

# YOUTH messenger

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# TRUSTING OUR FATHER: "The Perfect Daddy"

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*By Bobby Bell*

In Proverbs 3:5, 6 (NKJV) we are urged: "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths."

The day and age in which we live has succeeded in creating an entire culture of independent, self-reliant, and extremely determined people. And the church is not immune to this. Our culture has taught us that the only person you can count on is yourself. It has also toughened us up in the sense that we are constantly trying to solve our own problems. When things get tough we "pull ourselves up by our bootstraps," as they say.

## WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS?

The problem is we begin to rely on ourselves more and in God less; so often we try to handle our problems on our own instead of surrendering them to God. And because we do not surrender them to God, what do we end up doing?

We lie in bed at night and think of all of our problems. We worry about our social life, our future, and many other things.

We try to think of a way to fix our problems when we should be praying and asking God to help us. We should be trusting that God our Father will take care of all of our needs.

So why are we often reluctant to trust God, our heavenly Father? As a society we hear all the time about how people have "trust issues." Why is that? In the world, many people's trust issues stem from "family" issues—particularly with respect to the father.

Statistics from the National Fatherhood Initiative show that one out of three children live in biological father-absent homes. Tragically, in today's world many people grow up without a father, or the father they have may not reflect the role that God intended. After all, fathers are only human beings, short of perfection. The point of this article is not to complain about the frailty of mere mortals, but simply to help all of us realize that even the best human father is still not as perfect as our Father in heaven.

So what is the best way to learn about our heavenly Father and learn how to trust Him?



- By the example of good Christian earthly fathers.
- By reading His word.
- By personal experience.

### HOW CAN WE BE SURE WHAT KIND OF FATHER GOD IS?

Jesus said, “He that has seen Me has seen the Father” (John 14:9, NKJV).

Jesus is the exact representation of the Father. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of His being (Hebrews 1:3).

God the Father is exactly like Jesus! Thus, we are to “behold

what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know him” (1 John 3:1, NKJV). For those who—for whatever reason—have never known a true father, we have to learn by looking at the examples of others. We also learn about what the heavenly Father is like by looking to Jesus, and by reading His word.

Then lastly, we must know God as our Father through our personal experience.

Once we get to “know” God and gain a true biblical perspective what being a father is, then we can begin to trust Him.

We can become more willing to test His “trustworthiness” by personal experience. As we begin to trust Him in little things, our trust in Him grows, and we are more likely to trust Him with the great things in our life as well.

Often a child will be afraid to jump into water but be willing to do so if his or her father is there waiting with open arms, until eventually the fear is gone.

It’s the same with God. As we successfully take little jumps, we begin to trust Him more, and we become more willing to take even bigger leaps of



faith and trust, knowing that our Father will never let us down or fail us.

“Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me. Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed” (Psalm 25:1-3).

“It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man” (Psalm 118:8 NKJV).

“Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; for YAH, the Lord is my strength and song; He also has become my salvation” (Isaiah 12:2 NKJV).

It is after we make these experiences and really get to know our Father in heaven that we can trust Him even when we don't understand His ways or are able to see His plan for our life. This only comes through getting to know Him and experiencing Him personally. It is only then that I can be able to trust Him when everything seems dark. When I do not understand! When I realize that it is all out of my control and I must totally submit to His will. Submit to the “process,” even if I don't understand it.

## THE TRAIN THROUGH THE SWISS ALPS

Dark! Darkness like I've never experienced before! There is a train that operates through a tunnel in the Swiss Alps. It carries you in your car inside the train. Once I was caught by surprise, discovering this only after booking the ticket. This was not just an ordinary-length tunnel—it was a super-long tunnel in the pitch dark! This train had traveled these tracks many times before. The conductor of the train had traveled these tracks many times before, so I trusted the process.

I trusted that the tracks were well laid. I trusted that the train was fully functional. I trusted that the mountain had a tunnel that went all the way through. I trusted all these things believing that I would arrive at my final destination. Even though for what seemed an eternity at the time, I was in utter and complete darkness. Everything was out of my control, and I was forced to submit.

It would have been deadly to try to escape by jumping out of the car, so somehow I endured the trip. It wasn't easy.

Isn't that what we do with God sometimes? Just because we can't “see.” Just because we are afraid. Just because we do not want to yield up control.

Soon I saw a glimmer of light. And when we came out the other side of the mountain into the full brightness of the sun, the view was spectacular. My destination was just ahead and I eventually arrived safely.

How did I get there? I had to trust in the train conductor with all my heart; I could not depend on my own understanding. I couldn't depend on what I saw, or rather couldn't see!

My fears, if I allowed them to control me, would have led me to make a very foolish mistake (to jump out of the train to try to escape). So I had to yield to the process. Not give in to emotion. Not get into fear. Knowing that the final outcome would be to my benefit.

## BLAZING A TRAIL

With a scoutmaster and some boy scouts, we were once blazing a trail in the woods. Finally we came to an impasse where it was unclear which direction we should go. Debris covered the

trail and it seemed that the trail split into directions. And we just didn't know which way to go. We tried looking ahead to see if there were any faded blazes left on the tree which would indicate which direction we should continue, but we found nothing.

We were faced with a choice: Which direction should we go? Finally the scoutmaster who was behind us said, "Go in this direction."

The scouts look at him, puzzled.

"How do you know that this is the direction that we can go?" they asked.

The scoutmaster smiled, "Because I am the one who blazed the original trail. I created this path." Without hesitation we moved forward.

Is this not how it is and should be with God? If we are following God, if we are trusting God, if we are on the path—when we come to an impasse, when we come to a place that it's unclear what we should do, it is then more than ever that we need to trust the Lord. It is then that we need to look to Him and listen to His voice as He tells us in which direction to go.

