

Monster Unleashed: Skillet's John Cooper Takes a Stand Against Cultural Compromise

In a candid, exclusive interview with Charisma magazine, Steven Curtis Chapman reflected on the significance of his recently recorded concert performance, which marked a celebration of his 50, No. 1 hit songs and 20 years of his organization, Show Hope.

"I think moments though like this, you know, to celebrate a milestone, a mile marker in the journey, really are just one more opportunity to just be humbled, to be reminded that it's all God," Chapman said. "That God is good, that He has been faithful, that I get to sing about what is eternally true."

The concert, which airs on TBN today, Nov. 24, features Chapman's collaboration with an orchestra to deliver beautiful arrangements of his chart-topping hits. These hits remind Chapman, with great humility and thanks to God, of the journey he has had over the years, including the time of pressure when he was unsure about the future of his musical career. Instead, this would be the time God would use to renew his strength and provide a testimony that would touch millions through "The Great Adventure."

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"Things were getting busier, and more successful I guess, in a way than I even imagined when I started," Chapman said.

After seeing a greater success and awaiting the birth of his third child, Chapman says he was afraid of failure and became

unsure of whether or not he was supposed to continue to pursue music.

“I just remember weeping and saying, ‘guys, I don’t know how to do this. I don’t know if I even should be doing this because the toll it’s taken on my family,’” Chapman said. “I know God’s given me these songs and this opportunity, but maybe I’m not supposed to keep doing it or how do I do it.”

It was in this desperation that Chapman’s pastor helped provide him with the biblical advice he needed to keep going. Instead of feeling afraid and concerned about failing and not being enough, he was reminded that his grace and strength are derived directly from Christ.

“He said, ‘because you know this: you write songs about it, but I want to encourage you to remember what the cross is, what Jesus did at the cross. He took all of our failure, all of our not enoughness on Himself,’” Chapman said. “[Jesus said] Yeah, you’re not enough, but I am and My grace is enough for you.”

After realizing the need to lean in on Christ’s goodness and faithfulness, “The Great Adventure” came about and countless lives have since been touched by the song. However, music alone is not the only way that God has used Chapman’s life to have an impact on the world around him. He and his wife’s organization, Show Hope, which has helped over 8,600 families as they’ve adopted children from 63 different countries around the world.

“Show Hope is just a picture of the gospel that we get to put on display for the world,” Chapman said.

As we embark on the Christmas season, it’s stories like Chapman’s that are meant to remind us of God’s goodness and faithfulness no matter what He calls us to do because of His complete faithfulness to us to give us the gift of His one and only Son.

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Abby Trivett is a marketing copywriter and coordinator for Charisma Media.

Why Thanksgiving Is a National Treasure

Thanksgiving is more than a family holiday or a mindset; it's a national treasure.

Public acknowledgments of the providence of God have been part of the history and traditions of this nation—from the Pilgrims to the founding era, from the Civil War to today—and it's important to share the true meaning of Thanksgiving. It's an important part of our Judeo-Christian heritage. To this day, during Thanksgiving week, Congress honors National Bible Week and the Bible's impact on America to ensure these timeless traditions remain the lifeblood of America.

The tradition of sharing a meal and giving thanks for family and freedom dates back to 1620 when the 52 survivors of the Mayflower landed in Massachusetts and enjoyed a three-day meal with Native Americans.

Interestingly, a plantation nestled in the beautiful countryside of Virginia, famously called the Berkeley Plantation, is one of America's best-kept secrets. The former home of a signer of the Declaration of Independence, Benjamin Harrison, and the birthplace of the ninth president of the United States, William Henry Harrison, it is also the location of the actual first Thanksgiving on Dec. 4, 1619. When a ship

sailing from England, the Margaret, landed, the first act of business by those aboard was to pray. Written orders given by the Berkeley Company to Captain Woodlief declared that their arrival must "be yearly and perpetually kept holy as a day of Thanksgiving to Almighty God." And that's exactly what they did—for two years. Lawmakers have worked to ensure this history is recorded, and now this tradition of prayer during the Virginia Thanksgiving Festival has been revived and is an annual commemorative event.

