

Instrumental Music in Worship

By Casey Head

When I first encountered the church of Christ in Lexington, Kentucky, one of the things that stood out to me was their lack of instrumental music in worship. Growing up in the Baptist church, we had all kinds of musicians and musical activities, and I remember going to “Christian concerts” hosted by other denominational churches in the area. It was unusual for me to sing songs of praise in a church service *without* instruments.

At first, I thought that the church of Christ had simply chosen not to use instrumental music...that they preferred a cappella music. But in time, I came to learn that they actually opposed instrumental music in worship because they didn't believe the New Testament authorized it. I was shocked, to say the least!

I remember saying, “Oh, if you'd just come to the Baptist church with me, you'd see how beautiful the instrumental music is, and you'd realize that it's okay.” I would add, “The people playing these instruments love the Lord, and when you hear how beautiful it is, it just makes you feel so good.” On many occasions, I argued and debated with the members of the church of Christ, and for the life of me, I just couldn't believe that they would hold to such a position.

But while I outwardly argued that instrumental music in worship was acceptable, inwardly, I slowly began to realize that it wasn't...that they were right and I was wrong.

You see, all of my arguments were emotionally based. I would argue that instrumental music in worship was okay because of how it made me feel, how it was so beautiful, how everyone used it and therefore it couldn't be *that bad*. These are all emotional arguments rooted in human reason, but they are not biblical arguments. My conscience ultimately pushed me to simply accept the teachings of God's word.

Colossians 3:17 says, “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus,” and 1 Peter 4:11 declares, “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God.” In other words, everything we do as Christians must be authorized in the pages of God's word. We must seek book, chapter and verse for our actions. Christ is the head of the church (Eph. 1:22-23), and we must submit to Him!

These principles apply to every aspect of our service to God, including worship! We are to worship God in spirit and in truth (Jn. 4:24), and John 17:17 says that God's word is truth. Therefore, we are to

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“Anchor Of The Soul” is distributed monthly by the **Spruce Pine church of Christ**. We are a non-denominational church whose only goal is to follow the New Testament pattern.

Meeting Times

Sunday

Bible Class.....10:00 AM
Morning Worship.....11:00 AM
Evening Worship.....6:30 PM

Wednesday

Bible Class.....7:00 PM

Directions

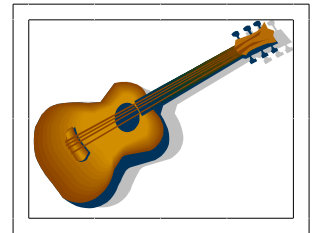
Our building is located at 36 McHone Rd just behind the Mitchell Veterinary Clinic in Spruce Pine. Call (828)467-1463 if you need a ride to services or have any questions about the church.

Ten Reasons to Assemble With Us...

1. Our sermons are completely Bible based.
2. Our classes are informative and uplifting.
3. We have Bible classes for all ages.
4. Our worship is in spirit and in truth (Jn. 4:24).
5. Our worship is meant to glorify God, not man.
6. We make all of our visitors feel welcome.
7. We are truly a spiritual “family.”
8. We will do everything we can to help you grow closer to God (as we do the same for one another).
9. There are people of all age-groups, including many young families with children. You won’t feel out of place.
10. We are not “just another denominational church.” We have many things to offer that no church in the immediate area is currently offering.

worship God according to His word! To take this a step further, Mark 7:7 says, “Howbeit in *vain* do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” If it is possible to worship God in vain, then that must mean that there is a right and proper way to worship Him. The only way to know what God wants in the realm of church worship is to consult the pattern of the New Testament!

So what does God say about music in His church? Romans 15:9 says, “For this cause I will confess to Thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto Thy name.” Ephesians 5:19 says, “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord.” Paul makes a similar point in Colossians 3:16 when he says, “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.” Finally, consider Hebrews 2:12 which says, “In the midst of the church will I sing praises unto Thee.” In each of these verses, God authorizes singing, but nowhere is instrumental music mentioned. You can search the New Testament from beginning to end, and you will not find one instance of the church worshipping God with mechanical instruments of music.



Furthermore, we know that instrumental music was not introduced into church worship until the seventh century! Hundreds of years after the close of the New Testament, the Catholic church incorporated the organ into their worship service. This was the cause of much controversy, but the organ remained and was finally accepted. Eventually, other instruments were introduced into the church and now there is no limit to the instruments and special effects one might encounter in a worship service.

If we are going to follow the pattern of the New Testament, we will remove the pianos and other instruments from our church buildings and simply sing praises to God from the heart! What will you do?

