

MUSIC IN THE CHURCH

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Reactions of people visiting the services of the church:
 - 1. A woman, after a visit to a church of Christ, offered to buy an organ, thinking they could not afford one.
 - 2. Another woman said, "With this many people coming you should soon be able to afford a piano."
 - 3. Members of the church are often asked, "Why don't you use the instrument in worship?"
 - 4. These need an explanation.
- B. Its popularity in the religious world demands a discussion of it.
 - 1. The popularity of a practice is not a test of right or wrong in God's sight.
 - a. Israel desired a king because it was popular - displeased God.
 - b. Noah, unpopular while building the ark - pleased God.
 - 2. In matters of right and wrong- one man + God = a majority.
 - 3. If all people in the world voted that it was right to steal and murder, this would not make it right.
 - 4. It is better to stand alone on God's truth than with millions in error.

I. THE HISTORY OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN CHRISTIAN WORSHIP.

- A. At the outset, however, we believe that it is important to note that instrumental music was not used in most, if not all, of the religious denominations in earlier years. Further, history can be used to show that the practice of churches of Christ is in keeping with the practice of the early church, as well as being in harmony with the teaching of Scripture, which we shall examine in later articles.
- B. Scholars tell us that the early church used only vocal music. Indeed the Latin term, "A-Capella" used to designate only vocal music, literally means "as in the church." For example, we will quote from some of them:
 - 1. "Both the Jews in their temple service and the Greeks in their idol worship were accustomed to sing with the accompaniment of instrumental music. The converts to Christianity must have been familiar with this mode of singing, but it is generally admitted that the primitive Christians employed no instrumental music in their religious worship" (Lyman Coleman, a Presbyterian, The Primitive Church, pages 370-371).
 - 2. "Music in the church is as ancient as the apostles; but instrumental music is not" (Joseph Bingham, Church of England, Works of Joseph Bingham Vol. II, page 482).
 - 3. "That instrumental music was not practiced by primitive Christians...is evident from church history" (J.M. Brown, article, The Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, page 852).

4. "...the church, although lapsing more and more into defection from the truth and into a corruption of apostolic practice had no instrumental music for twelve hundred years" (John Giradeau, a Presbyterian, Music in the Church, page 179).
5. "The Greek word 'psallo' is applied among Greeks of modern times exclusively to sacred music, which in the Eastern Church has never been any other than vocal, instrumental music being unknown in that church, as it was in the primitive church..." (John McClintock and James Strong, Methodists, Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature, Vol. VIII, page 739).

C. Introduction of the Organ.

1. Historically, we can trace the fact that the use of instrumental music came centuries after the establishment of the church.
2. The first indication of the use of instrumental music comes over 600 years after the day of Pentecost when the church was born.
3. "Pope Vitalian is related to have first introduced organs into some of the churches of Western Europe about 670; but the earliest trustworthy account is that of one sent as a present by the Greek Emperor Constantine Copronymous to Pepin, king of the Franks, in 755." (The American Encyclopedia, Vol. XII, page 688).
4. "The organ was first introduced into the church services by Marianus Sanatus in the year 920; and the first that we know in the West was one sent to Pepin by Constantine Copronymous about the middle of the eighth century." (The Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, page 852).
5. "In the Greek church the organ never came into use but after the eighth century it became common in the Latin church, not, however, without opposition from the side of the monks..." (Shaff- Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Volume II, page 1702)..
6. "The organ is said to have been introduced into church music by Pope Vitalian I 66AD." Chambers Encyclopedia, Volume 7, page 112).
7. "Pope Vitalian in 670 first introduced organs to churches." (McClintock & Strong Cyclopaedia, Volume 8, page 739).
8. "Such musical accompaniments were gradually introduced; but can hardly be assigned to a period earlier than the fifth or sixth centuries. Organs were unknown in the church until the eight or ninth century. Previous to this they had their place in the theatre rather than in the church. They were never regarded with favour in the Eastern church, and were vehemently opposed in many places in the West." (Lyman Coleman, The Primitive Church, pages 376,377). However, they did not come into regular use until around 920 AD, and even then only in some places.
9. Thus, instrumental music is at least 600 years too late to be part of New Testament worship.

