

There Is No Music in a Rest

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • August 9, In the year of our Lord, 2015
Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Larry Amberg – Any songs about songs or singing

Prelude:

I. On May 22, 1961, at 10:30 in the morning,

A. an unknown person wrote what he or she called, “Prayer for the Day,”

There is no music in a rest, but there is the making of music in it. In our whole life melody the music is broken off here and there by “rests,” and there are even times when we think we have come to the end of the tune. God sends a time of forced leisure—sickness, disappointed plans, frustrated efforts—and makes a sudden pause in the choral hymn of our lives, and we lament that our voices must be silent and our part missing in the music which ever goes up to the ear of the Creator.

How does the musician read a rest? See him beat time with unvarying count and catch up the next note true and steady as if no breaking place had come between. Not without design does God write the music of our lives. But be it ours to learn the time and not be dismayed at the “rests.” They are not to be slurred over, nor to change the keynote. If we will look up, God Himself will beat the time for us. With the eye on Him we shall strike the next note full and clear.

B. I saw this in The Singing School group on Facebook.

1. Robin Entrekin, a fellow-student, reposted it from another source, saying,

“This just kind of struck me as insightful...”

2. The man who originally posted it said,

“This was found in a desk drawer in the offices of our church. Notice it’s dated 5/22/61. Not sure of the original source, but a profound lesson nonetheless. Recently, ‘rest’ was forced upon me by sickness. I’m grateful God does whatever is necessary to get our attention.”

II. We see sickness, disappointed plans, frustrated efforts, and other problems

A. as an interruption of the way that we want to live.

B. Even worse is when I am forced to rest, but

1. others keep singing the tune of their lives.
 2. To us that is unfair.
- C. We think these things ruin our lives, but
1. truly, the Lord might be imposing on us
 2. a time of rest in the music of our lives, because He knows
 - a) that we learn from those times of rest, and
 - b) that we think on the more sober issues of life.
 - (1) We need to see that we are not the conductor of our lives.
 - (2) We do not write the song of our lives.

Persuasion:

I. The Musical Rest

- A. In many of the songs we sing,
1. the writer has placed a rest of one length or another.
 2. The writer will use different symbols to show the length of the rest.
 - a) I just notice how many beats are supposed to be in a measure, and
 - b) see how many of those beats we sing, and
 - c) that tells me how long the rest is.
- B. The song leader should continue to beat the song through the rest
1. so that we know how long to stop singing, and
 2. so that we all begin to sing together again. [Demonstrate]
- C. The writer may place that rest for an emphasis, or
1. to allow us to catch our breath, or
 2. some other reason, and
 - a) we really do not need to know why the writer placed a rest there,
 - b) we just need to rest, for then we may discover the reason.
- D. The power of the rest is like the power of the pause.
1. It gives you time to think.
 2. It draws attention to what was just sung.

- a) Listen to comedians and
 - (1) after they tell a joke,
 - (2) they will pause.
 - (a) Everyone thinks on what the comedian said, and
 - (b) then they laugh.
- b) A public speaker does the same thing, but
 - (1) not for a laugh,
 - (2) rather to get you to think on what was just said.

II. The Life Rest

A. This is why daily time between you and God cannot be minimized.

- 1. He writes and leads the song of our lives.
- 2. If
 - a) I am not attuned to Him,
 - b) how shall I know what to do?
 - (1) My life will show that I am not following His leadership.
 - (2) There is a time to act, and a time to rest.
 - (a) He puts us into those times.
 - (b) Am I aware of His work in my life?

B. Psalm 1 shows why we need time with God,

- 1 Blessed is the man
Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,
Nor stands in the path of sinners,
Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;**
- 2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord,
And in His law he meditates day and night.
(Psa 1.1–2)**

C. Even Jesus saw and had the need,

35 Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed (Mark 1.35).

- D. However, the point of the piece written by the unknown person
1. is that often God forces a rest upon us.
 2. I should accept those times for discovering what He wants me to do.

III. God Forces a Rest

- A. Yes, we need to be productive citizens.
1. We get the idea of work from God Himself, yet,
 2. He commanded the Israelites to rest, and
 - a) He meant total rest,
 - b) a whole day every week!
- B. We know of the great words of Job, because
1. his immense suffering made him cease all his activity, and then
 2. he spoke words that the Holy Spirit preserved in the Bible.
- C. Think for a moment of the Psalms.
1. Often, especially in the case of David, they wrote those magnificent words
 2. during a time of forced rest from God,
 - a) the times of illness.
 - b) Yet, their illnesses led to high and holy words!
 - (1) David assures us in Psalm 41
 - (2) that the Lord has not forsaken during those times,

**3 The Lord will strengthen him on his bed of illness;
You will sustain him on his sickbed.
(Psa 41.3)**

- D. The Lord drove Moses to a 40 year rest, and
1. when the Lord wanted the music to start again,
 2. Moses, out of frustration from his past rejected efforts, resisted.
- E. He drives us to rest everyday!
1. We have to sleep everyday.
 2. He could have made us to function without rest.