And why do we trust Him? Because He blazed the trail; He created the path; He walked it step by step before us. And we can trust Him.

He knows where the path will lead us, and He knows where the path will end. Some have a hard time trusting someone they don't know or have never seen. But, the fact is that we put our trust in a lot of things every day.

For example: I trust the people that put my car together. I trust the people in the opposite lane who are coming at 65 miles an hour.

I trust the manufacturers of airplanes and the pilots that fly them. The fact is I trust a lot of people that I do not know, that I've never seen, and that indeed I may never know or see.

The messenger of the Lord describes: "I saw that there was a great lack of faith with the servants of God, as well as with the church. They were too easily discouraged, too ready to doubt God, too willing to believe that they had a hard lot and that God had forsaken them. I saw that this was cruel. God so loved them as to give His dearly beloved Son to die for them, and all heaven was interested in their salvation; yet after all that had been done for them, it was hard to believe and trust so kind and good a Father." *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 120.

We often seem to practice the old saying, "When all else fails, pray!" But why do we need to fail at all? Why not trust God from the beginning? Why not pray first? Sometimes we do take it to the Lord, but the problem is we do not leave it with the Lord! The fact is if you are worrying then you are not trusting. And worrying is wrong!

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6, 7, NIV).

Another good saying to remember is . . . "If you pray, why worry? If you worry, why pray?"

Don't forget: You are blessed with THE PERFECT DADDY! He's not just somebody else's—He's yours! 🌟



It came to pass, that, as [Jesus] was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.” Jesus answered them in the words of the Lord’s prayer. “When ye pray,” He said, “say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil” (Luke 11:1-4).

Christ did not give us this prayer to repeat as a form. He gave it as an illustration of what our prayers should be—simple, earnest, and comprehensive. “Our Father which art in heaven.” The word “our” expresses a sense of human brotherhood; “father,” that of childlike trust.

In ancient times there was usually associated with the

name “father” all the affection and tenderness now centered in the word “mother.” Affection and strength were combined; the exalted and stronger served the weaker. When we say, “Our Father,” we worship God in truth. When we say, “Who art in heaven,” we worship Him in spirit. This petition carries the suppliant away from earth and human beings, to One who is unerring in judgment, compassionate, merciful, pure, and holy.

“Hallowed be thy name.” Thus we give expression to our reverence for the divine nature. All true prayer will first recognize the presence of God, whose eye is open to all that His creatures do. The supplicant’s first work is to honor God by giving expression to His reverence.

“Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.” In heaven the will of God is perfectly carried out. Love to God makes His service a joy. On earth there are rebellion and variance. The

disobedient and rebellious cannot understandingly repeat the Lord's prayer. Their will has never been submitted to discipline; and until they are brought into conformity to the will of God, they cannot intelligently pray that His will may be done in earth as it is in heaven. It should be the prayer of every true follower of Christ that God will subordinate everything in this world to His will.

Our temporal necessities are also to be the subject of our petitions. We are to call upon God for the very bread we eat. "Give us this day our daily bread," Christ said. But we are not to ask God for food, and then sit idly down, and do nothing. In order to supply our wants, our Heavenly Father puts work into our hands, that we may cooperate with Him in answering our prayers.

"Forgive us our sins; for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us." We cannot repeat this prayer from the heart and dare be unforgiving; for we ask the Lord to forgive our trespasses against Him as we forgive those who trespass against us. Very few realize the true import of this prayer. If those who are unforgiving comprehended the depth of its meaning, they would not dare repeat it, and ask God to deal with them as they deal with their fellow mortals.

Strength of character consists of two things—power of will and power of self-control. Many youth mistake strong, uncontrolled passion for strength of character; but the truth is that he who is mastered by his passions is a weak man. The real greatness and nobility of the man are measured by the power of the feelings that he subdues, not by the power of the feelings that

subdue him. The strongest man is he who, while sensitive to abuse, will yet restrain passion, and forgive his enemies. Such men are true heroes.

"Lead us not into temptation." God sometimes allows Satan to tempt His children, that He may prove them. If they rely on their own strength, they will fail under the trial; but while they realize their inability to help themselves, and trust wholly in God, He will provide a way of escape for them. There are times when it is necessary for men to be exposed to dangers, and be placed amid corrupting influences, but a sense of their dependence on God will lead them to keep their hearts uplifted in prayer every hour for strength to resist and grace to overcome. The experience gained in these conflicts will fortify the soul to pass unscathed through more trying scenes.

Christ prayed to His Father in behalf of His followers: "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil" (John 17:15). Sin and pollution abound on every hand; and daily, hourly, the prayer should go forth from hearts that realize the dangers, "Deliver us from evil." The Christian who offers this prayer, realizing his weakness, makes the temptation of the enemy powerless.

"Men ought always to pray, and not to faint," Christ said (Luke 18:1). To every child of God the words of inspiration are spoken: "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." "The end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer" (Colossians 4:2; 1 Peter 4:7). 



# The Healthy Church Hive

A Lesson  
on Unity

By Pam Stemmle

Recently, as we read of John the Revelator during our worship hour, we were reminded of God's plan of usefulness in all of our lives, no matter the age, no matter the skill set.

Of course, this connected very quickly in my mind to the constant object lessons here given by the hives of bees that we see and work with. I would like to briefly give you a tour of the bee hive, a visual lesson on church unity and the great commission.

How? Well, the Scripture states that we should ask of the beast to learn things of God, and that is what we do

when we study any creature of God. The bees are very interesting. There are many books written about these fascinating creatures, but not many from a scriptural backdrop. The Bible says that the 'law of the Lord is . . . sweeter also than honey.' Now, I know that many of you like sweets but have you ever thought about what is required to provide that substance that will satisfy your craving for sweet?