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• **instrumental music in worship, please call (828)467-1463** •
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Bible Trivia

Random Questions:

1. What was the name of the man who threw stones at David as he fled from Jerusalem (during the rise of Absalom)?
2. Following the three oracles of Balaam, the people of Israel committed whoredom with the daughters of what people?
3. Caiaphas was the high priest when Jesus was crucified. What was the name of his father, who also was a high priest?
4. Joseph had two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. Which was older?
5. What is the interpretation of the name "Tabitha" in the Bible?

Fill in the Blank:

1. "And, ye fathers, _____: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." (Eph. 6:4)
2. "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and _____."

Challenge Question:

8. How should the religious world strive for unity? What will it take?

Evidence of Intelligent Design:

If there is no God, then there is nothing wrong with murder, rape, theft, adultery, etc. Without God, we are just animals. But humans have a moral compass...and that is evidence of intelligent design.

Answers:

1. Shimei (2 Sam. 16:5-8); 2. Moab (Num. 24:1-3); 3. Annas (Jn. 18:13); 4. Manasseh (Gen. 48:14); 5. Dorcas (Ac. 9:36); 6. "provoke not your children to wrath"; 7. "unto God the things that are God's"

Challenge Question ANSWER From August 2008:

The apostle Peter was not the first pope. In fact, there were no human popes in the first century, nor is there any New Testament authority for the Catholic church or its pope. The church was built upon the concept that Jesus was/is the Son of God (Mt. 16:16-18), and we know that Jesus is the head of the church (Eph. 1:22-23) and the ONLY foundation of the church (1 Cor. 3:11). Peter was an apostle, yes, but he was married (1 Cor. 9:5) and he was certainly fallible (Gal. 2:11-16).

The Suffering of Jesus (No. 1)

By Byron Smith

I am persuaded that man is too comfortable with the suffering of Jesus. How often do we casually read the record of what Jesus endured while giving little thought to the profound significance of it?

Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper as a memorial of His death, but how often do people allow their minds to meander about while partaking of this solemn feast? How many hear about the sorrow He felt in Gethsemane, yet are satisfied to remain in sin? How often does the gospel preacher relate that old, old story of Jesus upon the cross at Calvary and few are touched by it? How many sing about the "old rugged cross," yet fail miserably to surrender all to Jesus?

Again, man is too comfortable with the suffering of Jesus. Man needs to be disturbed because of what Jesus endured and especially because of *why* He endured it. Man needs to feel some distress and personal responsibility. Where is the remorse for our sins that put Jesus upon the cross? Furthermore, gratitude needs to be deeply felt as the beneficiaries of His suffering. Jesus "gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father" (Gal. 1:4).

God's plan from the beginning involved the suffering of Jesus. This is a prominent theme in Scripture (cf. Gen. 3:15). His suffering was prophesied (Ac. 3:18; 13:27-29; Is. 53), foreshadowed (Ps. 23), and implied in sacrificial terminology (Jn. 1:29; 1 Cor. 5:7; 1 Pet. 1:19). The death of Jesus was not an accident and it is preposterous to suggest otherwise, as some do. The fact that Jesus' death was a part of God's plan to save man from sin is evident from plain statements of scripture (Mt. 20:28; Lk. 24:46; cf. Jn. 12:27; Ac. 17:3). In addition, Jesus foretold on multiple occasions the events awaiting Him in Jerusalem, but made no effort to avoid such a fate (Mt. 16:21-23; 17:22-23; 20:17-19). Jesus voluntarily laid down His life (Jn. 10:17-18; 19:10-11).

While the enemies of Jesus thought that they were restraining Him against His will, little did they know that Jesus had a mighty heavenly host at His disposal. He said, "Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?" (Mt. 26:53-54; cf. Is. 37:36).

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Is the Gospel Powerful Enough?

By Edwin Crozier

I have now heard it all. Okay, maybe not. But surely this is close. Some church in Columbia is offering gas cards to visitors. I have no doubt some folks will proclaim, "How innovative! How creative!" Some might say, "Wish I had thought of that."

I say, what happened to Romans 1:16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." Do we really believe it is the power of God to save? Or do we think it lacks something? I'm sure the church offering the gas cards would say they believe the Gospel has that power. They just don't think anyone will come to hear the Gospel if they don't prop it up with a material desire like free gas.

