

Our Maestro

Scripture: 1st Corinthians 12:4 - 20

8/29/21

My grandmother sang very well, she always had a song in her heart and most of the songs were about Jesus! The love she had for Jesus sounded wonderful. She sang about Jesus' grace and mercy. Her favorite song was 'Amazing Grace', maybe that is why it is my favorite song.

Everyone who knew her, would hear that song and her singing. We would hear her singing when she was fixing a meal, doing dishes, cleaning around her home, or holding us in her lap. She would sing for the people she visited and boy, did she sing in church!

Grammy just sang and sang! She displayed her faith through song and no one doubted that God had filled her heart with the jubilant song of salvation. And no one was surprised when they learned that my Grammy's favorite passage of scripture was Philippians 4:4 – *Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice!*

Let me take a moment and share with the first verse of 'Amazing Grace' in memory and honor of my grandmother.

(Sing verse one of 'Amazing Grace')

After sharing that about my Grammy, do others hear the song of God in you? Is there a place in your heart for singing God's praises?

The BBC Music Magazine asked 150 of the world's leading conductors or maestros to list 20 of what they believed to be the greatest symphonies ever written. Beethoven's Third symphony came out on top. The work, whose title means 'Heroic', was written during the turmoil of the French Revolution. But it also came out of Beethoven's own struggle as he slowly was losing his hearing.

The Third Symphony evokes extreme swings of emotion that express what it means to be human and alive while facing challenges. Through wild swings of happiness, sadness, and eventually triumph Beethoven's Third Symphony is regarded as a timeless tribute to the human spirit.

Paul's first letter to the Church in Corinth deserves our attention for similar reasons. Through inspired words rather than musical scores, it rises in blessing, falls in the sadness of soul crushing conflict, and rises again in the unison of gifted people working together for one another and for the glory of God.

The difference is that here we see the triumph of our human spirit as a tribute to the Holy Spirit of God. Paul urges us to experience together the inexpressible love of Christ. Paul helps us to see ourselves as called together by our Father, led by His Son, and inspired by the Holy Spirit. It is not in the noise of music, but in our contribution to the greatest symphony of all and the greatest maestro of all, Jesus Christ!

Another story - in a large auditorium a person listened to the majestic music of a full orchestra. It was perfect! It was perfect in timing, coordination, and sound. It was perfect!

However, earlier, as the orchestra tuned up, he had heard a disjointed screeching of sounds. It was like a fight of the instruments. The horns would warm up trying to outdo the violins. The drums would try to out bang the xylophone. There were so many noises, all competing against each other. So many noises, so much confusion!

Now, during the concert, they were in unity. The viola was not trying to sound like the percussion and the tuba was not trying to copy the flute. Once they started to play, everything blended together into a wonderful sound!

Separately, yet together, the musicians followed the plan of the sheet music and of course they followed the maestro. The definition of a maestro is a distinguished musician, especially a conductor of classical music. Some famous maestros are – Lenard Bernstein, Arturo Toscanini, Johann Sebastian Bach, and many more people whose names I cannot pronounce.

(Get out conductor's baton)

The eyes of the musicians in an orchestra go from written notes on their music sheets to the direction of the maestro. The maestro would start by banging his conductor baton on his podium to get the attention of the orchestra. Then the maestro would raise both arms with the conductor baton in one hand. The musicians were prepared but they also depended on the maestro's leadership.

As a Christian, we too need to be in harmony with our brothers and sisters in Christ. We must not try to emulate their gifts or compete with them, but we must keep our eyes on Jesus, our maestro! We need to be prepared by reading from our notes - our Bible. We need to tune up by praying. Then we need to look up and follow Jesus Christ lead, our maestro.

(Tape conductor baton on podium)

We need to follow our sheets of God's music and look up to Jesus and depend upon his leadership.

Christ is raising his arms, ready to lead us. Jesus is our maestro of faith!

Individually we may not sound good, but collectively, as God's orchestra, we will make wonderful music! If we follow the lead of our maestro, Jesus Christ, we will hit every right note and make a glorious noise.

In 1st Peter 4:10 it says – *Each one should use whatever gift he has received from God to serve others faithfully by administering God's grace in its various forms.*

God has gifted each of us uniquely for his work. God has given each of us a talent to do the work God wants us to do. We need not covet gifts. We need not covet our talents that are not ours.

When we focus on using the gifts the Lord has given us, we accomplish more for God. When we focus using our talents that God has given us and follow our maestro, Jesus Christ, we will stay in harmony with each other. This is a sweet sound to the Creator's ear. This is a wonderful sound to God's glory. This is a glorious sound to our maestro, Jesus Christ.

Let us pray:

Father, please enable us to see what we can do to serve you better. With our eyes, let us see in each of us your Son. We our strength, let us rely on your Holy Spirit. And let us grow in awareness of what we can do with a noisemaker like you.

All Sufficient Savior, may we see and serve you each day. May we hear you in our joyful singing as we sing songs of praise to you. May our songs always be songs of salvation and glory to you.

Gracious God, thank you for blessing each of us with unique gifts and talents. May we dedicate them to you to bring beauty and healing to others. May we follow your sheet music, the Bible, and may we listen for the tap of our maestro's, Jesus Christ's baton stick . AMEN.