

What The Bible Says About...

Instrumental Music In the Church Assembly

INTRO.

A. I understand why we accept the teachings we grew up with.

- It's "just the way it is."
- We assume these beliefs until we are confronted with something which causes us to question them.
... That's the way faith grows. The conviction then becomes our own rather than "inherited."

B. I happen to know that there are some in our congregation whose background is "instrumental accompaniment" and others whose background is "a cappella" (non-instrumental).

- Truth is not determined by tradition (even if it's mine); but rather "What does the Bible say" about this?

I- NEW TESTAMENT PASSAGES AUTHORIZING MUSIC AND DESIGNATING THE KIND OF MUSIC:

- [Matthew 26:30](#)- (parallel passage- [Mark 14:26](#))
- [Acts 16:25](#)- Paul and Silas in prison - "praying and singing hymns"
- [Romans 15:9](#)- quotation from [Psalm 18:49](#)
- [I Corinthians 14:15](#)- admonition to pray and sing with understanding
- [Ephesians 5:17-20](#)- [in singing we] "*Speak to one another... and make music in/with your heart to the Lord.*"
- [Colossians 3:16-17](#)- (literal translation)- "*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly with all wisdom; teaching and counseling one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace/gratitude in your hearts to the Lord.*"
- [Hebrews 2:12](#)- quotation from [Psalm 22:22](#)
- [Hebrews 13:15](#)- (not exclusively "singing")- "*fruit of the lips*"
- [James 5:13](#)- "*...Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise.*"
- 3 passages picturing scenes in heaven:
 - [Revelation 5:8](#)- 24 elders
 - [Revelation 14:1-5](#)- 144,000 sounded like "harpists playing on their harps"
 - [Revelation 15:3-4](#)- victorious saints

NOTICE: Nowhere, in any context of Christian assembly, on this earth, do we have mentioned the use of any musical instrument.

II. WHY DO WE NOT USE MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS IN OUR ASSEMBLIES?

A. **FIRST**- Because there is no New Testament authority to do so:

- Agreed... it was used in the Old Testament tabernacle and temple worship
- At God's specific command! - [I Chronicles 15:16](#); [II Chronicles 29:25](#)
- From these examples we have the same right to bring instruments into Christian assembly as we do animal sacrifices.

B. **SECOND**- There is no example of its use in the New Testament Worship

- Earliest recorded example in "Christian worship" is in Catholic church with sanction of Pope Vitalian (666 A.D.)

C. **THIRD**- Because God has given a specific command to "sing" (denotes using the voice)

- The Bible has many examples of God giving specific commands (and his attitude toward those who violate that command):
 - [Genesis 3](#)- Adam & Eve - Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil
 - [Genesis 6](#)- Noah/ark - Didn't say, "God didn't say I COULDN'T use pine."

- [Exodus 12](#)- blood on door posts of houses
- [Jonah](#)- Jonah decided not to go to Nineveh
- [II Samuel 6](#)- Uzzah- touching the ark of the covenant
- [Leviticus 10](#)- Nadab & Abihu “...*offered strange fire before the Lord which he had not instructed them.*”
 - Moses responded to [what was evidently] Aaron, their father’s, objection:
 - [v3](#)- *Moses then said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD spoke of when he said: 'Among those who approach me I will show myself holy; in the sight of all the people I will be honored.'* Aaron remained silent.”

CONCL.

- A. When a physician writes a prescription, does he have to write all the medications he **doesn’t** want used?
Do we have the liberty to add something/take something away from the Lord’s Supper?
- B. God instructed us to “sing.” No Bible-believer questions that.
- C. The consideration of adding an instrument, as with every other matter under consideration, is a question of **authority**.
 - **By whose authority do we have the “liberty” to add instrumental music to our Christian assembly?**
 - ... What does the Bible say?