D. Religious Leaders on Instrumental Music.

1. Most of the religious denominations were at one time opposed to the use of instrumental music in worship and many of the religious leaders spoke out against its use. Even when it was introduced there was opposition:

- a. It was debated strongly among the Presbyterians in Scotland during the nineteenth century and there are still some Presbyterians, known as the "Wee Frees" in Scotland, who refuse to use it because it is opposed to scripture.
 - b. Some of the Brethren groups still refuse to use it, although most have introduced it. An old sister in Australia, brought up in the Plymouth Brethren was taught that instrumental music was unscriptural in the worship. Her first contact with the Restoration Movement was with the Digressives who used the instrument, this was a stumbling block to her obeying the gospel. When those who were trying to teach her gave up the instrument, they found that she was ready to be taught.
 - c. The writer was told by some Strict Baptists in Peterborough, England that it has not been many years since it was introduced into their services, the reason cited being a lack of singers. However, they admitted that until that time it had been "against the church's rules."
2. Thomas Aquinas, Roman Catholic, about 1250, wrote, "The church does not use musical instruments, as harps and psalteries, to praise God with that we may not seem to Judaize."
 3. Martin Luther wrote, "The organ in worship of God is an ensign of Baal." (Realencyklopadie fur Protestantische Theologie Und Kirche Bd14 S. 433, translated by Gottfried Reichel as quoted in Instrumental Music and N.T. Worship, James D. Bales, page 130).
 4. John Calvin wrote, "Musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting of lamps, and the restoration of other shadows of the law." (Commentary on the 23rd Psalm).
 5. John Wesley stated, "I have no objection to the organ in our chapels provided it is neither heard nor seen." (Clark's Commentary, Volume 4, page 684.).
 6. Adam Clark, Methodist commentator wrote, "I am an old man and an old minister, and I here declare that I have never known instrumental music to be productive in the worship of God and have reason to believe it has been productive of much evil. Music as a science I esteem and admire, but instruments of music in the house of God I abominate and abhor. This is the abuse of music, and I here register my protest against all such corruptions in the worship of the infinite Spirit who requires his followers to worship him in spirit and in truth." (Clark's Commentary, Volume 4, page 684).
 7. Charles Haddon Spurgeon, Baptist, spoke to 10,000 for twenty years in London, England at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. When asked why he did not use the organ in worship said, "I will pray with the Spirit and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the Spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also (1 Corinthians 14:15). I would as soon pray with machinery as to sing with machinery."
 8. Andrew Fuller, Baptist commentator: "The New Testament speaks of praising God by singing, but further it says not...Paul speaks more than once in his epistles to the Corinthians of instruments of music, but not as being used in religion. He describes them as necessary to war, but not to worship; and speaks of them in a language of degradation, as 'things without life giving sound'...The history of the

church during the first three centuries affords many instances of the primitive Christians engaging in singing; but no mention, that I recollect, is made of instruments. Even in the times of Constantine, when everything grand and magnificent was introduced into Christian worship, I find no mention made of instrumental music. If my memory does not deceive me, it originated in the dark ages of popery, where almost every other superstitions are most prevalent, and where the last regard is paid to primitive simplicity." (Works of Andrew Fuller, Volume III, page 520).

