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“Be still and know that I am God.” ~ Psalm 37:7

Spring is here, and summer is just around the corner. When school ends, families tend to move into a new season ~ and sometimes it is even a busier season than the school year. With so many good activities to choose from, and so little time, it can be a season of trying to cram much into the longer days. But is that really such a good thing? It isn't if you are so busy with things, that you miss the still, small voice of the Lord and become oblivious to His workings all around you.

This thought, that we have become too busy to “stop and smell the roses,” resulted in an intriguing social experiment this past January. Gene Weingarten, a Washington Post staff writer, wanted to prove that we Americans have become so busy and so focused on ourselves that we wouldn't even notice if one of the world's greatest violinists was playing in the midst of rush hour. Weingarten approached Joshua Bell, one of the finest classical musicians in the world, to test his hypothesis.

“Bell, 39, is a consummate violinist who plays before awe-struck crowds across the globe. His instrument is a violin crafted by Antonio Stradivari in 1713, at the end of the Italian master's career. Bell purchased the violin at an auction several years ago, for 3.5 million dollars. Bell and his violin are musical mastery at its absolute height.

“On Jan. 12, 2007, at 7:51 on a Friday morning, Bell, dressed in jeans, a long-sleeved T-shirt, and a Washington Nationals baseball cap, opened his violin case, threw a few dollars in as seed money, and began to play at a Washington, DC metro station. The pieces he performed were not popular, well-known ditties. They were complex, breathtaking masterpieces that have endured for centuries. Bell put his heart and soul into his music, coaxing pristine, resonant notes from his instrument. He played six pieces in 43 minutes.

“During that time, 1,097 people walked by the virtuoso. Only seven stopped to hear the music for more than a minute. Twenty-seven tossed in some money while hurrying on. The rest rushed by in oblivion.

“Weingarten wrote up the results of his experiment early April in the Washington Post, two days before Joshua Bell accepted the Avery Fisher Prize, the greatest honor a classical musician in America can receive” (Gruen, Bassi. “Oblivious to the Music”).

The reaction to his article poured in. “This story got the largest and most global response of anything I have ever written, for any publication,” remarked Weingarten. Over 1,000 comments came from around the globe. More than ten percent of the readers wrote that the article made them cry ~ cry for the deadened souls that couldn't stop to appreciate the beauty that surrounded them, cry for the rush of life that destroys the essence of life itself, cry for the lost moments, the opportunities that slip through our hands never to return.

In the rush of a busy life, you miss the beauty of spring unfolding, you miss the tender moments of your children's childhood, you miss the music of a master serenading you, and you miss the voice of a loving Lord who only wants to spend a quiet moment whispering into your ear the plans He has for you. Make a decision this summer ~ not to rush into oblivion.

Blessings on a restful, reflective summer. I am looking forward to seeing you all in August!