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are

right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb” (Psalm 19:7-10).

Did you know that . . . honeybees tap 2,000,000 flowers to make 1 pound of honey, and that a hive of bees flies 55,000 miles to bring you that same amount? One average worker honeybee makes only 1/12 teaspoon of honey in its lifetime. Isn't that something? Doesn't that make you appreciate honey more?

Living together in one place with 60 - 80,000 other busy bees is what we think of as crowded living. But not for the bees! They think of themselves as one big family, each with a

job to do, and together they live and work for good. What a lesson for us! Do we like to work with others? Do we like to work? We will be happier if we learn to like both.

One of the most important lessons from the bees is teamwork—working together with others. What could one bee accomplish by itself? Not much. One twelfth teaspoon of honey for its whole lifework would be all it could do. But put together thousands and thousands, and there are many pounds or kilograms of honey gathered, stored, and ready for us to use.

If there were only one bee, it couldn't fight against enemies, either. It takes a united, or group effort to accomplish anything really great. So we need others who love God and want to serve Him, to work together in the duties of life and to share His truths with the world.



Each part of the hive has its work to do. If any one part does not do its work whether it be feeding, cleaning, repairing, guarding or foraging, the enemy has access to do its destructive work. Only by diligence in our duty whatever it may be, can the whole body be healthy and able to produce its fruit.

### PREDATORS AND PLAGUES

Even in the bee world there are destroyers. Sin is rampant upon this planet, seeking to kill and destroy. All we can do is what we can and work together. Enemies come in various forms; invader bees which look like bees, maybe even are bees, but are not of the same family. These come in to steal the fruit, instead of helping to gather and build up the hive.

Then there are the pests. Skunks persist in scratching at the hives, so that bees will come flying out to guard, only to be caught and eaten. This puts undue stress on the hive, making it less able to collect nectar, and more open to disease.

There are also the racoons and the bears. They are hungry for either bees, brood or honey and are destructive in their hunt for it. They will throw hives all over the place, ripping apart hives and frames to get only what they desire. What a mess!

Unfortunately, there is also the enemy of evil men who would steal the hives from their place to build up their own “mini kingdoms,” the fruit of greed and theft.

There are also very little enemies. They do the most harm it seems. Varroa mites are very small parasites that attach themselves to brood and suck the blood out

of both the adults and the brood. This can eventually kill the whole hive. This reminds me of attitudes or habits which seem small in themselves, but which take away our joy and our attachment to Christ, drawing away our attentions from heavenly things to the things of this world.

What about Nosema—a fungal disease, the simple reason of not being clean enough? The conditions have become such that uncleanness can multiply with its attending sickness. Nosema can be treated and the hive can recover if taken care of soon enough. “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Corinthians 7:1).

Have you heard of AFB—American Foul Brood—another disease that not only spreads through the hive but can infect through the whole yard, a collection of hives, and be carried to other yards by affected bees? The only help is to destroy the infected hives—the risk cannot be taken to let it spread further. This reminds me of open sin in the camp. It must be dealt with immediately and not let spread to other churches and peoples.

Then there is the hive beetle. It doesn't hurt the bees; it just uses the hive to lay its eggs, totally destroying the crop of honey (the fruit of their labor). Can you see any parallels in our Christian experience? What about the workers of evil who seek to instill doubt and error into the minds of youth who have been raised in Christian homes, taught the truth of God's word, and equipped to serve Christ?

## THE ONLY DEFENSE

It is plain to see that there is warfare in this world. The help of the bee and the hive is its “beekeeper,” the one responsible for its care. Our only help in this spiritual battle is our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the One responsible for our care.

The purpose of a hive of bees is not just to collect honey! Have you thought of that? Our sweet tooth thinks of their work in relation to what we like, need or desire, but in the larger scheme of things—like the will of our Creator, they have a much greater purpose. They were designed to work—to go forth and pollinate the plants, so that more food could be available for the population of our world. Honey is only the by-product!

We have a similar commission. We were designed and equipped

to go forth into this world and preach the gospel to all creatures, so that they could go forth and preach the gospel to more creatures and on it should go. Yes, we should also cultivate that sweetness of Christian character that will be drawing others to Jesus, but Christian character is not to hoard for ourselves. It is the by-product of our connection with our Lord, not the end of the goal.

So, let us learn a lesson from one of God’s tiny creatures, to use our God-given abilities, to work together for the good of the whole, to go and proclaim His goodness to our world and then soon we can dwell in a place where there is no more sin, no more disease and no more enemies. May God bless you as you work. 🍯



# 1<sup>ST</sup> *thoughts on the* MUSIC SYMPOSIUM *for the* *SDARM south american region*

In July 2013, delegates from around the SDARM South American Region united in discussion on the subject of sacred music. This topic is one that demands the attention of all who seek to praise the Lord in the beauty of His holiness. The will of God must be the root of all our perspectives. We must awake to the realities around us and study His will in regard to these points, that our music may be approved before God. We must have the melody of heaven in our hearts.

The Bolivian Union of the Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement, through its Music Department, was honored with the presence of guests to this first musical symposium for the South American Region. On July 2-7 in Cochabamba, Bolivia, they extended a cordial and fraternal welcome to all.

The following unions were represented in an official capacity: North Brazilian Union, South Brazilian Union, Chilean Union, Peruvian Union, South Union of South America, Bolivian Union, and Ecuadorian Association. The presence of many brethren and sisters from around the region and around the world was appreciated.

