

How Myles Munroe Changed the Course for Christian Music's Most Romantic Couple

Phil and Brenda Nicholas broke Christian music ground in the 1980s as they poured out their hearts to God—and each other—with their emotional ballads.

Thirty years later, the couple is largely considered an icon by many in the charismatic community for their work in ministry. Next Dimension University in Los Angeles awarded them an honorary doctorate in theology along with Erika Campbell of Mary Mary earlier this month.

The dynamic recording duo, best known for their Christian love songs, pioneered changing church culture in the 1980s. Many largely consider them the originators of Christian love music and credit them with refocusing countless marriage ministries.

But the soulful couple's songs almost weren't—until Dr. Myles Munroe stepped in.

As the couple belted out Christian love songs about their spouse, several pastors and ministers came against them.

"You didn't show love and romance. So we were doing the song 'The Closer I Get to You,' and we had a full-page ad. They said, 'These people are the devil. They're not saved. They're singing love songs in church. They need to get saved. They're horrible,'" Phil Nicholas tells *Charisma News*.

But Munroe, a close friend of the Nicholases, vehemently disagreed.

"He said, 'No! Don't stop that, keep it going,'" Nicholas recalls. Keep going they did.

Their albums frequently ranked among the top Gospel charts, including "Dedicated," which had a stint at No.1. In 1985, they were nominated for a Grammy with "Stop Your Searchin' (Try God!)"

Other top hits include "God's Woman," "A Love Like This," "The Closer I Get to You" and "Lord Bless My Husband."

Despite their popularity, the couple took a step away from the spotlight after the births of their children, Jennifer and P.J., who was born with Down syndrome and autism.

Miscarriages preceded P.J.'s birth, and Brenda says she began to lose sight of what God wanted from here.

"During that time, I would be singing 'Tell Somebody' on stage, I was up there, chugging that good R-and-B feel, saying God's been good, I remember just crying while singing it because the enemy was in my mind saying, 'How you goin' sing this song, tell somebody God's been good, look at all God's done, has God been good to you?' Brenda says. "I remember thinking just, oh Lord, I see where some people say just yeah, chuck it off, I might as well go out here and live how I want to live and this is really how it is, but then I reflected on what the Scriptures talk about how the writer said, 'But Lord, if I turn from you, where would I go?' Because we know the world is not the answer, and God is the answer, and I just have to trust Him and kind of walk this along and just know that He has it all in control, and that's what I've continued to do."

They led the Nicholas Love Cruise for more than a decade until the economy crashed, and then they turned their attention to another album, which came out in 2014.

As for what the future holds, the couple has plans to branch out beyond music. They're selling a perfume based on "God's Woman," and Brenda says she's interested in starting a clothing line.

No matter what comes, the couple holds to Romans 8:28.

“We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”