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America's founders intentionally encouraged public thanksgiving to God for His enumerated blessings. On Sept. 25, 1789, the Bill of Rights was ratified by the Senate. The First Amendment was approved by Congress and sent to the states for final approval. However, after the framers completed the Bill of Rights, Elias Boudinot, a member of the House of Representatives, said he could not think of letting the session pass without offering an opportunity to all U.S. citizens to return thanks to God for His many blessings. That same day, the U.S. House passed the following resolution:

"Resolved, that a joint committee of both Houses be directed to wait upon the President of the United States, to request that he would recommend to the people of the United States, a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed, by acknowledging, with grateful hearts, the many signal favors of Almighty God, especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a Constitution of Government for their safety and happiness."

On Oct. 3, 1789, President George Washington declared Nov. 26, 1789, a National Day of Thanksgiving to thank God for the Constitution and our new American government:

“Whereas it is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore his protection and favor—and whereas both Houses of Congress have by their joint Committee requested me to recommend to the People of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness.”

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That same year, the Protestant Episcopal Church, of which President Washington was a member, announced that the first Thursday in November would become the regular day for giving thanks, “unless another day be appointed by the civil authorities.” In fact, by 1815, the various state governments had issued at least 1,400 official prayer proclamations, almost half for times of thanksgiving and prayer and the other half for times of fasting and prayer.

Mrs. Sarah Josepha Hale, editor of “Godey’s Lady’s Book,” deserves much of the credit for the adoption of Thanksgiving as an annual national holiday. For two decades, Hale contacted presidents trying to promote the idea. Finally, in 1863, during the darkest days of the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln responded. Lincoln issued a formal proclamation, passed by an act of Congress, that set aside the last Thursday of that November as the first annual National Day of Thanksgiving and Praise.

The Thanksgiving proclamation called Americans to prayer with optimism and genuine thankfulness, noting that: “No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, Who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy.”

As we gather with loved ones this holiday season, we must remember freedom is not free. Give thanks to God for the men and women who pioneered this great nation into a beacon of freedom, as well as for those on the front lines who lay their lives on the line every day to preserve it. {eoa}

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Mat Staver is the founder and chairman of the Liberty Counsel, a nonprofit litigation, education and policy organization advancing religious freedom, the sanctity of human life and the family.

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Morning Rundown: Coach Fired After Hosting Voluntary Baptisms With Team

Here's a quick rundown of the top stories on :

Coach Fired After Hosting Voluntary Baptisms With Team

In the midst of recent events at Tattnall County High School, where Coach Isaac Ferrell's departure sparked concern among parents, one aspect stands out—the powerful symbolism of 20 players voluntarily participating in a baptismal ceremony. The

video, shared on the team's Facebook page, captured a moment of profound faith that transcended the football field.

In the words of Matthew 28:19, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." This biblical instruction echoes in the voluntary team baptism, offering a glimpse into a personal and communal commitment to Christ.

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Target Doubles Down on Christmas 'Pride' Campaign

If you thought Target had learned the lesson that many of their shoppers do not view items like tuck-friendly swimwear for kids as appropriate, think again.

In 2023, Target lost billions from the backlash their 'Pride' collection caused and the company's relationship with Abprallen and satanic-themed items, much of which was aimed at children.

The year is not over yet, and the retail giant thought it would be a good idea to ring in the Christmas season with another 'Pride' campaign where they deck the halls in transgender flag colors.

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Controversial Pentecostal Bishop Carlton Pearson Dies at 70

Pentecostal Bishop Carlton Pearson, once the pastor of the one of the largest churches in Tulsa, Oklahoma, died at 70 on Sunday, Nov. 19, after a long battle with prostate cancer. He had been under hospice care since early November.

During the 1990s, Pearson's church in Tulsa, Higher Dimensions Church, reached an average attendance of 6,000. In 1994,

however, after watching a television program about the “wretched conditions” of people suffering and dying from genocide in Rwanda, and considering the teaching of his church that non-Christians were going to hell, Pearson revealed that he had received an epiphany from God and stated publicly that he doubted the existence of hell as a place of eternal torment.

He said that hell was created on earth by human depravity and behavior. {eoa}

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Candace Cameron Bure on Hope-Filled Entertainment for the Holidays

When it comes to Christmas entertainment, there's few who do it better than Candace Cameron Bure.

In a new interview with Fox News alongside Great American Family CEO Bill Abbot, Bure shared her heart for creating family-friendly entertainment that can provide hope, with her latest film, "My Christmas Hero."