The objectives for the symposium were in harmony with the aim of the Music Department of the General Conference. It was organized by the SDARM General Conference, the Music Committee, the Bolivian Union, and the South American Region. The directors sought to make an event wherewith to analyze and establish guidelines based on principles from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy relating to sacred music in the church.



By Bethany Montrose

The Lord is to be praised for the accomplishment of this feat. The location was in Cochabamba, Bolivia, at a beautiful, brand new hotel they were able to afford the use of for an incredibly affordable rate, compared with other possibilities they had seen. The faith of the brethren and sisters in Bolivia was rewarded. It was the hand of the Lord in answer to prayer that enabled the event to become a successful reality.

The symposium was based on Psalm 47:6, 7, "Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding."

### WHAT CHARACTERIZES SACRED MUSIC?

Sacred music is an integral part of praising God. It should therefore receive the attention and study it deserves. It must be pleasing to God. We must know what it means to praise God through music. As the verse indicates, we are to sing with understanding. This understanding must be derived from a deep study of what music is appropriate for the worship of God. Therefore, meetings such as this one become essential for growth in discernment on what is acceptable in God's house. What kind of understanding are we to cultivate? For one, we must have understanding of the basic and fundamental principles of what constitutes sacred music. This will lead to development of proper styles in the church and in our lives.

### THE SYMPOSIUM

This event was open and welcomed the participation of many brethren and sisters. Speakers were brought from

different parts of the Americas to shed light upon the important topic of music in the church. Propositions were submitted for discussion and taken to the chairing board for consideration. They would then bring all approved propositions to the floor. Once a particular topic was opened, anyone could voice a concern or suggest a correction. Once all debate was finished, the chairing table would offer either yes/no or three options (#1, #2, #3) depending on whether any corrections found support among the delegates. Only the delegates could participate in the actual vote, where a two-thirds vote was mandatory. Any points not passed by the needed number of votes were reopened for discussion. A total of twenty-two basic propositions were agreed upon, leaving the need for a continuance of the work at the next music symposium to be held within a year.

### THE GLORIOUS SABBATH

The Sabbath meetings were a beautiful illustration of the practical place music should have in worship. We were blessed in the joyful assembly of many like-minded believers. Though many faces were new, the love of God encompassed us through the bond of Christian fellowship. Christ's prayer is that we may be one. One in truth, one in spirit, one in heart! While all are struggling and growing, we have the assurance that one day very soon we will be changed into His image from glory to glory. Together we will win the victory—over the beast, over his image, over his enticements. It is amazing to realize the effects music has on the subconscious

mind, and I am sure that those involved in this event wanted others to understand the importance of this topic. As we see the day of the Lord fast approaching, I believe that events like this one will become more frequent. The Holy Spirit loves to pour out blessings upon those gathered in prayerful study of His Word—seeking to follow the light of truth as it shines brighter and brighter until the perfect day.

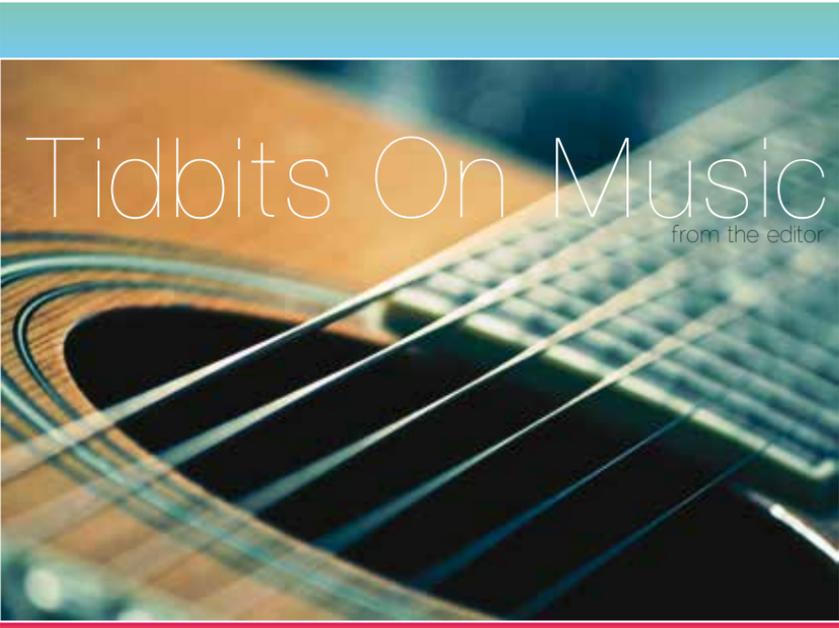
On Sabbath afternoon, all the attendees were favored with a presentation of good music in action. Vocal and instrumental items were offered up in praise to the Lord. The Bolivian believers participated with their various ensembles. Especially touching was the effort made by Canto Nobre, a choir from Sao Paulo, Brazil. These devoted singers from the Sao Paulo area traveled three days and three nights by bus across the mountainous frontier to sing for us. Now that's dedication! Their part of the program was a special highlight

for me. After sunset on Saturday night, they spontaneously formed a circle around the piano and sang a large portion of their repertoire by memory. They sang and sang and sang with their whole heart. May God bless and reward their efforts—and may we all be energized and inspired to praise the Lord with an understanding heart. I believe that the Lord has special opportunities in store for those who thus devote their talents to honor and glorify His name.

