

# Shannon Bunch

## Biography – Take Me There

Gospel music has been the life of Shannon Bunch. Shannon has been in church since his birth in 1974, singing at the age of three, playing the piano at the age of four, and dreaming of the day he could be on a stage sharing his heart with the world. As a child growing up in Barbourville, Kentucky, he attended area gospel concerts and faithfully listened to gospel radio to keep up with professionals in gospel music. Shannon states, “When one of the “big time” groups were coming into our area for concert or church service I would say, “Mom, **‘take me there’**.”

Going here and there has always been on Shannon’s mind. And gospel music has always been in his heart. Shannon’s passion for music became a ministry when he accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Savior at the age of 14. Shannon says, “Although I had been in church since I was 2 weeks old, I realized there was a decision I had to make for myself. It was really difficult to see myself as a sinner because all I had ever known was church. But believe you me, when the Holy Spirit passes by and He draws you to the goodness and mercies of salvation, it doesn’t take but a moment to recognize you need a Savior.”

Ministry soon combined with a career-oriented goal when he was 15 years old when he learned that auditions for Opryland USA in Nashville, one of America’s premier theme parks at that time, was coming to Richmond, KY to scout for next season’s talent. Again Shannon’s plea to his family was, “**Take me there**”. Shannon recalls, “I didn’t know I was only to sing sixteen bars of my best piece so I sat down at the piano with a song I had just written for the audition and started from the top.” One of the judges stood from their seat and walked toward the piano while I was still singing. I thought to myself that he is coming over to ask me to stop. On the contrary as he walked closer I could see the pleasant expression on his face. He then stood in the curve of the grand piano and awaited my completion. After being allowed to perform an entire song he was then informed I was not old enough to work for the company. He expressed his disappointment. But it didn’t even come close to mine. So with a “thank you” I exited the stage. Even more determined, he began making trips to Nashville, TN to knock on the doors of record companies and publishers to hand out demos.

Then in 1995, at the age of 20, a childhood dream would begin to unfold with one phone call from Jim Glass, owner and manager of the legendary Telestials. They were in need of a pianist and Shannon was recommended. By this time Shannon did not need a physical person to take him there, but in his spirit he turned to his Source and said, “Lord, **Take me there**”. Shannon made the journey to Nashville that November to meet the group and audition for the part. If accepted, this would be an awesome opportunity to travel with Dove and Grammy nominated artists. While Shannon’s excitement was building, the Telestials then-resigning pianist decided to stay on indefinitely. It appeared that another opportunity to travel and sing professionally had passed by him again. Only two months later he would get another call from Glass that he had the job if he was still interested. After considering the offer for 30 seconds, Shannon accepted to go on the road and as they say “the rest is history”.

Shannon worked tirelessly to achieve the standard of playing that a legendary group needed. But this dream was being overshadowed with a sickness that had plagued Shannon for almost

two years. In 1994 Shannon was diagnosed with clinical-manic depression. This would be a part of his life that would last nearly four years. After battling with suicide for 2 ½ years, the physical side of this illness began to take its toll. He soon learned that fulfillment of dreams does not take away hurt and pain. Days on the road would come and go when it was all he could do to perform each night.

Shannon says, "What was so amazing is the number of people who would approach me after a concert to tell me how blessed they were by my ministry. I often saw people healed and delivered from various illnesses including depression and I could never understand why God was using me to minister healing to others and then pass me by. It was like God's virtue was enough to heal everyone but me. I needed God to **take me there**, to a place of healing, restoration and rest."

Shannon relates his pain to Job who knew first-hand how it felt to have pressure, anxiety and depression in life. In Job 17 he said, "*...my breath is corrupt, my days are extinct, the graves are ready for me. Mine eye also is dim by reason of sorrow, and all my members are as a shadow. My days are past; my purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart. If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness. I have said to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother and my sister. And where is now my hope? As for my hope, who shall see it? They shall go down to the bars of the pit, when our rest together is in the dust. ...*" In other words rest would only come at the point of death. Shannon says, "Trust me, many times I prayed the Lord would **take me there**. But I was raised in a strong Christian heritage, taught that nothing is impossible with God, and that His strength is made perfect in our weakness." So began the next chapter of his life.

In late 1996 while on the road with the Telestials God came on the scene. In the back lounge of a Silver Eagle bus in Quitman, GA, Shannon told God he couldn't go any further unless there was divine intervention. Shannon had become so ill he had already given his resignation with the group sometime earlier. Not only did the Lord begin the healing process and deliverance from depression but also called him to preach! Right there, right then! In the midst of adversity, God's word resounded, "...in this world you will have tribulation but be of good cheer for I have overcome the world." And through Him "...we are more the conquerors..." Shannon says, "By the power of the Holy Spirit and the strength of His word, the Lord finally **took me there**."

Today Shannon has become of the most loved artists in gospel music. This is evident by his radio success. In 2006 Shannon had a song in the Gospel Music charts 10 of 12 months, which included his first top 40 Song for September 2006.

Shannon currently resides in Nashville, Tennessee with his wife, Melissa. They are expecting their first child January 2009.

Shannon remarks, "Isn't it funny how God works when we just pray 'Lord, take me there?'"

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## *Radio Singles (past to present)*

- ☞ *Goin' Up Yonder*
- ☞ *The Harvest Is Ripe*
- ☞ *One Day My Day Will Come*
- ☞ *It All Starts with a Song*
- ☞ *Chains Fell Away*
- ☞ *Lord, I Thank You for the Valley*
- ☞ *The Story*
- ☞ *One Lamb, One Cross, One Time*

## *A Bunch of Facts*

- Shannon supports a mission work in Venecia, Mexico, which provides resources for a church, a Christian school, medical treatment for the underprivileged and transportation of needed items to the area. Shannon feels it is not only a good gesture but a fulfillment of a mandate given by Christ to "...go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every living creature...."
- Radio promotions are managed exclusively by Shannon & Melissa Bunch
- Shannon's discography includes **8 solo albums** with the most recent, ***My Sunday Best***.
- Shannon's last five singles have produced **four top 80 hits, one top 40 hit, and one DJ Pick Hit**, as reported by *Singing News Magazine*.

## *Television Appearances*

- ❖ Country Gospel Tonight with Rev. Jimmy Snow (son of Grand Ole Opry Star, Hank Snow)
- ❖ Plus or Minus 60 program with Denny and Marge Hazen in Canton, OH
- ❖ Living Faith Television Network in Abingdon, VA
- ❖ Gospel Music Television
- ❖ Southern Style Praise- Knoxville, TN
- ❖ World Premiere- Pigeon Forge, TN

## *Achievements & Milestones*

- 2009 Diamond Award Nominee for Soloist of the Year & Christian Comedian of the Year
- Two appearances on **The Gospel Greats with Paul Heil**, July 19-20, 2008 & Labor Day Weekend 2006, which aired on over 200 national & Canadian radio markets & XM Radio.
- Performed five shows at **Dollywood** in Pigeon Forge, TN in October 2006
- Currently heavy airplay on **XM Satellite Radio**
- Performer for 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 2006 **World Premier Concerts**- Pigeon Forge, TN
- Featured artist in the **Singing News Magazine**, February 2007.
- **New Excelling Artist of the Year** nomination at the Southern Gospel Music Fan Fair, February 2007
- Heaven's Waiting Room becomes first concept video, released October 2007 via [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)
- Regular Performer at the **National Quartet Convention**, Louisville, KY

## *References:*

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