- E. The Restoration Movement was launched on the plea, "Where the Bible speaks, we speak, where the Bible is silent, we are silent." In the early years of restoration there were no instruments used and thus it was not greatly discussed. However, after its introduction into some congregations after the American civil war, it eventually, with other innovations led to the apostasy of the Disciples of Christ/ Christian Church. Later there was a further division amongst these churches resulting in the Independent Christian Church/Churches of Christ, instrumental, which use instrumental music in their worship.
1. Alexander Campbell: "The argument drawn from the Psalms in favor of instrumental music, is exceedingly apposite to the Roman Catholic, English Protestant, and Scottish Presbyterian churches, and even to the Methodist communities. Their churches having all the world in them..., and being founded on the Jewish pattern of things...To those who have no real devotion or spirituality in them, and whose animal nature flags under the oppression of church service, I think with Mr. G., that instrumental music would not only be a desideratum, but an essential prerequisite to fire up their souls to even animal devotion. But, I presume, to all spiritually-minded Christians, such aids would be as a cow bell in a concert." (Millennial Harbinger, 1851, pages 581-582).
 2. J.W. McGarvey: "It is manifest that we cannot adopt the practice (of instrumental music in worship K.J. C.) without abandoning the obvious and only ground on which a restoration of Primitive Christianity can be accomplished, or on which a plea for it can be maintained." (What Shall We Do About The Organ?" page 10).
 3. In England, the use of instrumental music divided churches later than in the U.S. Edmund Hill, an old English brother who lived through the period of the introduction of the instrument, made the comment that it opens the door for the introduction of other unscriptural things and a changed attitude to the Scriptures. The history of the Disciples of Christ and the Christian Churches bear this out. The Fellowship of Churches of Christ in England, the equivalent of the Independent Christian Church in England uses instrumental music and engages in other practices foreign to New Testament teaching. However, faithful brethren on both sides of the Atlantic and throughout the world continue to oppose this innovation.
 4. These statements are made not to settle the question, but to show that there are many who **cannot** find biblical authority for the use of instrumental music in worship.

II. WHY CHURCHES OF CHRIST DO NOT USE INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN WORSHIP?

A. Christ and the apostles **never** commanded it:

1. The New Testament tells us “all that Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day in which he was taken up” (Acts 1:1,2); yet He **never** once mentioned the instrument in worship.
2. Matthew, Peter, James, John and Paul were apostles of Christ who wrote the greater part of the New Testament, and they taught us to observe all things commanded by Christ. The apostles are silent with regards to using instruments in worship - it is no part of the apostles’ doctrine.

B. The New Testament authorizes singing only:

1. An examination of every passage in the New Testament that bears on praising God in song will clearly reveal that we are to **sing**.
 - a. Matt. 26:30: *“And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.”*
 - b. Mk. 14:26: *“And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.”*
 - c. Acts 16:25: *“And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.”*
 - d. Rom. 15:9: *“And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.”*
 - e. I Cor. 14:15: *“What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.”*
 - f. Eph. 5:19: *“Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”*
 - g. Col. 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.”*
 - h. Heb. 2:12: *“Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.”*
 - i. Heb. 13:15: *“By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.”*
 - j. Jam. 5:13: *“Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.”*
 - k. Rev. 5:9 *“And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.”*
2. Singing is the **limit** of God’s command in the New Testament and it is the limit of our practice.
 - a. If God had said, “make music,” we could sing and play, that would be general, but God said, “sing”. There are only **two** kinds of music and God specified **one**.

3. It is strange, assuming that the instrument should be used in church worship that one cannot turn to the Bible and find a record by command, necessary inference or apostolic example that shows that the first century church used it.

II Tim. 2:2 *“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”*

B. God prohibits it by the **law of exclusion**.

1. Noah was told by God, “make thee an ark of gopher wood” (Genesis 6:14). Had Noah used oak, ash, maple, in place of or in addition to gopher wood, he would have committed sin. When God said “gopher” every other kind of wood was excluded.

In building the ark, Noah could have used saws and hammers as true aids because they did not add to God’s word. They would have been helpful in carrying out the exact command to build the ark. However, using oak, ash, maple in building the ark would have been sinful as they represented transgression of the command to use gopher wood. The use of any other kind of wood would have been an addition.

2. When the Passover was instituted, God commanded: “In the tenth day of this month shall they take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for a house” (Exodus 12:3).

It is evident that God would not have considered a cow, horse, or dog an acceptable sacrifice when He commanded a lamb. The command to use a lamb **excluded** every other kind of animal for this sacrifice.

3. God commanded the priests: “Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon’ (Exodus 30:9). This was a **specific** command that nothing other than what God had appointed was to be used. Nadab and Abihu offered other than that which was specified, contrary to the command of God, and they perished (Leviticus 10:1,2).

4. When Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper, He specified what were to be its elements, namely the bread and the fruit of the vine. If one were to put jam on the bread or add meat, it would be an addition and contrary to the **specific** command of the Lord.

5. In the commission to His disciples, Jesus said, “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” This gives us liberty to use any form of transportation or means of going to fulfill the command. However, if Jesus had said to “walk into all the world”, then to fulfill the command, we would have to walk and use no other means of going, if we were to please Him.

