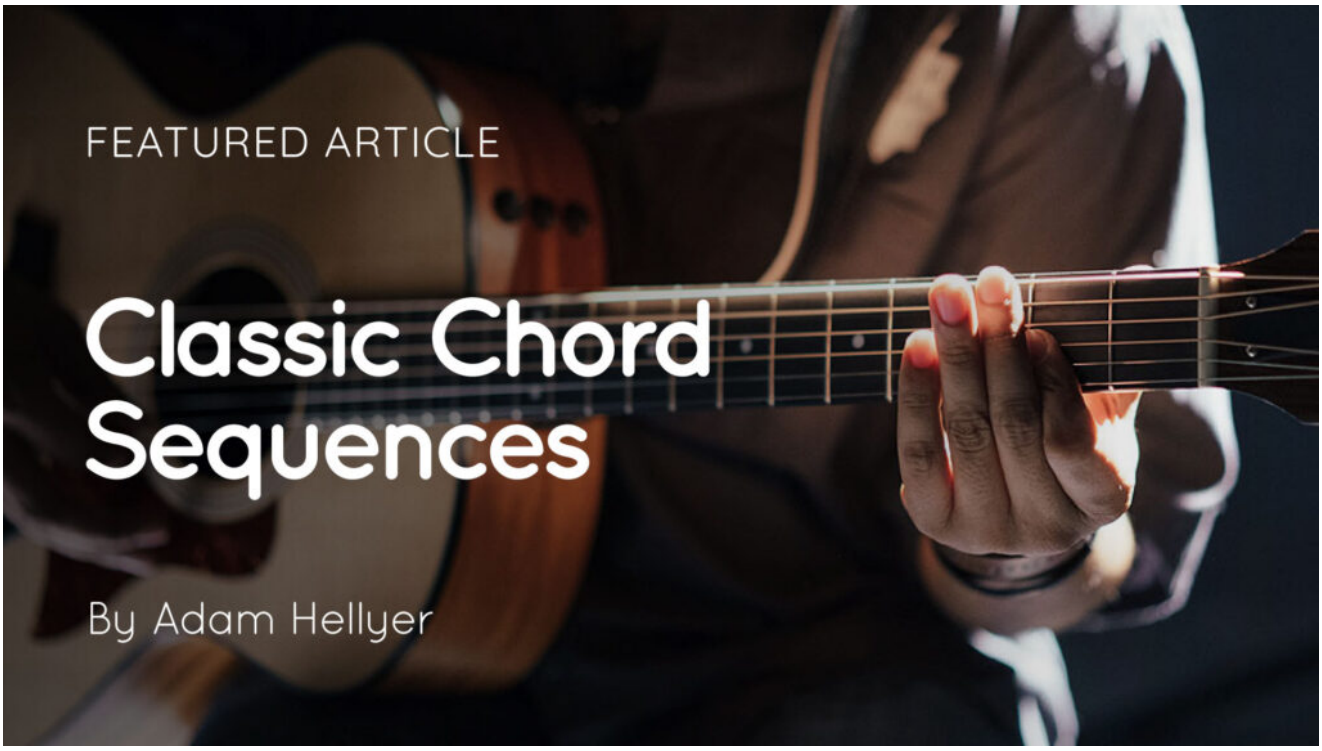
Classic Chord Sequences

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A more in-depth look at popular radio hits, or your worship music file, will reveal that many of the songs we sing share common chord structures. This is not a problem and is not regarded as plagiarism, provided the melody is original.
Here are some classic chord sequences from famous songs you may have heard on the radio or at church. The inclusion of these songs should not be seen as an endorsement of the songs. This list only exists to illustrate the point that many songs share the same chord sequences.
Why not play these Chord sequences on your instrument and see if you can think of church songs that use the same patterns? You can use these chords or different combinations of them to get you started song writing.

The Three Chord Trick

| 1 | 4 | 5 |

Starting with a simple one. This chord sequence is behind such classics as _La Bamba_ (1958) and Wild Thing (1965). A little more recently it's been the chorus of Counting Crows' Mr Jones (1993). It also made up the entire soundtrack to The Ting Tings' That's Not My

Name (2008), but they used the 5 only briefly as a passing chord. Popular chorus, Lord I Lift Your Name On High (1989) by Rick Founds, has this sequence at it's core. It is also the verse pattern in Sinking Deep (2012), by Hillsong and God is Great (2001), both by Hillsong United.

