



Do you suppose that if the Judaizers tried to impose any of the other Old Testament practices, Paul would have condemned those also? Remember, the Old Law has been removed and annulled (cf. Heb. 7:12, 18; 10:9-10; Gal. 5:18).

Can we agree that to try and justify our practices by the Old Law is to contradict Christ who died to remove it? Would you agree that everything we do, we do by the authority of men or by the authority of God? Can we agree that the only acceptable music in praise to God is vocal and *nothing* else? Can we agree that if I worship God as He has not commanded, I'm wrong, and my worship is in vain? (Matthew 15:8,9)

One final thing I want to make clear. I do not deny that the music people create today with instruments to worship God is beautiful from a strictly musical standpoint. However, it is not a question of what pleases us, or what we find beautiful. If I think in these terms, if I am primarily concerned with what *I* find beautiful and pleasing, then I cannot be concerned with what God finds beautiful and pleasing and acceptable. And just because something sounds beautiful to me, do I then assume it will be just as pleasing to Him? **“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD”** (Isaiah 55:8). I am once again reminded of the tragic example of Nadab and Abihu. Two men—sons of the High Priest that, so far as the record shows, had the right motives and intentions, the right priestly attire, their fire pans and incense—all thing necessary to worship. All elements were in place, but what went wrong? One thing. There was simply one element *they* added, and the Lord consumed them with fire (cf. Lev 10). The explanation? God saw it as an affront to His holiness. Could it be that there are some folks today who have the right intentions, a passion for serving God, who sing wholesome words in their worship, but they've added *one thing*? How will God react to them on the Day of Judgment? Remember, He is the same God that consumed Nadab and Abihu with fire and He has not changed (Heb. 13:8).



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Faithful Sayings Issue 13.11 March 13, 2011

Welcome Visitors

We are so glad that you joined us today.
Please come again.

● Let us know if you have any questions.

ISSUE

13.11

BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Faithful Sayings

March 13
2011

Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM
10:20 AM
6:00 PM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Pat Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Kyle Pope

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Bill Davis
Steve Dixon
Pat Goguen
Jack Langley
Neil Ledbetter
Brady McAlister
Walker McAnear
Lance Purcell
Rusty Scott

Evangelists:

Kyle Pope
Jason Garcia



Instrumental Music—What's the Big Deal?

By Jason Garcia

We might be tempted to think that some discussions are not as edifying as others if those discussions happen to about points of contention. Does this mean we should avoid such conversations because they don't seem beneficial to us? Do you remember Jesus' prayer in John 17? Did He not pray for us (those who believe in Him) to be united? Are all who consider themselves believers united in truth today? Sadly (and I think you'll agree), we are not, because we teach and practice different things. We see things like "all faith" chapels, and one might overhear two "Christians" (I put the word in quotes because I'm using it loosely as the world uses it) speaking with each other and one might ask, "Well, *what faith* are you?" What does the Bible say? **“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism”** (Ephesians 4:4-5 KJV). Someone might reply that "If I believe Jesus is the Christ and that He is the only hope I have for salvation, then *nothing else matters.*" I would then ask where in Scripture do we find that teaching? All this to say that anything that causes division among God's people should not be viewed as something trivial or inconsequential, but should be studied and given careful thought, so that we will be united in truth, just as He prayed we would be. Don't you agree? God has told us *how* we should worship Him, but men have disagreed about this, and thus division has occurred over the issue.

Many folks will say worshiping God is a "heart issue". I agree completely if they mean to say that we must be sincere in our worship of Him and genuinely mean what we sing when we praise Him. But is it *only* a "heart issue"?

“God is Spirit and those that worship Him must worship Him in spirit AND IN truth” (John 4:24 emphasis mine).

There are people who worship in spirit but not in truth, and folks who may worship in truth, but not in spirit. As we’ve noticed, in order to be pleasing to Him we *must* do both. I know you’ll agree that no one but God has the authority to tell us how He should be worshipped. What New Testament Scriptures are there that speak of musical worship to God?