6. Many times in the New Testament we have examples of praising God in song by singing. Not once is there an example of playing a mechanical instrument of music in worship; hence it is excluded by the **law of exclusion**.

- a. When God commanded gopher wood, all other wood was **excluded** - oak, ash.
- b. When God specified a lamb all other animals were **excluded** - dog, horse.
- c. When Jesus specified bread and fruit of the vine, anything else was **excluded** - jam meat.
- d. When in the New Testament, God commands singing, all other music is **excluded** - instrumental.

D. Some other observations from the New Testament:

1. I Cor. 5:7 *"For we walk by faith, not by sight."*
2. Rom. 10:17 *"Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God."*
Since instrumental music is nowhere taught in the New Testament, it **cannot** be practiced by faith. We do not walk by faith when we use it.
3. I Pet. 4:11 *"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God."*
Defending mechanical instruments of music in worship hinders us obeying this passage.
4. II Pet. 1:3 *"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."*
Since the Bible does not teach the use of mechanical instruments of music in Christian worship, then it does not pertain to that which gives life and godliness.
5. Matt. 15:9 *"In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."*
Everything in our worship not authorized by Biblical precept or example may be classified as a commandment of men. The instrument falls into this class, and when used it makes our worship vain.

III. ARGUMENTS USED IN AN EFFORT TO GIVE AUTHORITY FOR THE USE OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN WORSHIP.

A. The meaning of the Greek word, "Psallo."

1. The one argument which comes closest to giving any authority for instrumental music - that is, if the contention of those seeking to justify the use of instrumental music in worship, concerning the meaning of the word could be proved.
2. If "psallo" meant to sing with instrumental accompaniment, the apostles violated the confidence the Lord placed in them for they did not use mechanical instruments of music or teach the church to use them.
3. Greek Catholics say that the word means "to sing" only, not "to sing and play" both. They have never used the instrument in the Greek Catholic church in Greece and regard such as being an innovation.
4. What do the lexicons say:
 - a. Abbott-Smith Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament, published by T & T Clark:
 - 1 "to pull, twitch, twang (as a bowstring etc.) hence
 2. (a) to play a stringed instrument with the fingers; (b) later to sing to a harp, sing psalms; in the N.T. to sing a hymn, sing praise."
 - b. The Analytical Lexicon of the New Testament, published by Zondervan:
"to move by a touch, to twitch; to touch, strike the strings or chords of an instrument; absol. to play on a stringed instrument; to sing to music; in N.T. to sing praises."
 - c. Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, Grimm Thayer:
 - a. "to pluck off, pull out.

- b. to cause to vibrate by touching, to twang, to touch or strike the chord, to twang the strings of a musical instrument so that they gently vibrate; and absol. to play on a stringed instrument, to play the harp, etc.; to sing to the music of the harp; in the N.T. to sing a hymn, to celebrate the praises of God in song..”
- d. This is just a sampling of the lexicons. It is interesting that most lexicons; as in the case with these three, indicate a specific New Testament meaning which refers to sing with no mention of the instrument. They also indicate that changes in meaning have taken place in the word which is also true of others words in Greek and in other languages.
5. Most translations of the New Testament follow the lead of the lexicons follow the lead of the lexicons in translating the word “psallo” by the English word “sing”. We will quote two of these, which, without warrant translate it differently.
- a. William G. Ballentine, The Riverside New Testament reads Ephesians 5:19: “singing and playing the harp heartily unto the Lord.” However, if it is to be translated “singing and playing the harp”, the only instrument that would be authorized would be the harp!
- b. The Amplified New Testament renders Ephesians 5:19, “Speak out to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, offering praise with voices (and instruments), and making melody with all your heart to the Lord.” The brackets serve to indicate that the translators felt that the words are implied by one of the words in the original. In this particular passage, “and instruments” does not appear to be brought in through the “psallo”, but rather through “ado”. This is misleading to say the least as none of the lexicons mentions instruments as being related to the word “ado” at any period. Why did the translators of the Amplified New Testament render “psallo” in Ephesians 5:19 “making melody and then disguise the fact that they also derived “instruments” from the word by placing “instruments” after “voices”, as if they had derived it from “ado”. A curious example of word manipulation indeed!
6. At this time it seems appropriate to mention the commentary of Conybeare and Howson on Ephesians 5:19 from the Life and Epistles of St. Paul page 714-715, both scholars of the Church of England:
- “Throughout the whole passage there is a contrast implied between the Heathen and Christian practice, q. d. When you meet, let your enjoyment consist not in fulness of wine, but fulness of the Spirit; let your songs, not be the drinking songs of the heathen feast, but psalms and hymns; and their accompaniment, not the music of the lyre, but the melody of the heart; while you sing them to the praise, not of Bacchus or Venus, but of the Lord Jesus Christ.”
7. Further, if the instrument were inherent in the word “psallo” then **ALL** would have to sing **and** play. This is proving too much!
- However, some have gone so far as to say that it is commanded in the word, note the following statements:
- a. “To use again your own words, this time quoted from 1 Cor.14:37 ‘...the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord’ Would you not say that this could apply to the Colossian and Ephesian letters as well? If so, then