- a) I know that because even when we do rest,
 - b) our bodies continue to function.
 - (1) Think about it: Your heart never rests.
 - (2) If it does, you are in deep trouble.
- F. Does He stop the music of our lives, forcing a rest upon us,
- 1. that we might learn something?
 - 2. that we might remember He is the song leader?
 - 3. that we might think on what just happened in our lives?
- G. We see forced rests as inconveniences, even irritations, but
- 1. following the Lord's leading of the song of our lives,
 - 2. we learn why these times become necessary,

3 And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; 4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope (Rom 5.3–4).

2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. 4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him (Jam 1.2–5).

IV. The Beat Continues

- A. The music of life continues.
- 1. At some point in your life,
 - 2. you will realize that someone else is writing the music, leading the song.
 - a) When you get in-step with Him,
 - b) the music of your life will improve dramatically.
- B. The song leader, conductor, continues to beat the time to the music, but
- 1. the leader is in charge.
 - 2. If we follow the leader,

- a) we know when to start singing again.
 - b) So it is with life.
 - (1) He gives all the instructions that we need
 - (2) for singing the music of our lives.
- C. When the time of forced rest comes upon us,
- 1. we think it will never end.
 - 2. That is because we looked away from the Leader of the music of our lives.
 - a) We try our own tune, but
 - b) we make it worse.

V. God Writes the Music of Our Lives

- A. He is in charge.
- 1. He writes and leads the music of our lives, but
 - 2. sometimes we forget and we want our own tune.
 - a) This was Jonah's problem.
 - (1) God told the prophet to preach to the city of Nineveh, and
 - (a) Jonah ran *from* God, going in the opposite direction.
 - (b) That is Jonah chapter 1.
 - (2) After God sent a storm against Jonah, the sailors threw him overboard,
 - (a) Jonah ran *to* God in prayer after three days in the the great fish.
 - (b) That is Jonah chapter 2.
 - (3) After praying to God, the Lord had the great fish vomit Jonah, and
 - (a) Jonah finally ran *with* God, preaching as the Lord directed.
 - (b) That is Jonah chapter 3.
 - (4) After preaching to Nineveh and they repent,
 - (a) Jonah ran *ahead* of God, expecting Him to destroy the city.
 - (b) That is Jonah chapter 4.
 - b) Jonah wanted a different song.

- (1) He did not like God's leading of the music
 - (a) of the prophet's ministry or
 - (b) of the city of Nineveh.
- (2) This is what happens when we do not follow the Lord's leadership.
 - (a) We have to sing, so to speak, when He says to sing, and
 - (b) we have to rest when He says to rest.
- c) The Bible shows an angry prophet who did not like God's song,

1 But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he became angry (Jon 4.1).

4 Then the Lord said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" (Jon 4.4).

9 Then God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?" And he said, "It is right for me to be angry, even to death!" (Jon 4.9).

3. Let us remember that we confessed,
 - a) "Jesus is Lord," to be saved.
 - b) You were not using a secret password to be saved.
 - (1) When you confessed the Lordship of Jesus Christ,
 - (2) you denied yourself the lordship, and
 - (a) came to believe that He rules over all, and
 - (b) that you wanted Him to rule your life.
 - i) He writes the music of our lives and
 - ii) He directs it, causing us to rest when He wants it.
- B. We have to learn the time of the song in our lives.
 1. We learn the time by watching Him.
 2. Watching Him we do not have to guess.
 3. He knows what He is doing.
- C. We cannot let the "rests" dismay us.
 1. A rest in music does not mean the music has stopped permanently,

2. so a rest in life does not mean the music of life has ceased.

D. We cannot change the music during the rest.

1. We cannot slur over the previous words to take us through the rest.

2. We cannot change the keynote of the song of our lives.

a) Enjoy the rest.

b) Gain from the break in life's race.

E. Mark tells us that Jesus told His disciples to rest,

31 And He said to them, "Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while." For there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat (Mark 6.31).

F. Watch God beat the time for the music of your life.

1. For in so doing, you will hit the next note

2. as you should, full and clear,

a) you will live just as He wants you to live.

b) Submit to His leadership.

Exhortation:

I. The Lord is our song (quoted 2x in OT)

**2 "The Lord is my strength and song,
And He has become my salvation;
He is my God, and I will praise Him;
My father's God, and I will exalt Him."
(Exo 15.2)**

II. What is He doing to get your attention?