### CONCLUSION

After the musical feast, we enjoyed fellowshipping with our new acquaintances until retiring for the night. On Sunday morning, more conclusions were made and various plans were introduced for the development of musical labors. The conference closed with a message on A New Song for the People of God. Praise be to the Lord who gives us the desire to praise Him with our talents in the best possible way. 🎻





# Tidbits On Music

from the editor

## HOW IS CLASSICAL MUSIC ANY BETTER THAN OTHER TYPES OF MUSIC?

A study was done by a student, which revealed the effects of music on rats. The rats were given a maze to navigate. The control group took an average of 10 minutes to negotiate the maze. After three weeks, they had knocked 5 minutes off of their time. The group that listened to classical music cut 8.5 minutes off their time after three weeks. On the other hand, the group that listened to music with a heavy beat did not even seem to care and added 20 minutes to their time!

## CAN ROCK MUSIC HARM MY MUSCULARITY?

An Australian physician and psychiatrist, Dr. John Diamond, found a direct link between

muscle strength/weakness and music. He discovered that all of the muscles in the entire body go weak when subjected to the stopped anapestic beat of music from hard rock musicians.

## HOW CAN CLASSICAL MUSIC HELP ME SCHOLASTICALLY?

Research has been done on what is referred to as “the Mozart effect,” demonstrating benefits in scholastic ability when one listens to the music of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Albert Einstein traces his success back to when he began studying the violin. He says that playing the music of Mozart and Bach increased his intelligence. The science behind indicates that when it is used while studying, most Baroque music activates the left and right sides of the brain, maximizing learning and retention of information. 

# MUSIC

to Glorify

# GOD



from  
the  
editor

## WHAT ABOUT THE NEW SONG— HOW CAN WE INCORPORATE THIS INTO WORSHIP?

Yes, the Bible speaks of a new song. When converted, we are to leave the worldly music behind and only accept music that characterizes the Christian walk. This is more than just a change of words: it must be a change of the character of the music itself—just as our lives must be changed into perfection through Christ. It must be conducive to the development of Christian character. It must be a new song—one that’s in harmony with the will of God. “Music was made to serve a holy purpose, to lift the thoughts to that which is pure, noble, and elevating, and to awaken in the soul devotion and

gratitude to God” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 594).

## HOW CAN MUSIC BE PROPERLY USED TO TEACH?

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Colossians 3:16). Proper music should be consistent with proper teachings. The music should be in harmony with the lyrics. This gives greater power to the message, when properly used.

## WHY IS A CONSTANT REFORM IN MUSIC NEEDED?

“For the time will come when

they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (2 Timothy 4:3, 4). Music teaches. We live in an era where fables are more common than truth. And music has been influenced by this mindset. Therefore, we must stand on guard and follow the instruction given in Ephesians 5:11, “Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.” This encompasses music as well as every aspect of our lives.

#### WHAT KIND OF MELODIES SHOULD BE SUNG?

“Those who make singing a part of divine worship should select hymns with music appropriate to the occasion, not funeral notes, but cheerful, yet solemn melodies. The voice can and should be

modulated, softened, and subdued.”—*Evangelism*, p. 508.

#### MUSIC HAS MELODY, HARMONY, AND RHYTHM. IN WHOLESOME MUSIC, WHICH ELEMENT PREDOMINATES?

“Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 5:19, 20). We are to make melody in our hearts. Melody should predominate all our music.

#### SHOULD MUSIC BE AN INTEGRAL PART OF OUR WORSHIP?

Yes. “Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing” (Psalm 100:2). When used appropriately, music can be a blessing. We are instructed to praise the Lord with song. Music is powerful and should be utilized for good. 🎵



In the case of the water turned to wine we have the most striking lesson not only in righteousness but also in temperance. The two are combined. The question is often asked, "What kind of wine was it that Jesus made at Cana?" Many assume that it was as a matter of course fermented, intoxicating wine, and urge that miracle as an evidence that Christ sanctioned the use of intoxicating liquor. If we study the miracle as we ought, we shall have no difficulty over this matter. Whoever does not allow his appetite to becloud his judgment will readily see that the miracle which Jesus wrought was the exact counterpart of the miracle which is wrought in the storing up of the sap in the grape clusters. He made just such wine as you would get if you should press the juice of the clusters of grapes into a vessel and drink it. This process is described in the dream of Pharaoh's butler: "A vine was before me; and in the vine were three branches: and it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes; and Pharaoh's cup was in my hand; and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand" (Genesis 40:9-11). But there is another point, which gives us a most practical lesson in both righteousness

what  
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the title, *Righteousness  
and Temperance*

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By A. T.  
Jones

and temperance.  
The wine which Jesus made

on that occasion, like the clusters of grapes on the vine, was the direct product of His own life. It is not too much to say that the guests who drank that wine were drinking directly of Christ's life. Of the Israelites who drank of the water which flowed from the rock on which Christ stood in the wilderness, it is said that they drank from Christ (1 Corinthians 10:4). Those who did not by faith recognize His life, did not in either instance receive any spiritual life; but the turning of water into wine did become spiritual life to Christ's disciples, for they believed on Him.

There is this difference between fermented and unfermented wine. The unfermented wine is pure food. It is the life of the vine in the most condensed form and is all nourishing. It tends to build up the system and is therefore one of the best ways in which to supply nourishment to those who are ill, and who cannot receive a great quantity of food. The unfermented wine—the juice of the grape, the true fruit of the vine—supplies a great amount of the nourishment in a small space, and is easily assimilated. But in fermented wine the food elements are so changed that there is scarcely any real nourishment. It is now a stimulant and an intoxicant, instead of a food. Instead of building up the system, and supplying new life and power, it simply excites the power already

possessed, spurring it to action. It adds nothing to the one who takes it but simply stimulates him to use that which he already has.

Now Christ's life is food, and not a stimulant. He did not come to earth to incite men to put into operation power that they already had, but which lay dormant, but

to give them power, of which they were destitute. It was when we were "without strength" that Christ died for the ungodly (Romans 5:6). There is in men no power whatever to do right. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Romans 8:7, 8).