instrumental music is a commandment of God and not of men.” J.D. Marion, Christian Church in a written debate with Robert H. Bunting, Both Sides of the Music Question Discussed, page 15.

- b. “The Ephesians were commanded to sing ‘hymns’ and ‘spiritual songs’ with musical accompaniment, psalms, offering their praises to God with the whole heart.” O.D. Wilson, Christian Church quoted from Sermon on the Music Question in a volume of sermons entitled, Sound Doctrine.”

Despite these statements, they do not insist that all play, as it should be if the word command playing as well as singing for the command is to **ALL** Christians, not one or two. Further, they would, on occasion, as they have stated, sing without the instrument, as it is only an “aid” (we will discuss aids shortly) that they can do without, despite the fact they insist that the instrument is commanded and, if they sing without the instrument, according to their own argument, they would be violating a command of God!

B. The Cultural Argument.

1. This is the one of the latest arguments that has been advanced by those who would advocate instrumental music in churches of Christ.
2. It is stated that it was left out of the early church because of its association with pagan rites and not because it was thought to be in violation of a command of God to use it.
3. They state, also, that it was left out of the churches of the Restoration Movement because it was not compatible with a frontier culture rather than on scriptural grounds.
4. Instruments were first introduced into the more affluent city churches and it is argued that the opposition came from the rural churches who could not afford an organ and who thus opposed them purely on the same grounds as elaborate buildings were opposed.
5. Larry Jonas states, “Obviously, hymn books had been in the churches a long time and were not associated with modernistic innovations so they passed the test. But the instruments had been decided against for cultural and emotional reasons already and now scriptural subtleties must be invented to condemn them.” Appendix 1, Documents on Instrumental Music, Tom Burgess.
This statement is made, but **no** proof is offered.
6. In answer to this argument, it could be asked why the churches in Britain were constant in their opposition to the use of the instrument, it could hardly be said that Great Britain in the last century was a frontier culture. It was only after World War 1 that churches established by Americans using the instrument were fellowshiped by some of the British churches that led to a great digression. (Some today are beginning to fellowship those using the instrument, may we not follow them into this digression.)

C. Instrumental music in the Temple.

1. Two basic arguments are advanced based on this fact.
2. Christians worshipped in the Temple where instrumental music was regularly used.

- a. No instrumental music was used in the tabernacle but it was introduced into the Temple, however, there were three temples that were built and there is **no** proof that instrumental music was used in Herod's temple which was standing at the time of the establishment of the church.
- b. Further, there is no record of the Christians participating in the worship of the temple, where instrumental music could have been used, and even if they did, it would **not** authorize its use in Christian worship.
- c. The Jews were used to using instrument in their worship and would have to be told not to use them.
 - i. As stated above, there is **no** proof that instrumental music was used in Herod's temple.
 - ii. Instrumental music was **not** used in the synagogues where most Jews worshipped.
 - iii. Instrumental music was first introduced into synagogue worship in Berlin in 1815, and even there was opposition.

