THOUGHTS ON THE PLAYING OF THE VIOLIN JUST FOR FUN

It is no doubt true that many people do not persist in the playing of a musical instrument because they do not come up to the magnificent performances of the great artist which we see on television and hear on audio tapes. However as a person who plays the violin for fun, I thought that at this Christmas time I would jot down a few thoughts for those who like music simply for the sake of music and for the blessing that comes from simply playing an instrument.

It occurred to me one time that just sitting down at the piano or playing the violin without notes and making music as unto the Lord is rather like singing and praying in the Spirit. At our recent conference in Toronto, which was a blessed and anointed occasion, there was a very lovely girl, Ruth Fazal, who plays in the Toronto Symphony. She also plays the violin and guitar as well as the organ. The first night of our conference in Toronto at the Inn on the Park Ruth just played a beautiful melody unto the Lord which she said was just exactly that, an offering unto Jesus.

It was very lovely and in fact everything that she did at the conference was beautiful. Those who missed the conference not only missed the wonderful musical inspiration and the singing of those present but also the presentations which were given in a most edifying and enlightening manner by those on the teaching faculty.

Since I was eight years old I have played the violin. I started with a three quarter size violin made by a man who lived across the street from us at that time in Port Huron, Michigan, Adam Lawandowski. I used to watch Adam as he made beautiful violins. How amazing it was when the violin was completed to be among those who first heard the voice of the newly made instrument! In those early years I played the violin in Sunday school orchestras and other orchestras in our community which many churches at that time had. Upon leaving high school I took my violin with me and was blessed to be chosen to play in the University of Michigan Symphony Orchestra in its second violin section. This was always an amazement to me because I never considered myself a particularly gifted violinist in any way. I also played the viola the second year. For this endeavor I was paid twelve dollars a month through the National Youth Administration and this helped to pay some of my expenses in going through college. Since going to medical school and going into the navy and through residency and then into practice my violin playing was spasmodic and quite infrequent. However when I went to Poland to meet with doctors who came to our meeting area from all over Eastern Europe I found that these physicians who do not have the kind of affluence that we have in the Western world have clung to music, and to the playing of their instruments as one of their primary modes of recreation and inward expression. On the Wednesday night of our meeting back in 1975 many of the doctors had brought their instruments with them and we had a spiritual concert in the great Jesuit Cathedral in Zakopane. What a joyous occasion that was especially the singing of those in attendance.

On my return home I vowed to introduce the playing of musical instruments into Christian Medical Foundation knowing that many physicians and their wives in the past have played in orchestras and most physicians love music.

Thus, for a number of years prior to our annual meeting in Tampa the doctors are encouraged to bring their violins and other instruments and we do during our times of praise "make a joyous noise unto the Lord".

Recently Kay and I were in Scotland in the area of Dunkeld and Pitlochry and we asked the Lord for a sign concerning the future of CMF and of our ministry. One afternoon browsing through an antique shop in Dunkeld I saw an old violin case. Opening the case I discovered therein a rather unusual violin. It had been rebuilt and was in perfect condition and when I played it I noted that its voice and tone were most beautiful. Looking at the name inside the violin to see who made it I saw only one word in bold capital letters, HOPE! It was our Lord's way of telling me that we were to press on - that He was giving us hope - and that we were to continue giving the hope of Christian healing and the hope of Christ salvation to whomever He privileged to place in our path during these last years before Christ return.
So at this Christmastide I send to our beloved Canada just one word, HOPE! Hope thou in Christ for in the blessed name of Jesus lies the assurance that our hope in Him will never be in vain and that which we hope for will surely come about for He will never withhold any good thing from those who love Him. God bless you all and let me remind you doctors and the spouses and families of Canada's doctors to get back to your instruments and do not bury your talent for in that gift which God gave to you lies a tremendous number of blessings to your soul and spirit.

William Francis Reed M.D.

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From the Conference in October:

The 1988 Christian Medical Foundation of Canada Conference in Toronto to be chaired by Dr. Thomas Bryan of Peterborough, Ontario.

Dr. Donald Denmark was re-elected President of CMF of Canada.

The first William Osler award was presented posthumously to Dr. Rod Davison of Winnipeg and was accepted by Doris Davison.

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I should have wished to have been born to a family of fame,  
A father who was well renowned, a mother with a famous name.  
But dad was but a simple man who owned a little corner store.  
And mother was born in the far snowy north — just a mother — nothing more.

As years have passed and parents have left our family scene.  
And I look down life's path — where I have been,  
I feel that their greatest gift was simply one of love —  
And knowledge of God, His Word and a Heaven above.  
— William Standish Reed, M.D.

MERRY CHRISTMAS