

WHY DON'T WE USE INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN WORSHIP?

INTRODUCTION: We have discussed several things concerning what the Bible teaches about singing. We have learned that God did command us to sing in the worship. We have learned that God has given us some important guidelines concerning the way in which we are to sing. But the question often comes up among visitors to a worship service of the churches of Christ as to why we do not have instruments of music to accompany our singing. We need to know why we do not use the piano or guitar in our worship. Is it just our preference? Or is there some valid reason for rejecting these things.

BODY

I. WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT WE CAN ONLY PRACTICE THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE AUTHORIZED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

A. Must not go beyond that "which is written" by the inspired men.

1. I Corinthians 4:6- "And these things, brethren,, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apolos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another."
2. Galatians 1:6-9
3. II John 9-11

B. When God is specific about a command we do not have the right to change his instructions.

1. Genesis 6:14- example of God commanding Noah to build the ark out of gopher wood.
2. When Jesus specified fruit of the vine and bread for the Lord's supper he didn't have to specify everything else that he would not be pleased in.
3. In the same way, if God specified one type of music and did not authorize another he would not have to specify every other kind of music that he would not be pleased with.

II. HAS GOD SPECIFIED THE KIND OF MUSIC THAT HE WANTS FOR HIS CHURCH?

A. Every example of music practiced by Christians was vocal.

1. Matthew 26:30- "...and when they had sung an hymn, they went out unto the Mount of Olives."
2. Acts 16:25- "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God; and the prisoners heard them."
3. Romans 15:9- "I will sing unto thy name."
4. I Corinthians 14:15- "I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the

understanding also."

5. Hebrews 2:12-"Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."

B. Every command concerning Christians and music was a command to practice vocal music instead of instrumental music.

1. Ephesians 5:19-"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord."

2. Colossians 3:16-"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

3. The only music commanded in the New Testament is vocal. 4. It is a specific command, therefore it excludes all other kinds of music.

C. No where in the New Testament does Christ, or an inspired man command the use of instruments of music.

1. There is no command for its use in the church, there is no example of it being used by the church, there is no hint that it was used.

2. If we truly love the Lord the positive command to sing would be sufficient to exclude instrumental music from the worship.

II. REASONS SOME GIVE FOR USING INSTRUMENTAL IN WORSHIP.

A. "Instrumental music is just an aid to the worship."

1. An aid is something that does not change the basic command enables one to expedite the command.

2. A songbook does not change the basic command. Even when the songbook is used it doesn't change the command.

3. Instrumental music is different because it changes the basic of singing. If the Lord had commanded us to make music the instrument of music would have been an aid.

B. "The Bible doesn't say not to use it."

1. The Bible doesn't have to specify everything that might ever be declared by God to be wrong.

2. We have already discussed the principle that when God is specific in a certain area he excludes all other options.

3. Some examples.

a. Ephesians 5:20

b. I Corinthians 16:2

c. Colossians 3:16

C. "The Old Testament commands, authorizes, the use of instrumental music in the worship."

1. Those under the Old Law used instrumental music with the approval of God.

a. II Chronicles 29:25-"And he set the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of God the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet: for so was the commandment of the Lord by his prophets."

2. But those who appeal to the Old Testament as authority are "missing the boat" because we no longer live under the commands of the Old Law.

a. Colossians 2:14,15-"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."

b. Hebrews 10:9-10

c. Hebrews 9:15-"And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament..."

d. Under the Old Law worshippers burned incense, offered sacrifices, and worshipped in Jerusalem. Would those who appeal to the Old Testament for authority for using instrumental music in worship include these things in their worship?

D. "But isn't instrumental music used in Heaven."

1. Revelation cited.

a. Revelation 14:2,3-"And I heard a voice from heaven, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the' hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth."

2. But notice that John didn't say that there were harpers playing in heaven but that it was the VOICE as the voice of harpers harping.

3. Besides, none of us can predict what will be in heaven. We only know that God has not chosen to include instrumental music in the worship of Christ's church.

III. ARE WE ALONE IN THIS VIEW? (BACKGROUND AND WHAT SOME OTHERS HAVE BELIEVED.

A. When did Instrumental music begin among believer in Christ?

1. "The organ is said to have been introduced into the church by Pope Vitalian I, in about 666 A.D. (American Encyclopedia, Volume 7, p. 112)

B. What different religious leaders have said about instrumental music.

1. Martin Luther (founded the Lutheran church)-"The organ in the worship of God is an ensign of Baal. The Roman Catholic borrowed it from the Jews."

(Martin Luther, McClintock & Strong's Encyclopedia Volume VI, page 762).

2. John Calvin (the father of Presbyterianism)-"Musical instruments in celebrating praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting of lamps, and the restoration of the other shadows of the Law. The Papists, therefore, have foolishly borrowed this..."

3. John Wesley (the father of Methodism)-"I have no opposition to the organ in our chapel provided it is neither seen nor heard."

4. Charles Spurgeon (famous Baptist preacher)-In commenting on I Corinthians 14:15 he said, "I would as soon pray to God with machinery as to sing to God with machinery."

5. These men are not quoted to prove anything scripturally. We can only find scriptural proof from God's word. It is important to note that we are not the only ones who have stood against instrumental music. In fact, the instrument caused division and conflict in every church in which it has been introduced.

CONCLUSION: THERE ARE MANY OTHER ASPECTS OF THIS QUESTION THAT WE COULD REVIEW. BUT IT IS PLAIN THAT THERE IS NO SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY FOR THE USE OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN THE WORSHIP OF ALMIGHTY GOD. WHEN WE INTRODUCE IT INTO THE WORSHIP WE VIOLATE GOD'S WILL.