- **“And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives”** (Matthew 26:30).

- **“And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them”** (Acts 16:25).
- **“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”** (Romans 15:9).
- **“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”** (1 Corinthians 14:15).
- **“Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord”** (Ephesians 5:19).
- **“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”** (Colossians 3:16).
- **“Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee”** (Hebrews 2:12).
- **“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”** (Hebrews 13:15).
- **“Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms”** (James 5:13).

To my knowledge these are all the passages in the New Testament that refer to worshiping God. We do not find in these verses that using instruments to praise God is acceptable and pleasing to Him. How can we conclude this? Please consider several passages with me. **“All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate for EVERY good work”** (2 Timothy 3:16 emphasis mine). Is there any Scripture we could use to show that using musical instruments to worship God are a good work? **“Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, so that you may learn NOT TO EXCEED WHAT IS WRITTEN so that no one of you will become arrogant in behalf of one against the other”** (1 Corinthians 4:6 emphasis mine). No one seems to disagree about vocal music being acceptable, why is that? Have we exceeded what is written when we *add* instruments to our worship of God? **“Seeing that His divine power has GRANTED US EVERYTHING pertaining to life and godliness”** (2 Peter 1:3 emphasis mine). Again, is there a Scripture in the New Testament that teaches we

should use instruments to praise God as His people did in the Old Testament? Would you agree that if we cannot find one, then using instruments does not pertain to life and godliness? **“Anyone who GOES TOO FAR and does not abide in the teaching of Christ does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son”** (2 John 9 emphasis mine). Are we abiding in the teaching of Christ, and can we worship Him in truth if we add instrumental music to our worship?

Someone might reply, where in the New Testament does it say *not* to use instruments to praise God? Is this a sound principle by which to live? I can’t show where the New Testament says *not* to use instrumental music, neither can I show you where the New Testament says *not* to use Dr. Pepper and Doritos in the Lord’s Supper. I also can’t show where the New Testament says *not* to dance or burn incense in worshipping God. Do you see my point? Does the silence of the Scriptures about any behavior give us authority to practice that behavior?

Let’s consider a secular example using the same line of reasoning. Suppose that there was a married woman who asked her husband for a specific gift on her birthday. And the gift that she wanted is all that she wanted and nothing else. Her husband has the means and is perfectly able to give her this gift, but on her birthday the gift he gives her is something different than what she asked for. He says to her “Well, you didn’t say *not* to get it.” Would you agree the husband in this context reasons the same way many people do when it comes to their service to God? Jesus said **“So that the world may know that I love the Father, I do EXACTLY as the Father commanded Me”** (John 14:31 NASB emphasis mine). Does our attitude reflect that of Jesus?

Another objection someone might have is that instruments were used to worship God in the Old Testament, and thus they are acceptable to use in worshipping God today. How did God’s people know they were to use instruments in worship of Him? Was it not because He told them? (2 Chronicles 29:25) It was a binding law to worship God with instruments. There were many other things one was bound to do under the Mosaic Law: observing the Sabbath, offering animal sacrifices, circumcision, observing holy days and feasts, eating roast lamb, burning incense, etc. Would you agree that instrumental music was just as much a part of the Old Law as circumcision or the observance of holy days or any other items we

find in the Old Law? Paul says we cannot take part and leave the other parts, but rather we **“obligate ourselves to keep the whole law”** (Gal. 5:3). Remember that the Judaizers accepted the Gospel of Christ but wanted to *add* elements and practices of the Old Law to New Covenant worship, and thus severed themselves from Christ. At Galatia they wanted church members to be circumcised, at Colosse they wanted the members to observe holy days. Do you recall Paul’s reaction to both cases?

Behold I, Paul say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you. And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole law. You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by the law; you have fallen from grace (Galatians 5:2-4).

Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day—things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ (Colossians 2:16).