This, of course, is no different than numerous attempts going on each week by churches all over the country. When Vacation Bible Schools look more like county fairs with free crafts and bouncy rides, are we saying the Gospel is no longer cutting it? When assemblies are more like rock concerts or club hopping, are we saying the Gospel needs to be propped up? When we attract people to the congregation by having parties for the young people, mixers for the singles, mother's day out for the parents and so much fun and games, are we saying that we just don't think the Gospel is powerful enough to save people?

No church would say they are ashamed of Christ's Gospel. But let's get real. When folks ask, "What have you got for my children?" and we bow our heads, kick the dirt and say, "Only the Gospel," we are showing embarrassment. When a church is adding in all these fleshly frills to get folks to attend, they are saying, "We are kind of embarrassed that the Gospel doesn't have what you want, so we'll add it in. Maybe while you're here, you might catch some of the Gospel by osmosis."

I think God is powerful enough to get the folks who are willing to submit by using His Gospel. He doesn't need us to offer free gas in order to help Him out. If He needed that, He would have done it Himself. Do we not think that God could fill all the gas tanks in the world if that is what it would take to save people? Let's just stick with what God has given us—the Gospel that is powerful enough.

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The Seed of The Kingdom

"The seed is the word of God" (Lk. 8:11)

By Andy Mitchell

The Bible Alone	⇒	Christian
The Bible + Methodist Discipline	⇒	Methodist
The Bible + Baptist Manual	⇒	Baptist
The Bible + Book of Mormon	⇒	Mormon
<i>Denominations result when men tamper with the seed!</i>		

God created each seed to reproduce "after his kind" (Gen. 1:11-12). So what do you get when you plant corn? You get cucumbers, right? No, you know better, don't you?

You know that corn will only produce corn, and nothing else! You know that potatoes won't produce tomatoes, and carrots don't produce cabbage. It just won't work. So what makes you think that you can produce a Christian by planting a different seed than the word of God?

You see, if the Bible is planted in one's heart, you'll get the same thing that it's always produced...a CHRISTIAN, and NOTHING ELSE! But if you plant something else along with it, that's exactly what you'll get...SOMETHING ELSE!

Why not just do away with the additions? Follow the Bible and nothing else = be a Christian and nothing else!

Would you like to learn more about simple New Testament Christianity? Are you tired of religious division and denominational confusion? If so, call (828)467-1463, email us at NCBibleQuestions@yahoo.com or write to P.O. Box 401, Spruce Pine, NC 28777.

Do you have any questions about any of the following Bible subjects? Circle any that may apply...

The plan of salvation

Are babies born in sin?

The free-will of man

Miracles

Moral issues (drinking, adultery, etc.)

The deity of Christ/Godhead

The book of Revelation

Jesus' final return

The New Testament church

The sin of divorce

Jehovah's Witnesses

Is it wrong to judge others?

Other: _____

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“When Do I Die, Daddy?”

One of the most stirring stories I have ever heard was told to me several years ago. A family had a tragic accident involving the youngest son, Jody. He was in desperate need of a transfusion. Jody's big brother, barely eight years old, had the same rare blood type. The father sat down and carefully tried to explain to the big brother how this blood transfusion was needed, and how wonderful it would be for his little brother. Finally, after some silence, the big brother seriously responded, “Yes, Daddy, I'll give my blood to Jody so that he will get well!” After courageously giving a pint of his blood, the father was silently standing by the side of his son. Much to the shock of his father, the boy, with tears in his eyes said, “When do I die, Daddy?” In utter amazement, the father reeled with the realization that in his whole feeble attempt to explain the giving of blood, his son had misunderstood. He thought that he would die as soon as the transfusion was over! He thought he had given all of his blood. What brotherly love!

Author Unknown

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Lightning Lesson

We hear a lot today about churches having conferences, conventions, synods, associations and other such multi-congregational organizations. Furthermore, we hear of churches being ruled by steering committees, boards of directors, and of course there is the “one man pastor system” that is so prevalent in Baptist churches today. But does the New Testament authorize such organizational entities? Let's take a look at the pattern of the early church. In the first century, we know that elders (plural) were appointed over each congregation (Ac. 14:23; 20:17; Titus 1:5). These elders (also called pastors, bishops and overseers) were given the oversight of the local flock (Ac. 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2). Never do we find one pastor overseeing the flock all by himself, nor do we find the elders of one church overseeing other churches in other places. In other words, the early churches were self-governing, and when one church oversees another, that autonomy is broken. There is nothing wrong with Christians in one church having relationships with Christians from another church (just read Romans 16:1-16), but when churches begin to pool their funds and organize associations, they have violated the pattern of the New Testament. This may appear to be an insignificant matter, but it is not (Col. 3:17; 1 Pet. 4:11).