

# Just a Rehearsal

*by Jackie Abbott*

I read those three words: "just a rehearsal" and it brought to mind a memory of many years ago when I was playing for the Odessa Symphony.

We were a large musical group with some outstanding, talented members. I began playing with them when I was in high school and continued until just prior to the birth of my second child. So I was very excited that they accepted me, especially when I was still in school.

When we played to our audience, it was awesome. Amazing that such beautiful sounds are created from such a variety of instruments. Some have strings, some have reeds, some just have to be blown into, and some are like the pounding of nails. I can see that mix in my mind right now.



But, let's go back one step or so... like before the concert. New music on the music stand... first time to see it, to read it, to visualize how it will be created on the instrument. In my mind I would finger the notes on the strings of my violin, hoping to get a grip on the first play-through time. The conductor raises his baton, indicates the rhythm that we will follow, and GO! Maybe the first few bars (term of music indicating the pace of rhythm) go okay, but as we musicians are pushed further and further, things are getting kinda shaky.

The conductor stops us. Indicates where to play and away we go again. This always happens at the first rehearsal. Thankfully, after a few goes, the music begins to flow as a thing of beauty.

Of course, our main presentations were classical pieces... my favorite music to this day. My very favorite was... and still is... Handel's Messiah. Especially a Christmas favorite... the story of Jesus' birth in musical oratory... right out of the book of Isaiah. I have been blessed to go to that concert and knew the music note for note and word for word.

You know, this day that I am living is a rehearsal, too. God gives me a choice to play in His orchestra or not. And I choose to rehearse with Him as much as I can... through Bible study, prayer, music and praise. And with this "rehearsal" comes hope for the real life... Joining Jesus, my Savior, in Heaven when it's time for the performance.