D. Instrumental music in heaven

1. Who said there will be musical instruments in heaven?
Most members of the church answer the "instrument in heaven" argument by saying, "If God has it in heaven, it is His business, but since He has not put it in the church, we have no right to do so."
This would be true - but will there be instruments of music in heaven?
2. What would a spiritual being do with a material harp? Heaven is the home of the soul, we will have new bodies, not physical bodies. We could just as well argue that there will be Rolls Royce or Cadillac cars in heaven as to say there are mechanical instruments in heaven.
3. But doesn't the book of Revelation teach that there will be musical instruments in heaven?
 - a. Rev. 5:8 *"The four beasts and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having everyone of them harps and golden vials full of incense which are the prayers of the saints."*
 - i. There are those who use incense in their worship and they go to this passage for their authority! There is incense in heaven; hence it is acceptable in the church.
 - ii. In this figurative and symbolic passage, John says the incense and harps are **THE PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS**.
 - b. Rev. 14:2 *"And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder; and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps."*
 - i. A.S.V. *"And the voice which I heard was as the voice of harpers harping with their harps."*
 - ii. The word "as" is not only in the American Standard Version of the Bible, but its equivalent is also in the Greek text.
 - iii. John heard a voice "as the voice of many waters", and "as the voice of a great thunder", and "as the voice of harpers harping with their harps."
 - iv. John did not hear actual, literal waters or thunder, or harps.

v. John heard one hundred and forty four thousand souls redeemed from the earth **sing** a new song. The volume of the 144,000 voices was as thunder, the rhythm was as surging waters, and the sweetness of the melody was “as harpers harping with their harps.”

vi. Thunder symbolizes volume, water symbolizes rhythm, and the harps symbolize melody.

4. “If God should choose to have literal harps in heaven for the saints, that would not necessarily permit mechanical music in Christian worship here, for the principle of acceptable worship here is not what will or will not be in heaven, but what Christ or his inspired apostles endorsed in the early church. There will be no marriage or giving in marriage in heaven; shall we abolish it here? There will be no baptism or Lord’s Supper in heaven, but Christ commanded both here on this earth. There will be a sea of glass, jasper walls, and a golden street in heaven, but we don’t attempt to reproduce those here or anything like them. By the same token, it is very far-fetched to imagine that the reference to figurative harps in heaven give us the right to bring mechanical instruments of music into God’s worship today.” Fred B. Walker, tract, *The Kind of Music God Wants*, pages 17,18.

E. Instrumental music in the Old Testament.

1. It is true that instrumental music was used in the Old Testament worship beginning with David.

2. Notice what else David had in his worship:

Psa. 66:13-15 *“I will go into thy house with burnt offerings; I will pay thee my vows, which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble, I will offer unto thee burnt sacrifices of fatlings with the incense of rams: I will offer bullocks with goats.”*

3. If one wants the instrument because David used it, why will not consistency demand that he also take the burnt offerings and incense?

4. On the same basis, we could bring in the dance as an item of worship because David said, *“Praise him with the psaltery and harp, praise him with the timbrel and DANCE; praise him with the stringed instruments and organs.”* (Psa. 150:3).

5. Many things were practiced under the Old Testament law which are not continued under the Christian law: Col. 2:14-16; Gal. 5:4; 3:24-25; Heb. 10:9; Rom. 7:4.

6. David introduced instrumental music into Hebrew worship some 400 years **after** the Ten Commandments were given at Mount Sinai.

II Chr. 29:25 *“And he set the Levites in the house of Jehovah with cymbals and psalteries and with harps, according to the commandment of David.”*

7. God tolerated instrumental music in worship, along with polygamy and easy divorce under the old law, but later the prophet Amos pronounced a curse upon those who, like David, introduced instrumental music into worship: “Woe unto them that...sings songs to the sound of the viol, that invent for themselves instruments of music like David” (Amos 6:5). Hence, under the Old Testament, instrumental music was in question.