Anyone would say that it is an act of cruelty to beat a poor, lame horse that is almost ready to die, in order to make him work. He has no work in him, and neither whip nor spur can put it into him. The whip or spur may incite a strong animal to use its strength, but they cannot put strength into one that has none. So it would be wicked to try to force a palsied man to work. He has no power to work. There are men who are wicked enough to do such things, but they are moved by the spirit of Satan.

For the work of the devil is to make men think that they can manufacture strength out of nothing. So he induces them to drink alcoholic liquors, and tea, etc., in order to get strength for work,



when there is nothing in those substances to supply strength. Taken in certain quantities they only stimulate a man, and cause him to put forth and use up the physical strength that he has. In larger quantities they stupefy and intoxicate. Thus he literally induces them to spend money for that which is not bread, and their labor for that would satisfieth not. By the use of those substances people use up the strength they have, and become prematurely old.

In the same line of work the devil causes people to think that they have in themselves all the power that is necessary for doing right. So he stimulates them with false hopes and promises. He gets them to punish themselves in various ways, for their failures, and to spur themselves up to bring forth the good which they are persuaded

is latent in them. And when the individual effort fails, he induces the nation to pass laws with the object of compelling people to be religious. The idea is that they have goodness in them, but that they have to be spurred by the law, and by fear of punishment, in order to bring it out. That is the devil's way. The end, of course, is increased sin, and death.

Christ's way is different. He knows that in man "dwelleth no good thing," and therefore He

does not give him a stimulant, which would do no good, but which would tend only to excite and wear him out. On the contrary, He feeds man with His own life, which contains all the elements necessary to perfect growth. In Him "all fulness" dwells, and we are made complete in Him. We are "saved by His life."

And so from the miracle of changing water into wine we learn an important lesson in righteousness, and temperance, and the judgment to come, because it is the life of Christ that is to be the standard in the judgment.



**"When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now" (John 2:9, 10).**

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That which Christ gives to us is His life, which is real nourishment. His life in the heart produces righteous acts. And so for our physical sustenance He gives us that which is wholesome and nourishing, and not that which adds no real strength, but which dissipates the energy we already have.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Galatians 5:22, 23). 

# Warned by a Squirrel

**H**ave you ever realized that the majority is often wrong? Jesus tells us: “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matthew 7:13, 14).

Therefore we need to exercise caution in this world. What does it mean to be cautious? It means to be careful and thoughtful, paying close attention to avoid risks. A warning is instruction given to another person when it is necessary to be careful about something.

## A WARNING FROM A SQUIRREL

Let’s pause to learn something from the furry little red squirrel found in the northern wooded areas in Canada. This watchful creature carefully guards his habitat, always ready to sound an alarm whenever he spots danger.

One chilly morning a red squirrel was perched on duty high in his pine tree, scanning the forest below for any sign of intruders. Visible amidst the underbrush was a large family of porcupines—a favorite delicacy of certain types of weasels. The fisher weasel is able even to digest the razor-sharp quills that defend the porcupine.

As a clever weasel neared the porcupines, he quietly disappeared under the snow. Watching every detail of the porcupines’ pace and direction, the fisher quietly dove into the snow to make a hidden tunnel toward them. Suddenly, the squirrel began to warn the porcupines of their danger by stomping his foot, jerking his tail, and making shrill noises with his voice.

Completely ignoring the alarm given to benefit them, the porcupines continued their casual pace, trusting confidently in their armor of quills. As the fisher approached them, the red squirrel



.....  
*By Les Gibson*

increased his warnings—only to be ignored.

Suddenly the fisher rushed from his snow tunnel to launch a fierce attack on his prey. The red squirrel could only watch helplessly at the fate of the porcupine that had failed to listen to the warning, choosing instead to follow the majority.

### WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THIS?

How is it with us? Will we listen to the voice of the true sentinel—the warnings found in prophecy? Often the voice of warning is ignored with mockery, contempt, or even disdain, because we want to please ourselves.

How is it with you and me? Will you become the watchman on the wall, and give the faithful warning message to all whom you see in danger? How is it with us? Are we ready to meet Jesus, face to face?

The Lord declares: “When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul” (Ezekiel 33:8, 9).

They could be friends from school. They could be siblings. Whoever they may be—if they have a relaxed attitude unmindful of God, we—like the red squirrel—really ought to sound the alarm to warn them of their danger.

“As we see souls out of Christ, we are to put ourselves in their place, and in their behalf feel repentance before God, resting not until we bring them to repentance. If we do everything

we can for them, and yet they do not repent, the sin lies at their door; but we are still to feel sorrow of heart because of their condition, showing them how to repent, and trying to lead them step by step to Jesus Christ.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 960.

“There must be no toning down of the truth, no muffling of the message for this time. The third angel’s message must be strengthened and confirmed. The eighteenth chapter of Revelation reveals the importance of presenting the truth in no measured terms but with boldness and power.”—*Evangelism*, p. 230.

“The third angel’s message is to be given with power. The power of the proclamation of the first and second messages is to be intensified in the third. . . . So many other interests are brought in that the very message which should be proclaimed with power becomes tame and voiceless.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 60.

“Satan has laid every measure possible that nothing shall come among us as a people to reprove and rebuke us, and exhort us to put away our errors. But there is a people who will bear the ark of God. . . . They will proclaim the word of the Lord; they will lift up their voice like a trumpet. The truth will not be diminished or lose its power in their hands. They will show the people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 411.

The Lord declares with certainty: “I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence” (Isaiah 62:6). Let’s be those people! 

