

## THE STEWARDSHIP PAPERS

### Fine Tuning

A finely tuned instrument produces a tone that is very different from one that's "not quite" in tune. It's as if another dimension were added to the sound...richer, fuller. It almost takes on a life of its own. Some instruments, especially those with many strings, "hum" when the tuning is just right; they resonate to the sound of your voice. "Resonance" is a term used to describe the "sympathetic awakening of tone." For example, if a particular note is played on a piano, and some object in the room is known to give off a note in response, then that object is a resonator. [Reference The Oxford Companion To Music, p. 15] In other words, one note causes another note to occur.

In a multi-stringed instrument, if the tuning is just right, a cascade effect occurs: your voice causes one or more of the strings to vibrate; these strings cause even more strings to vibrate; which causes even more vibration, etc., etc., etc. All of this happens in a split second, with each new note being higher, but quieter than the last. The human ear only perceives the starting note; but because it is accompanied by all of its harmonics, the tone comes across as rich and full. In order for all of this to happen, one of the strings had to be in resonance with your voice. Or, looking at it from a different perspective: you had to be "in tune" with at least one of the notes on this finely tuned instrument.

Prayer is like that. When we pray, our belief (our faith, if you will) gives that prayer its trueness of tone. If there is any "doubt" (in our belief in God or in what we are praying) then the prayer goes "flat"; but, if our belief is pure, then it touches the perfectly tuned heart strings of God, causing a spiritually higher and higher "sympathetic response," until all of Creation resonates with the sound. We perceive only the original prayer, but the overtones give it a full and rich existence. Jesus said that "If you believe in God and have no doubt, whatever you ask will be given to you." [Mk. 11:22, 23] When this happens, you are "in tune" with God.

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