F. The Instrument is just an aid.

1. Argument: The instrument aids the singing just as a cane aids a man walking, or glasses aid in one seeing.

2. The simple rule of grammar on the co-ordination of words will show the mistake of comparing instrumental music to walking canes, eyeglasses or song books:
 - a. Instrumental music and singing are **two** kinds of music - they are co-ordinate or equal.
 - b. Walking and riding are co-ordinate - two kinds of going.
 - c. However, the songbook and singing are **not** co-ordinate - two kinds of music are not produced.
 - d. The walking cane is **not** co-ordinate to walking - it is subordinate to the walking.
 - e. When one uses the cane he is doing only one thing - walking.
 - f. When one uses glasses he only does one thing - seeing.
 - g. When one uses the songbook he does only one thing - singing.
 - h. But when one uses the instrument, he is doing **ANOTHER** thing - playing.
3. The one who uses the instrument does the same as the one who sings.
 - a. The person who sings uses notes, either in a book or in his head.
 - b. The person who plays uses notes, either in a book or in his head. He uses the same aid - so in this argument, an aid aids the aid!
4. The instrument is **not** an aid -- it is an **ADDITION**.
 - a. If I am commanded to walk, can I ride as an aid? Riding would **not** aid the walking, it would be another way of going.
 - b. If I am commanded to sing, can I play as an aid? Playing is **not** an aid to singing, it is another way of producing music.
5. When we sing we may use a songbook exactly as one who walks may use a cane, he is walking only, and we are singing only. When another kind of music is introduced it ceases to be an aid and becomes an addition.
6. In the Old Testament it was **not** used as an aid but as part of the worship:
 - a. II Chr, 5:13 *"It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord."*
 - i. The singing and the playing blended together to make one sound constituting praise to God. If it were an aid it couldn't be blended together to praise God else it would make the playing part of worship, but here it **was** a part of worship.
 - b. II Chr. 29:26-28 *"And the Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets. And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt offering began, the song of the Lord began also with the trumpets, and with the instruments ordained by David king of Israel. And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang and the trumpeters sounded; and all this continued until the burnt offering was finished."*
 - i. God declared that this was worship.
7. However, most of those who advocate it as an aid do not confine their "aiding" to aiding the singing but also use instrumental music as a prelude to the service, while prayers are being offered, while the Scriptures are being read, while the Lord's Supper is being served, while the contribution is being collected, in fact in all parts of the worship except the sermon. What is the instrument aiding in these other situations? It is as much an addition to the Lord's Supper as ice cream.

8. Rather than being an aid, it becomes a "crutch" - "can't sing without it":
 - a. Christian Church school in Australia, leader of service said, "We won't sing today as we do not have an organist to play."
 - b. Very often people leave the instrument to do the work and thus all you hear is the instrument. Visiting in Liverpool Cathedral all one could hear was the instrument and the building was packed. I have heard more singing from a congregation of 25 Christians than from that congregation of over 1000. How can "teaching and admonishing" be done in singing when the words cannot be heard above the organ?
- G. There is no passage that expressly forbids the use of instrumental music thus sin cannot be committed as there is no transgression of the law.
 1. The word "transgress" simply means to go beyond certain prescribed limits:
 - a. II John 9 *"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God."*
 - b. 1 Cor. 4:6 *"That ye may learn not to go beyond the things that are written."*
 2. We have a law on how to praise God in song. The law says to "sing." To go beyond is transgression.
 3. Instrumental music in worship is going beyond the law of worship; therefore, it is a transgression of God's law. Since transgression is sin, instrumental music in worship is sinful.
 4. Further, incense, beads, etc. could be justified on the same grounds - also, meat at the Lord's Table.
 5. Can you really imagine God having to tell us not only what He wants us to do but then having to go on and tell us everything not to do in fulfilling that command. It would seem to be ridiculous. A mother tells her child she wants butter from the shop, she doesn't have to then list the things she does not want -- cheese, milk, biscuits, etc., etc.
- H. A matter of Christian Liberty.
 1. The argument is made that if we say they can't use the instrument we restrict their liberty in Christ.
 2. Christian liberty means freedom from the law and the rudiments of the world (Gal. 3:13; 4:3,10).
 3. It is not to be used as an occasion to the flesh (Gal. 5:13).
 4. But Christ commanded us to sing. He puts the bounds on our liberty. Liberty does **not** give us the freedom to sprinkle or pour for baptism. We cannot set free what God has bound. It is a matter of what is authorized.
 5. "It is not to be exercised in any manner offensive to the conscience of a brother (1 Corinthians 10:28 - 11:1). Instrumental music in worship is offensive to the conscience of many and has always been a source of division. In an article by brother J.B. Brinley, he had just given the illustration of a group of individuals leaving sectarianism and making a complete return to New Testament Christianity. After a period of time, the question of the instrument is brought up, the brethren vote whether to accept it or reject it. The majority vote for its introduction, brother Brinley then represents the minority as pleading for the instrument to be left out and fellowship maintained. We regard it as unauthorized and corrupting; as

