

Alice Cooper Is A Christian

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Rock star Alice Cooper shocked the world in the 1970s with an alcohol-fueled stage show that explored taboos ranging from murder to necrophilia. Years later he shocked the rock world by quietly embracing Christianity.

He's getting a lot of visibility from his syndicated radio show, "Nights With Alice Cooper," which is heard 5 nights a week on more than 80 stations around the country. Cooper told a guest, "It's great, I get to play the anything I want to play." Interestingly, his musical tastes are far-ranging, from Motley Crue to the Beatles.

He also interviews retro rock stars like Ozzy Osbourne, Joe Perry from Aerosmith, and Brian Johnson from AC/DC.

Besides his radio program, Cooper maintains an active tour schedule. Little known to most people is that he owns AliceCoopersTown in Phoenix, Arizona, his hometown. It is a restaurant that pays homage to baseball, a sport he is passionate about.

He also loves golf, and his Solid Rock Foundation holds an annual golf tournament to aid at-risk youth in the Phoenix area.

While his on-stage antics and the radio show do not settle well with some Christians, Cooper has a vibrant faith. Though he rarely spoke openly about his faith, he did open up some time ago with Lonny Friend, editor of the on-line rock magazine KNAC.COM, Cooper spoke at length about his drinking days, faith in God, and views on the shock-rockers who are following in his footsteps.

Cooper was introduced to alcohol when he began his music career, and drank heavily for the next 15 years. Lonny quoted Cooper as saying, "I was a totally functional alcoholic, probably the most functional alcoholic ever. I never missed a show. I never stumbled. I never slurred a word. I mean I was the Dean Martin of rock n' roll," he told KNAC.COM. Cooper said divine intervention is what broke his drinking habit in the mid-1980s. "I honestly think I was simply and completely healed," he said. "I guess you can call it a miracle. It's the only way I can explain it. It was absolutely eliminated from my life."

Cooper has often been called the model for today's shock-rockers, including Marilyn Manson. While he doesn't criticize Manson for his on-stage theatrics, Cooper takes issue with Manson's anti-Christian stance.

"He's very vocal about it," Cooper told KNAC.COM. "I believe [the Manson album] AntiChrist Superstar was pointed right directly at me. I didn't volley the first shots in this whole thing. His whole anti-Christian thing, and I'm like 'Hey, I'm Christian, and I'm not going to denounce what I believe.' I can be a rock 'n' roll star, a Christian and Alice Cooper."

Cooper continued, "I think Marilyn had a really bad Christian experience when he was younger. My guess is he got involved with some less-than-Christian-Christians and that really, forgive the expression, nailed him. You know, he's one of the greatest button pushers I've ever met. And I know that game because I invented that game...Manson clicked

because he found a whole new set of buttons to push, he even pushed my buttons, which is pretty impressive since I was pushing buttons before he was born."

Cooper's embrace of Christianity was more a return to faith than a coming to faith. "I was pretty much convinced all my life that there was just one God and there was Jesus Christ and there was the Devil," he told KNAC.com.

"You couldn't believe in God without believing in the Devil. I always tell bands that the most dangerous thing you can do is to believe in the concept of the Devil or the concept of God, because you're not giving them full credit. When you believe in God, you've got to believe in the all-powerful God. He's not just God, He's the all-powerful God and He has total control over everyone's life. The Devil, on the other hand, is a real character that's trying his hardest to tear your life apart. If you believe that this is just mythology, you're a prime target because you know that's exactly what Satan wants: To be a myth. But he's not a myth, of this I'm totally convinced. More than anything in the world, I'm convinced of that."

Cooper said, "We have to make a choice. And everybody, at some point in their lives, has to make that choice. When people say, 'How do you believe this? Why do you believe this?' I just say nothing else speaks to my heart. This doesn't speak to my intellect, it doesn't speak to my logic - it speaks right to my heart and right to my soul, deeper than anything I've ever thought of. And I totally believe it. That being said, I'm not a very good Christian. I mean, none of us are ever 'good' Christians. That's not the point. When you're a Christian, it doesn't mean you're gonna be good, it means you've got a harder road to pull."

Though some have questioned combining his faith in God with his rock-and-roll background, Cooper doesn't see a conflict. "I'm the first one to rock as loud as I can, but when it comes to what I believe, I'm the first one to defend it too," he said. "It has also gotten me in trouble with the staunch Christians who believe that in order to be a Christian you have to be on your knees 24 hours a day in a closet somewhere. Hey, maybe some people can live like that, but I don't think that's the way God expected us to live. When Christ came back, He hung out with the whores, the drunks and miscreants because they were people that needed Him. Christ never spent His time with the Pharisees."

But while Cooper may still speak to some of his old themes, he has a new message today.

"I used to celebrate moral decay, the decadence of it," he admitted in the KNAC.com interview. "I can look back on what I did then and what I'm doing now and they're two different things. But at the time I was the poster boy for moral decay, you know. So yeah, I've got a lot to be forgiven for...out of ignorance, I thought I was doing the right thing. I was totally in agreement that every guy should sleep with every girl and drink as much as they can. I don't believe that now. I don't believe in it, because I see how destructive it is."

Spiritual awakening is happening around the world, Cooper believes. "It's obvious humanity is craving for answers directly born of awareness," he said. "That's the healthiest thing I've seen in a long time because there is something better and everybody's gotta find it in their own way. People aren't feeling fulfilled by how many cars they own or the size of their stock portfolio. Even the addicts are saying, 'It doesn't matter how many drugs I take, I'm not fulfilled. This isn't satisfying.' There's a spiritual hunger going on. Everybody feels it. If you don't feel it now, you will. Trust me. You will."