto our back porch, and a blast of furnace hot air hit me in the face.

It was so stifling I could hardly breathe. It had to be the most oppressive day we'd had that year, and I hoped the air conditioning would be working in the ranch house. One of the highlights of this blistering hot day was that John and Dede Smalley were coming for a visit.

We'd met them years ago when we first started going to the vineyard. They had six children, and they were all on their way to Connecticut to start a home fellowship and eventually a church. The Smalleys arrived shortly before dinner.

Keith took them on a quick tour of the offices, and then we sat talking at the dinner table in the ranch house living room. Just about that time, Josiah and Bethany came skipping in. They had just returned from

their swimming lessons, and their hair hung in damp ringlets around their sun-kissed faces.

They both looked like little angels. After dinner, Keith lost no time. It was getting late, and even though we were all tired, the Smalleys wanted to see the rest of the ranch, including a quick sightseeing flight in our leased Cessna 414.

Our pilot, Don Burmeister, who'd flown in the military, would take them up. Keith wanted me to come with them on the flight, but I didn't want to go. As Keith dashed out the front door, I was struck by the sudden silence.

The living room was empty. Were all the kids going, too? No, Rebecca was still playing in her bedroom. I ran to the front door.

Keith was standing on the far side of the station wagon and was just about to get in. John and Dede were already inside with all their kids. Josiah was inside, too.

I couldn't even see him amidst all the other heads. All I could see was Bethany. She was standing by the gate, and in her sweet little girl voice, she was calling, I want to go, too.

Keith said, let her in the car. I stood on the porch and thought, no, not her, too. I at least want to keep Bethany.

It seemed like a crazy thought that Bethany was lifted into the car. It was all happening so fast. I didn't expect all the kids to go.

Something didn't seem right. I wanted to run out and call my children back, but I didn't want to be a spoil sport. I couldn't understand where these awful feelings were coming from.

Just as Bethany was lifted into the car, Keith hesitated. He called across the yard to me in an off-handed way. If I don't come back, raise Rebecca to be a woman of God.

With Keith traveling so much, we talked about the possibility of death before, but this seemed like an odd time to bring up the subject. Of course, he was just kidding. What about this one? I said with a slight laugh as I patted my just-pregnant tummy.

If it's a boy, name him Daniel. You mean you don't want me to name him after you, I said playfully, but the conversation was starting to take a serious tone. Okay, if it's a boy, you can name him after me.

As I walked back into the house, it felt so empty. I really didn't like Keith taking the kids on the airplane any more than necessary. I knew I was going to feel silly about my fears when they all got back in a few minutes, but in a few minutes, the phone rang.

It was one of the girls from the office. She said, our plane just went down. I'm going to call an ambulance, but I wanted to tell Keith first.

Will you tell him? It was like getting socked in the stomach. It took me less than a minute to get to the mile-long runway, but try as I might, I couldn't see anything of our plane. I drove down the airstrip.

There were people running. From the end of the airstrip, I could now see a thin column of smoke rising out of the woods in the distance. Jesus, Jesus, I thought, this can't be happening.

After reaching a place of uncleared woods, I jumped out of the car and took off through the thick trees. I stopped a few times, out of breath, feeling like I might pass out, but I had to keep going. My husband and children needed me.

I kept running, listening for their screams or cries. It was totally quiet. After what seemed like an eternity, I finally broke into a clearing, and I was overwhelmed by the awesome silence that hung in the air.

Everyone there was standing still. No one said a word. I felt something warm beneath my feet.

The ground I was standing on was black and smoldering. I got as close as I could to what was left of the airplane and looked right inside, because the was completely gone. I quickly turned and walked away and didn't look again.

Some rescue workers arrived. They were asking how many people were in the plane, and I was the only person who knew exactly who was on board. I started counting.

There were the Smallies with their six kids, and Keith and our two children, and Don. Twelve. The rescue workers just looked at me when I told them.

Then it hit me. Why on earth did twelve people go up in that plane? Now I felt so weak, I wanted to lie down, but there wasn't any place there in the woods. I felt so vulnerable.

I turned and started back, and when we were almost out of the woods, we passed a fireman on his way in. I simply said, there are no survivors. What that meant to him and what that meant to me were two different things.

On the morning following the crash, I opened my eyes and for a split second, it felt like any other morning. That was the only relief of the day, as reality came quickly crashing in. I had a doctor's appointment that day, and I decided to keep it.

I had to spend my time doing something. My pregnancy was confirmed, but being in town was terrible. The plane crashed with headline news, complete with pictures.

I saw newspapers in the drugstore and outside the restaurant where I stopped to eat. I wanted to stop and scream out loud to everyone. That's my family, my husband, my children.

