

When Spirit-Filled Pentecostal Singers Commit Suicide

News of Mindy McCready's apparent suicide has rocked the country music world. The latest reports indicate that McCready, 37, had just recorded an emotional new song in effort to reach out to wounded souls considering suicide before she allegedly took her own life on Sunday.

Many knew about McCready's struggle with substance abuse. Many knew of her legal woes. Many knew of her suicidal tendencies. But fewer knew that McCready learned to sing at a **Pentecostal** church when she just 3 years old.

McCready's Christian roots—and her familiarity with **spiritual warfare**—were on display in her 1996 debut album, "Ten Thousand Angels." She sold 2 million copies of that album and went on to record four more studio albums before her death. The talented young singer landed on the Billboard country singles charts 12 times. But it seems the spirit of the world targeted the Pentecostal (if by upbringing only) singer for destruction.

With a measure of fame to her name, McCready started dating celebrities. She was even engaged to Superman star Dean Cain at one point. But life seemed to take a dark turn shortly after. Post-Cain, one of her boyfriends was arrested for attempted murder after he beat and choked her in 2005. That may not have been where the downward spiral began, but the enemy used it to accelerate his plans to kill, steal and destroy.

About two months after being beaten and choked, McCready made her first suicide attempt. But she nevertheless returned to her abuser. Soon, the country music sensation attempted suicide a second time. Other apparent suicide attempts and

drug overdoses followed before a pornographic videotape featuring McCready and an ex-boyfriend went on the market through Vivid Entertainment. Obviously, if she ever was saved she had fallen from grace and strayed from the Biblical values that are taught in Spirit-filled churches.

McCready continued her up and down battle in life until the father of her second child, record producer David Wilson, was found dead in her home of an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound about a month ago. That may have been the last straw for McCready, who called Wilson her “soulmate” and “life partner.”

What went wrong? God sent McCready to the world with a gift to sing His praises. Growing up in **Pentecostal** church, she probably recited the Sinner’s Prayer and could have been baptized in the **Holy Spirit** at some point during her youth. Again, it seems clear that she strayed from her family’s faith—and I don’t believe in “once-saved, always saved” or a hyper-grace message—she seems to have had some understanding of the wiles of the wicked one, and even sang about him in her most famous anthem, “Ten Thousand Angels”:

*Speaking of the devil
Look who just walked in
He knows just where to find me
Here we go again
I can tell he’s gonna ask me to dance
But that’s not as far as he wants to go
I need ten thousand angels
To help me tell him no*

*Lead me not into temptation
Heaven help me to be strong
I can fight all that I’m feeling
But I can’t do it alone
Help me break this spell that I’m under
Guide my feet and hold me tight*

*I need ten thousand angels
Watching over me tonight*

What happened to McCready? She was practicing sin. It's possible that McCready, raised a Pentecostal, was taught how to handle the **spiritual warfare** that comes against the mind. But she may not have been prepared for the onslaught from the spirit of the world as she stepped into stardom and into a sinful lifestyle.

If news reports are true, she gave the enemy an open door by compromising with the world. We do know she wasn't married to either of the men who fathered her child. She took drugs. She was featured in a pornography movie. She was probably exposed to all manner of sin that hasn't been reported.

Where do we go from here? I don't have all the answers. But I believe the church needs to be ardent about shepherding its celebrity members, and praying for those who claim to be Christians even if the fruit tells a different story. Just because a Christian (even if in name only) becomes famous doesn't mean he doesn't need to belong to a church family. Even those who claim Christianity when their lives clearly contradict their confession need prayer. It's likely that some reached out as a witness to her and I'm not blaming the church for her demise. But I still believe in the power of prayer to change hearts.

The enemy counts the deaths of Whitney Houston, Mindy McCready and other "famous Christians"—whether true Christians or Christians in name only—as trophies. Yes, Christian celebrities have a responsibility to treat their bodies like the temple of the **Holy Spirit**. But I believe the rest of us tongue-talking believers have a responsibility to pray for those whom God elevates into the international spotlight who claim Christ, even if they have fallen from grace and even if they have never really found that saving grace. Amen.