

MUSIC IN THE CHURCH

The one thing that stands out in sharp contrast in churches of Christ: the absence of instruments being used in worship unto the Lord. Is this done as a “distinctive” feature to delineate a particular group? Do we just want to be “different?”

There are different views on their use, how can we determine what is right?

What the New Testament says about music in the church.

References to Christians singing:

Mat.26:20 *sang a hymn (Mar.14:26)*
Act.16:25 *Paul and Silas sang in prison*
1Co.14:15 *sing with spirit and understanding*
Eph.5:19 *making melody in your heart*
Col.3:16 *teaching and admonishing in song*
Jam.5:13 *any merry? let him sing*

Reference to singing:

Rom.15:9 (O.T. reference) *“I will sing to Thy name”*

Symbolic references to instruments:

Rev.5:8 *having golden harps...sang a new song*
Rev.14:2-3 *voice that sounded like harpists*
Rev.15:1-3 *angels...holding harps of God...sang*

Arguments used in favor of instruments.

The New Testament doesn't forbid the use of them. It doesn't say, “don't use them.”

Answer: Bible doesn't specify every prohibition.
Cannot use the silence of the Scriptures as authority.

The Bible mentions instruments in heaven.

Answer: Cannot ignore the use of symbolic language.
If true, then there is also glass, wine presses, sickles, etc.
A crude attempt to twist Scriptures. cf. 2Pe.3:16

Most churches use them.

Answer: Majority does not establish truth.
Majority of Jews reject Christ. Whose was right?

Churches do other things without Bible authority.

Answer: Arguing that other unscriptural activities are allowed, therefore this, too, should be allowed, is nothing more than a smoke-screen, or red herring.
It's also an admission that there is no Scriptural basis for it.

Instruments have always been used in churches.

Answer: Not so. For over 700 years, no church used them.
Not all movements during Reformation used them.
Rejected at the beginning of the Restoration movement.

David used them, as well as the Israelites. Psalms 150:1-6

Answer: Cannot use O.T. practices as patterns for church activity today.
Temples, sacrifices, priests, etc. have no part in Christianity.
Must not go back to Old Testament for any teaching. Gal.5:3-4

Greek work *psallo* (Eph.5:19) means to sing with the instrument.

Answer: Etymology of *psallo*: originally, a striking or twitching with the fingers (on musical strings.) then, sacred songs, sung to musical accompaniment (as Psalms in O.T.).
then, Book of sacred songs in the O.T. (Act.1:20)
then, sacred songs in general.--Vines Expository Dictionary

One should use his or her talent for Lord.

Answer: Only if one uses the talent while doing what the Lord authorizes.

Biblical references are to be our only source for doctrine.

Faith comes by hearing ... the Word. Rom.10:17
Scriptures are complete. 2Ti.3:16
We are to walk by faith, not sight. 2Co.5:7
We are to do all in His name. Col.3:17
We are not to preach another (perverted) Gospel. Gal.1:6-7
We are not to add or take away. Rev.22:18
Singing from the heart is heartily approved. Nothing else is authorized!

This is all the Gospel of Christ has to say about instruments in worship.

All it authorizes as music in worship is singing!