How can you act like everything's so normal? How can you be smiling today? As news of the crash broke, the media came out in full force. It got crazy. Helicopters circled overhead, and we were swamped with reporters and camera crews wanting statements.

The news teams camped out there, just a few hundred yards from my door. Word fanned out around the world. Lauren heard about it in Japan.

Other friends heard in Finland. Keith's grandmother found out when she saw Keith's picture flashed across her television screen in California. Phone calls, letters, flowers, and telegrams poured in from people in all walks of life who had been touched by Keith and his music.

But the majority of messages came from Christians out on the front lines somewhere who had been encouraged to serve Jesus in a deeper way because of Keith's ministry. One of the important details I wanted to take care of was to write a letter to everyone who received our last day's magazine. On Friday,

July 30th, as I sat at a computer terminal thinking, praying, and crying, a phrase came into my mind, a grain of wheat.

I thought, isn't there something in the Bible about a grain of wheat? It was John 12, 24. Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit.

On Saturday, we had a memorial service open to the public, and thousands of people attended. Then on Sunday, we had the funeral open only to personal friends. I buried the children in the same coffin with Keith, in the arms of their daddy.

At the end, I picked up the first handful of dirt in Jewish tradition and threw it into the grave. My mother followed suit, and so did several others as a small crowd dispersed. In the months following Keith's death, remarkable reports came from across the country and around the world.

Almost at once, I was beginning to see how the falling of this one grain of wheat was already bearing fruit. The Lord touched millions of lives through Keith, and he would be missed. There was a deep grieving that swept through the body of Christ when Keith died.

There was a sobering, too. God took one of his choice servants home at the age of 28, and it spoke reality to all of us. We have no time guarantees.

We must use the time we have to the fullest. As Winky spoke at festivals that summer, crowds of young people came to him, weeping as they told him, I've gotten serious with God since Keith died. In fact, Christians everywhere were asking God, who's going to speak to our generation now? Keith's death left a void, but it was used to point believers to Jesus.

The answer was in Keith's for prophets only article, where he left us with these wise, simple words. Every Christian is called to speak to their generation. I believe the Lord has something he wants this generation to gain from Keith's story.

I hope it will encourage you not to look to Keith, but to see the call God has on your life. Keith had been a Christian for seven years when he went home. Because of his high profile as a new believer, he did a lot of his growing in the public eye.

Keith hit like a bombshell, then left just as suddenly. Perhaps there's something precious to glean from closely observing the strengths and weaknesses of a fellow struggler in the faith. Maybe it's the simple fact that we all have areas of weakness, but God is faithful to use us in the fullest way if we give ourselves totally to him.

Your gifts may be different from Keith, but they are just as important. Whether they are up front or behind the scenes, God wants you to use them for him. You have an important part to play in this generation.

That's why you're living at this time in history. Last Days Ministries continues today to fulfill her destiny to this generation as a living reflection of Keith's life and ministry. A lot has happened at Last Days in the past 10 years, and I'm excited about our future too.

Let me fill you in. During two years of Keith Green Memorial Concerts, we went to 110 cities, taking Keith's missions challenge to over 300,000 Christians. I've met people around the world who are in missions today as a result.

Last Days has more staff than ever, over 200, and we continue to grow. We're also developing an international communication center to multiply God's message in print and by the spoken word and song. We've launched schools in printing, desktop publishing, video production, illustration, worship, and music ministry, and in 1991, we officially linked arms with Youth With a Mission to further our international calling.

In many ways, we feel like we've just begun, and my prayer is that this book will be a new beginning for you in some way. You too have a call on your life and a destiny to fulfill, but to find your purpose, first you need to be sure you're plugged into the source of all life. If you don't already have a relationship with Jesus, I encourage you to open your heart as Keith did.

God is knowable, and he is real. God will be faithful to reveal himself to all who sincerely seek him. There isn't a life that can't be transformed, a heart that can't be mended, a wound that can't be healed, and if you already know the Lord, then do what he's calling you to do, and do it with all of your heart.

May the Lord bless you as you press on to know him. I want to tell you something. Unless we truly love one another, our worship is a stench in the Lord's nostrils.

Unless we truly are living a life of love, Paul said we can speak in tongues, we can prophesy. He said you could give away all your bucks, you could give away all your clothes, you could you could become a martyr and burn on the stake for Jesus, but if you don't love one another, it stinks. After listening to the audiobook, I realized that you might not be familiar with Last Days Ministries.

If you're not, I really want you to be. I'd love to send you four free issues of the Last Days magazine, along with a selection of track messages by me and Keith and others, and some basic information on our schools and other ministry opportunities. Just write us and ask for the complimentary Keith Green audiobook packet, and we'll send it right off to you without any obligation.

We just want to let you get to know us a little better. Write Last Days Ministries, Lindale, Texas, and the zip is 75771. May the Lord bless you as you press on to know him better.

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