"I think we want to create an oasis in a cultural desert," Bure said.

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Thanksgiving: From a 'Pilgrim's' Perspective

Twice in the Bible believers are referred to as "pilgrims." The apostle Peter wrote, "Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul" (1 Peter 2:11).

The author of Hebrews also used this term to describe the Patriarchs: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and

pilgrims on the earth. For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland” (Heb. 11:13).

A pilgrim is “A person who journeys, especially a long distance, to some sacred place as an act of religious devotion.” A pilgrim is also “a traveler, a wanderer, a wayfarer, one who stays in a place only temporarily, but who normally has a set destination.”

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Monster Unleashed: Skillet’s John Cooper Takes a Stand Against Cultural Compromise

In a recent interview with Charisma News, Skillet frontman, John Cooper, both a musician and author, delved into the complexities of our ever-changing culture. Cooper’s insights, drawn from his experiences and observations, are captured in his upcoming book, “Wimpy, Weak, and Woke: How Truth Can Save America from Utopian Destruction.”

The conversation touched upon the challenges of addressing the cultural shifts and moral dilemmas facing society today. Cooper expressed concern about the prevailing ideologies influencing both the secular world and the church, leading to what he terms as being “wimpy, weak and woke.”

“I think we are to the place now where most people are like, ‘OK, things are getting pretty weird.’ ...Most people see these things happening now and they’re just saying, ‘What is going

on?’ and I wanted to write a book that encapsulated all of those things under the rubric of being wimpy, weak and woke,” Cooper explains.

“Wimpy” refers to a tendency to prioritize being winsome over telling the truth, especially within the Christian community. It takes strength to stand on the Word of God in an increasingly secular world. Cooper notes that the fear of offending others has led to a reluctance to discuss critical topics such as morality, sexuality and gender. The desire to win the favor of the world, according to Cooper, has compromised the steadfast proclamation of biblical truths.

In addressing the challenge of being “wimpy,” Cooper draws inspiration from the Bible, urging believers to stand strong in their faith. Proverbs 28:1 states, “The wicked flee when no man pursues, but the righteous are bold as a lion.” This verse underscores the importance of courageously proclaiming God’s truth even in the face of cultural opposition and cancellation.

On the concept of being “weak,” Cooper emphasizes the importance of understanding the philosophical and theological foundations of our faith. He argues that a lack of familiarity with these foundations has weakened the Christian response to cultural challenges. Without a solid grasp of biblical principles, believers may unknowingly adopt secular worldviews that contradict the teachings of Christ.

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“We have become philosophically and theologically weak,” Cooper proclaims. “We do not know what has come before us. We do not understand political philosophy. We don’t understand worldview. And so we just start saying things that we don’t know are absolutely ridiculous, because we just don’t know the Bible.”

Cooper draws attention to Ephesians 6:10, which encourages believers to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. This verse serves as a reminder that true strength comes from a deep connection to God and a reliance on His Word.

The term 'woke' takes on a nuanced meaning in Cooper's discussion. While acknowledging the biblical mandate to care for the poor and oppressed, he critiques the secular social justice movement, which he believes often centers around power dynamics rather than biblical justice.

"It creates an entire world, not based on biblical righteousness or biblical wickedness, but it creates a new world [based] on power and oppression. So it creates these new groups of oppressed people that's not actually accurate to biblical justice."

Cooper calls on Christians to be discerning, guided by biblical principles. Micah 6:8 provides a biblical framework for justice: "He has told you, O man, what is good, and what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God."

Cooper also discussed the rising trend of deconstruction within Christian circles, expressing concern that a lack of biblical understanding and an adherence to secular ideologies could lead believers down a path of deconstructing their faith. He emphasized the importance of knowing the Word of God and relying on it for answers.

John Cooper's upcoming book aims to address the challenges of navigating a culture that seems increasingly disconnected from biblical truth. As believers confront the falsehoods of a society that is seeking to replace God, Cooper urges them to stand firm in their faith, grounded in the timeless truths of the Bible. The call is to be courageous, understanding that true peace and justice come from aligning with the cross of

Jesus Christ rather than conforming to the ever-shifting tides of societal expectations. {eoa}

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James Lasher is Staff Writer for Charisma Media.

Christian School Fights Vermont Exclusion in Religious Freedom Battle