

## The Symphony

A symphony is an instrumental or vocal presentation of musical melodies and harmonies. In a symphony, a particular theme of tones and songs usually is offered up to the listening discretionary ears of an audience. This audience is consisting of hopefully appreciative persons. Some symphonies fall upon more critical ears. These persons may fail to discern the full meaning of the piece of musical work which was designed and planned to present a particular message in melody. Other symphonies become legendary and become the acme of sonorous presentation and are heralded as a stroke of genius, and might be said to be years ahead of their time. What is thus viewed favorably in some circles of society, may not reach such high acclaim in other segments of society. Thus the symphonies may be a matter of subjective judgment as to the interpreted value of the piece of work.

To that end, life itself is a symphony of happenstance, circumstance, and events, about which we have our own personal interpretation. We are cautioned by some persons, to plan for the best of situations, but prepare for the worst of them. Analogously, just as the musical tone of the trumpets may sound an alarming tone in a musical concert, while the soft resonance of the bassoon or bass viol may usher in a more quiescent emotional state, so the situations of life's general circumstances, be they good or bad, may have parallelisms here.

In this country I have been spoiled. My life has been, for the most part, an agreeably melodious flow of events and situations. However, even though what has seemed to me to be a less than desirable set of circumstances may have come my way, if I have had a well tuned ear, I would have been able to discern the parallel overtones of the more deep throated instruments in this symphony of life. These deep throated soothing instruments come in the form of the internally reassuring voice of the Savior as He narrates the stilling and calming words which came for those who had listened to His Voice. Both the alarming set of circumstances and the stilling calm, although at opposition to one another, are a part of the main movement in this symphony of life. This symphony may also be presented in all forms of artistic production. Vocally and visually are the generally accepted means of ushering in the production in which we are both audience and cast members.

When I was at work in the park, this calming voice, in a corresponding fashion, may have come through as a rustling of leaves in the forest, a rippling brook or stream, or a call of the night birds as they begin their evening patrol on the quest of sustenance for themselves or their families. All this may be punctuated by the hoot of an owl, or the shrillness of a bat's voice. These all, to me, are the narration of the Heavenly Father's providential care. It may not come as I would first expect, but, like Elijah's anticipation of God's voice in various and sundry sets of circumstances and places at Horeb, he was only to find God in the soft whisper[1]. I, also, had to tune my ear to shut out the blaring interference of the world to be able to hear the true symphony of life. This true symphony of life is the total harmony of Jesus the Creator God[2] as He instills a quiescent melodious and harmonious song of peace in my troubled soul. It is this song of peace which is in the background of the blast of the louder instruments that is quieting the storm as He did on the Lake Gennesaret[3]. Truly this is reminiscent of Jesus' reminder that in spite of the troubles of life, continuing with the symphony analogy, no matter how loudly the worldly and intimidating blast of the trumpets, trombones, baritone horns and French Horns may be sounding and troubling us as they attempt to usher in problems and troubles, Jesus is still the Devine Orchestral Conductor and has overcome the world[4]. He can turn a presto forte into a legato pianissimo of the music movement. The melody may not change in life, but the changing of the means of emphasis will mellow out the symphonic movement, and its internalized expression in life.

The basic melody in the park where I used to work is carried by the Clackamas River which is the main tune of this ecological symphony of the outside environs at night. It is punctuated by a multi media production. The visual light show, for instance, is that which consists of the stars, moon, and reflection of the light off retinas of the animals in the evening hours of the park. The calls of these animals add to the vocal and audio portion of this symphony and act as solos, duets, trios, quartets and ensembles which are but a part of the main symphony. Taking the whole of the environs as the sanctuary of God, all this fit together an ecological and biological version of Psalms 150....Let everything that has breathe Praise the Lord[5]. I hear the music from "Holy, Holy, Holy.... as it rings out "all Thy Works shall Praise Thy Name in earth and sky and sea[6]".

The unsettling disharmonious intonations of the music are those which parallel to the storms of life. These storms of life, in the park, generally come from the contacts with persons who do not wish to abide by the rules of the park. Such persons may become obstreperous and abusive when asked to cooperate. The more belligerent they become, the more forte the analogous music becomes, until, with the clash of the cymbals, the peak of the crescendo is reached and now the police are needed to be summoned. Just as with any symphony, however, the end of the concert approaches, the music fades out, and I give the Devine Conductor His “standing ovation” for the success of yet another twenty four hour long symphonic production, wherein I was both audience and performer. I sing His accolades as the instruments of the orchestra are set aside for a rest. The concert of life continues unending, however, into the late night and early morning hours of this synchronized choreographed magnificent creation into which I was born. Even though I am free to slumber, if I can, the symphony of life plays on with musicians, vocalists, and actors who live on the set....As a sometimes overlooked part of God’s Created Orchestra.

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[1] 1 Kings 19: 10-18

[2] John 1:1-5

[3] Matthew 8: 23-28; Mark 4: 35-41; Luke 8: 22-25

[4] John 16:33

[5] Psalms 150

[6] Hymn “Holy, Holy, Holy” Great Hymns of Faith Singspiration Music 1968