Gaining Grandeur

# From THE LIFE OF GIDEON

Part 2 of 4:  
A Test of Faith

As published  
in *The Signs of  
the Times*, June  
30, 1881.

By Ellen  
G. White



in review:

In the last issue of the *Youth Messenger*, we read about God's call to Gideon to deliver His people from the cruelty of the Midianites. When Gideon saw the strong evidence of God's blessing upon this venture, his courage was strengthened.

**G**ideon's courage was greatly strengthened by the tokens of divine favor vouchsafed to him. Without delay, he went out with his forces to give battle to the Midianites. But now another severe trial of faith awaited him. With the immense host of invaders spread out before him—the thirty-two thousand of the Hebrews seeming, in contrast, like a mere handful—the word of the Lord came to him: “The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me. Now therefore go to,

proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gilead” (Judges 7:2, 3).

It had been made a law in Israel that before they went to battle, the following proclamation should be sounded throughout the army: “What man is there that hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it? let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it. And what man is he that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not yet eaten of it? let him also go and return unto his house, lest he

die in the battle, and another man eat of it. And what man is there that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man take her. And the officers shall speak further unto the people, and they shall say, What man is there that is fearful and fainthearted? let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren's heart faint as well as his heart" (Deuteronomy 20:5-8). What a striking illustration is this of the tender, pitying love of Christ! He who instituted the relations of life and the ties of kindred, made special provision that these be not too widely broken. He would have none go forth to battle unwillingly. This proclamation also sets forth in a forcible manner the influence which may be exerted by one man who is deficient in faith and courage, and further shows the effect of our thoughts and feelings upon our own course of action.

"As (a man) thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7). The thoughts and feelings cherished give direction to the conduct, and thus determine the character. A strong, well-balanced character is built up by faithfulness in all the smaller as well as the greater acts of life. A man is measured, not by the power put forth in some one great effort, but by the zeal and integrity which he brings to the daily round of cares and responsibilities.

True Christian character is marked by a singleness of purpose, an indomitable determination, which refuses to yield to worldly influences, which will aim at nothing short of the Bible standard. If men will permit themselves to become discouraged in the service of God, the great adversary will

present abundant reasons to turn them from the plain path of duty to one of ease and irresponsibility. Those who can be bribed or seduced, discouraged or terrified, will be of no service in the Christian warfare. Those who set their



affections on worldly treasures or worldly honors will not push the battle against principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places.

All who would be soldiers of the cross of Christ must gird on the armor and prepare for conflict. They should not be intimidated by threats; or terrified by dangers. They must be cautious in peril, yet firm and brave in facing the foe and doing battle for God. The consecration of Christ's follower must be complete. Father, mother, wife, children, houses, lands, everything, must be held secondary to the work and cause of God. He must be willing to bear patiently, cheerfully, joyfully, whatever in God's providence he may be called to suffer. His final reward will be to share with Christ the throne of immortal glory.

Because of the weak condition of the armies of Israel, in contrast with the numbers of the enemy, Gideon had refrained from making the usual proclamation. He was filled with astonishment at the declaration that his force was too large. But the Lord saw the pride and unbelief existing in the hearts of this people. Aroused by the stirring appeals of Gideon, they had readily enlisted; but when they saw the multitudes of the Midianites, their courage failed. Yet, had Israel triumphed, those very men would have ascribed the victory to their own skill and valor, rather than to the mercy and power of Jehovah. As a people, they had little faith in God. Many were suffering the reproaches of a guilty conscience.

Instead of being too many, the Israelites felt that their numbers were too few; but Gideon made the proclamation as the Lord had directed. With sinking heart

he saw twenty-two thousand, or more than two-thirds of his entire force, depart for their homes.

Again the word of the Lord came to His servant: "The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there; and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go" (Judges 7:4).

The people were led down to the waterside, expecting to make an immediate attack upon the enemy. A few hastily took a little water in the hand and sucked it up as they went on, but nearly all bowed upon their knees, and leisurely drank from the surface of the water. Those who took of the water in their hands were but three hundred out of the ten thousand; yet these were selected, and the great body of the army were permitted to return to their homes.

Here we see the simple means by which character is often tested. Those who in a time of great peril were intent upon supplying their own wants were not the men to be trusted in an emergency. The men of God's choice were the few who would not permit their own wants to hinder them in the discharge of duty. Not only did they possess courage and self-control, but they were men of faith. They had not defiled themselves by idolatry. God could direct them, and through them he could work deliverance for Israel. The Lord designed to show His people that He was their source of strength. By the simplicity of the means employed, He designed to rebuke their pride and self-exaltation.

As with ancient Israel, so it is with the people of God at this

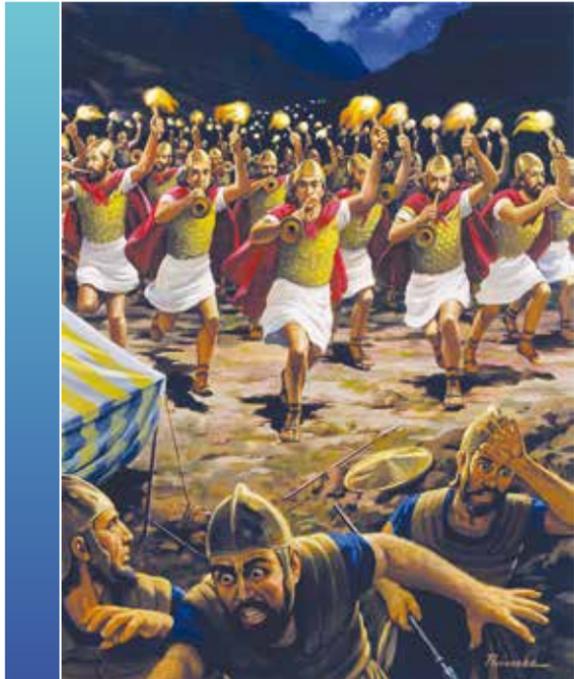
age of the world. The Lord can do but little for the children of men, because they are so ready to esteem themselves wiser than their Creator. If blessed with a measure of success, many become elated and self-confident, and forget their dependence upon God. There is too much reliance upon human plans and methods, and too little faith in the mighty God of Jacob; too much machinery, and too little of the life-giving Spirit and power of the Most High.