Variation A | 1 | 4 | 6m | 5 |

This variation inserts a 6m into the pattern and is used in the chorus of Happy Day (2006), by Ben Cantelon and Tim Hughes.

Variation B | 5 | 4 | 1 |

Simply the Three Chord Trick in reverse. You'll find this in the Chorus of I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For (1987), by Irish rockers U2, and as the unmissable riff in Lynyrd Skynyrd's Sweet Home Alabama (1974).

The 50s Progression

| 1 | 6m | 4 | 5 |

Called the 50s Progression because of the nostalgic or Motown feel it can evoke, this progression has been used across all genres, by many different artists. It is a classic chord sequence found in numerous popular songs, secular and sacred. Blue Moon (1934) is a classic example. Don't Dream It's Over (1986), by Crowded House, Every Breath You Take (1983), by the Police, the legendary Stand By Me (1961), by Ben E King, and the holiday classic All I Want For Christmas Is You (1994), by Mariah Carey. How Great is Our God (2004), uses this progression in the chorus and bridge (the verse uses the 1, 6m, 4 without going to the 5).

Variation | 1 | | 6m | 2m | 5 |

This is the chord sequence in Heart And Soul (1938), by Hoagy Carmichael, a popular piano duet, made famous by Tom Hanks in the movie Big.
An extension of this sequence which goes...

Extension | 1 | 6m | 2m | 5 | 3maj | 6m | 2m | 5 |

... makes up the verse to Jason Mraz and Colbie Caillat's Lucky (2009). This is quite a typical Jazz cycle, where modulation allows chords that are usually minor to be played as major.

Descending Scale Pattern

| 1 | 5/7 | 6m | 5 | 4 | 5 | 1

This is the When A Man Loves A Woman (1966) chord sequence. It is based around a simple descending major scale pattern, that turns back on reaching the 4. Jesus, Lover Of My Soul (1992), from Hillsong, has almost the same chord sequence, but using the 5 as a passing note only, on the way down.

The Pop Punk Progression

| 4 | 1 | 5 | 6m |

Good Time (2012), by Owl City and Carly Rae Jepsen, uses this cycle for nearly the whole song, verse and chorus. Just keeps rolling, very catchy. Matt Redman and Jonas Myrin used this pattern in their song 10,000 Reasons (2011).

Variation A | 1 | 5 | 6m | 4 |

This very popular cycle of chords, is just the Pop Punk Progression starting on the 1 instead of the 4. Disney's Oscar winner Can You Feel The Love Tonight (1994), and Oscar winning Let it Go (2014), both use this sequence in the chorus. _Right Here Waiting_ (1989), by Richard Marx, Jason Mraz on his I'm yours (2008), Natalie Imbruglia's _Torn_ (1993), and Men at Work's Down Under (1983), plus literally hundreds of other songs, all use this sequence. This pattern forms much of Blessed Be Your Name (2002), by Matt and Beth Redman.

Variation B | 6m | 4 | 1 | 5 |

This variation moves the starting point again, this time to the 6m. Africa (1982), by Toto, famously uses this cycle, so does the chorus of Grenade (2010), by Bruno Mars. Adele's record breaking hit, Hello (2015), also follows this cycle in the chorus. This pattern is used throughout Be Lifted High (2010), from Bethel Music's album of the same name, and the chorus of One Thing Remains (2010), also from Bethel.

Variation C | 1 | 5 | 2m | 4 |

This variation swaps the 6m for a 2m. Toad The Wet Sprocket's Crazy Life (1997), uses this cycle extensively.

Modulating Cycle

| 1 | 5m | 7maj | 4 |

This cycle includes some modulation. Normally the 5 would be major and the 7 would be diminished. This loop was the backbone of The Verve's Bittersweet Symphony (1997), taken from The Rolling Stones' song The Last Time (1965). It also features in Duran Duran's Ordinary World (1993). It is best known in church music as the never-ending chorus of Revelation Song (2004).