calculated to carnalize the worship. But, say the majority, we have determined to use the instrument and you can either accept that or withdraw from the congregation. Here now is a new test of fellowship. Who has made it? Certainly the majority, as it seems to me. They say to the brethren, "You cannot have the fellowship of the congregation unless you accept the organ. We think more of our unauthorized instrument than we do of either your conscience or your fellowship." Quoted in *Instrumental Music*, a tract by James Tolle, page 12.

I. The Home Argument.

1. In the home - **anything** is permissible that is **morally** right.

In the church - **Nothing** is permissible that is not **scripturally** right.

The home is circumscribed by moral law - the church is circumscribed by New Testament law.

2. Washing hands.

a. We do this often in the home - it is morally right.

b. It is wrong as a religious rite.

c. Matt. 15:2,3 *"Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandments of God by your tradition?"*

3. Eating a common meal.

a. Necessary in the home.

b. Wrong as an act of worship.

c. I Cor. 11:20-22 *"When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper. For in eating everyone taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another drunk. What? Have ye not houses to eat and drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not."*

d. This is not condemning eating in church buildings but misusing the Lord's Supper. Remember they did not have church buildings then, they met in homes and obviously Paul was not teaching that you cannot eat in a home which is used for the church to meet in.

4. Of course, if you assembled in a home for the purpose of worship, instrumental music would be just as much out of place there as in a church building.

a. It is not to be used in worship - whether in a private home or a church building.

b. Christians worshipped in their homes in New Testament times; hence, we read of "the church which is in thy house."

c. It is the worship that counts -- not the place of worship.

J. Instrumental music is a God-given talent.

1. This argument is based upon a false premise. It is assumed that any talent one has, and all the talent one has, should be used in worship. If this were true, the woman whose talent was baking pies should bake pies in the worship service.

2. Further, worship is **not** the time or the place to display one's talent. Talent to do what God has commanded that we do in worship should, of course, be used, but we are to worship as God has directed.

K. Singing is **not** a part of worship, thus, it does not matter what they do.

1. This latest argument shows that the proponents of it have ceased to search for authority for the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship.
2. The argument is made that Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 are not speaking of a worship service, thus singing is not part of worship.
 - a. One could ask, if it is not, then why do they continue to sing, and play during their services there is, according to their theory, no command, necessary inference or example of it being done?
 - b. It could also be asked where the commands of Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 apply for, obviously, they must refer to some situation.
 - c. However, no amount of skirting the issue can get away from the fact that these verses prohibit the use of instrumental music in praise to God, in whatever circumstance.

CONCLUSION

Churches of Christ **DO NOT** use instrumental music in worship because:

- A. It violates the law of faith (II Cor. 5:7; Heb. 11:6; Rom. 10:17).
 - B. It violates the law of worship (Jhn. 4:24; 17:17; Matt. 15:9; Col. 2:23).
 - C. It violates the law of unity (I Cor. 1:10; Rom. 15:5; Jhn. 12:48; Matt. 7:5; Rom. 16:17).
 - D. It was **not** commanded of the apostles (Matt. 28:18-20); it is **not** part of "all truth" revealed through the Holy Spirit (Jhn. 16:7,13); it **cannot** be done in the name of Jesus (Col. 3:17); and it does **not** "pertain unto life and godliness" (II Pet. 1:3).
 - E. It was **never** used in the primitive church.
 - F. It is **not** inherent in the word "psallo," leading translators and lexicographers concurring that in the New Testament, the word refers to singing, vocal music, the human heart being the **only** acceptable instrument to accompany the human voice in singing praises to God.
- I Thess. 5:21 "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." May each of us seek to always do just that.

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