Christ is the light of the world. All wisdom and all knowledge flow from Him who is the fountain of wisdom. He bids His followers, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). It is when reflected in His disciples, that the divine loveliness of Christ is revealed to the world. Those who depart from the simplicity of the gospel have gone on in advance of their Leader; but Christ says, "Follow me."

All who indulge pride and self-importance, "vaunting themselves against God," He will separate from His work; and, in their stead, will choose those who will walk in the path of humility and obedience, acknowledging that all their success comes from God.

All the wonders which God has wrought for His people have been performed by the most simple means. When the people of God are wholly consecrated to Him, then He will employ them to carry forward His work on the earth. But we should remember that whatever success may attend us, the glory and honor belongs to God; for every faculty and every power is a gift from Him.

God will test, to the utmost, the faith and courage of those to whom He has entrusted responsibilities in His work. Appearances will often be forbidding. Although God has given repeated assurance of His help, yet faith will almost stagger. "Thus saith the Lord," must be our firm reliance, independent of human reasonings, or apparent impossibilities. 🕒





TRUSTWORTHINESS, CREATED, INTELLIGENTLY CONTROL, OTHERS, DILIGENCE, BOLIVIA, HARMONY, PORCPINE, SMALLER

1. We can test God's \_\_\_\_\_ by personal experience.
2. The scoutmaster was super-reliable on the trail because he had \_\_\_\_\_ that path.
3. Until we are brought into conformity to God's will we cannot \_\_\_\_\_ pray that His will may be done in earth as it is in heaven.
4. Strength of character consists of power of will and power of self \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Bees can teach us about learning to work together with \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Only by \_\_\_\_\_ in our duties can the whole body be healthy and able to produce its fruit.
7. The recent music symposium was held in \_\_\_\_\_.
8. The "new song" of the Christian is one that is in \_\_\_\_\_ with the will of God.
9. The \_\_\_\_\_ failed to listen to the squirrel's warning.
10. A good character is built up largely by faithfulness in the \_\_\_\_\_ acts of life.

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# COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR *Creator*

**T**he quiet college student just had to know the answer.

... "What is the meaning of life? ... If only I knew a little more about the future, perhaps I could plan my life better. ... Should I consult an astrologist to know what to do? ... Who are my genuine friends? Do I even have any? ..." The questions seemed endless and the mental answers too vague to be conclusive.

Thankfully, the student was too shy to approach the resident professor who was reputed to be an advanced astrologist. That cautious trepidation, however, turned out to be a blessing in disguise, for little did she realize how dangerous such a path would have been! So, instead she tried asking another professor who had been a super-brilliant, child-prodigy, intellectual genius. Some students had also referred to him as a born-again Christian.

Coming like Nicodemus in the late evening at the close of a school event, the student timidly approached the professor's office.

"Hello, sir, um. ... I'm coming just to ask a quick question about how to memorize things better and know the secret of speed-reading so I can make more progress at a faster rate," the student blurted out.

The professor cheerfully responded, "Actually, people are surprised to learn that—believe it or not—I'm not one of those speed readers. But somehow I still manage!"

"Really? Okay. ... Well, I suppose the actual question I'm really asking is ... Um ... How do

you know what you're supposed to do in life? I mean, I have my major here at the university, of course. But what am I meant to do in the wide scope of the universe (uh, if you understand what I'm trying to say)? How can I know what my life is meant to be?"

The professor paused for a moment, then smiled warmly. He thoughtfully and soberly responded, "There is only one way that can be known. It is by communication with your Creator."

"How do you do that??? Is it kind of like the way dogs have instinct?"

"Animals do not have this level of capability. It is actually much deeper than that. Honestly, what you have come to ask is the most important question of the day. The hour is late, but we must plan to talk another time."

Knowing that he was an employee of a state university, the professor was not permitted to speak much about religion. His next step was probably to pray in his closet for the God of heaven to reveal Himself to this searching soul, for that was exactly what happened.

Yes, to communicate with your Creator is the answer to everything. Life certainly has significant meaning. It also has its perplexities, disappointments, injustices, struggles, and joys. In this issue of the *Youth Messenger*, we will learn more about how that One who created us can indeed be our everlasting Guide and ultimate Best Friend. Don't miss the opportunity!

# Strange, Isn't It?

By Harry Armstrong

'Tis very strange that we should love  
The things of earth, while heaven above,  
    With all its glories fair.  
    Is held so lightly in esteem,  
And seen as only in a dream—  
    A castle in the air.

'Tis very strange that we should prize  
This earth, while mansions in the skies,  
    Prepared by God in love,  
    Are all too lightly laid aside,  
By hearts of selfishness and pride,  
    Who mind not things above.

'Tis very strange that we should let  
    The trifling things of earth upset  
    And turn us from the way  
Which patriarchs and prophets trod  
In faith, that they might dwell with God  
    Through one eternal day.

'Tis very strange that we should live  
    Each day, yet no attention give  
    To God, the source of life;  
Despise His blessings from above,  
His tender care, His pitying love,  
    And choose the way of strife.

