

**FOR PREACHING AGAINST INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN WORSHIP**  
**(John 4:23-24)**

**I. I have the talent to play an instrument.**

- A. The argument is usually made: "People have musical talent and you are telling them they can't use their talent for God."
  - 1. The problem with that idea is the church is not a talent show.
  - 2. Whenever someone does something in that manner, the attention is drawn to that person and not to God.
- B. Talent is one thing and Bible authority is another (Colossians 3:16-17; 2 Timothy 2:15).
- C. Congregational singing, one to another, is the only authorized music in the New Testament.
- D. If you go this route of it being a talent, what about other peoples talents?
- E. What we do in worship is what God has commanded us to do.
- F. Worship to God is not a talent show, it is honoring Him with that which He has asked us to give Him.

**II. It is just an aid.**

- A. There is a lot of confusion between what is an "aid" and what is an "addition;" how can you tell the difference?
  - 1. An addition occurs when a particular action is altered, or the basic substance of the thing is changed.
  - 2. An aid alters nothing, it simply helps in the implementation of the action.
- B. Think of these examples:
  - 1. Mom sends you to the store to buy bread.
    - a. Bring the bread home in a bag - that is an aid.
    - b. Bring home bread and a candy bar - an addition.
  - 2. You take your car to get an oil change.
    - a. The tech uses a funnel and a wrench - aids.
    - b. The tech puts on 4 new tires - addition.
- C. When we come together to worship and we get to the musical portion of the service, we are commanded to sing (Ephesians 5:18-19)
  - 1. We might use a song book, pitch pipe, or projector but we would only be singing.
  - 2. If we use an organ, there is an addition and two types of music are being used - vocal and instrumental, so the nature of the service has changed.
- D. Additions to worship of God has always been condemned.
  - 1. Cain added offerings of the ground.
  - 2. Nadab and Abihu added fire from another source.
- E. We have no authority for adding instruments to worship.

**III. It is used in the home.**

- A. Some argue that if we can use them in the home, we can use them in the church building.
- B. The home is a completely separate institution from the church.

1. There are a lot of things we can do in the home we can't do in worship to God.
  2. We can go on trips, play ball, go into business and many other things completely unrelated to worship of God.
  3. Paul made a clear distinction between the church and the home (1 Timothy 5:16).
- C. Just because something is done in the home, does not make it suitable to do in worship.

**IV. God didn't say "Don't do it."**

- A. When God specifies something, He doesn't have to specifically exclude all else.
1. Gopher wood for the ark (Genesis 6:14).
  2. A red heifer (Numbers 19:1-4).
  3. A brazen serpent (Numbers 21:8).
- B. God did say to sing (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16).
1. God also said, don't add to or take from His word (2 John 9-11).
  2. The question is never "Where did God say not to" something, but "Where did God say to" do something.

**V. It is popular and it draws crowds.**

- A. Instrumental music is an attempt to be like the world, to try to win the world in a way that is pleasing to the world.
1. This makes the church more like the world and the world less like the church.
  2. Many denominational worship services look a lot like concerts.
  3. If a capella music was effective in the first century, it can be effective in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- B. There are a lot of ways to draw crowds if that is all we wanted.
1. Give away money;
  2. Give a free car to one sitting in a lucky seat.
- C. Jesus condemned those who sought Him for the wrong reasons (John 6:26).
- D. Our purpose is to please God, not get a crowd.

**VI. Instruments will be in heaven.**

- A. If it is good enough for heaven, it is good enough for us is the argument (Revelation 4:1; 14:1-3; 15:2-3).
1. If the harps are literal, then everything else there must be literal as well.
  2. Armies, horses and all the other things mentioned.
- B. The harps are symbolic like the rest.
- C. We will have spiritual bodies in heaven, not physical ones to play physical instruments.
- D. People who make this argument realize there is no authorization for it revealed anywhere else in scripture.
- E. Even if heaven does have instruments, it is because God authorized them there and He has not done so for the church.

**VII. It sounds much better.**

- A. This was the reason given at the Midway, KY congregation.
- B. There is no spiritual value in the instruments being added.
- C. We also must ask, "Beautiful to whom?"
  - 1. God wants worship to come from a joyful heart.
  - 2. God wants hearts that submit to His will for man.
  - 3. If you have the worst singing voice in the world, you can still submit to God's plan (Ephesians 5:19-20).
- D. It doesn't matter if it may sound better.
  - 1. The purpose of singing is to glorify God and to teach one another (Colossians 3:16).
  - 2. Every soul can sing, not every soul can play an instrument, thus all can worship God in song by singing.
  - 3. No one gets elevated above another, all are together encouraging and admonishing one another.
- E. If you carried this logic out to the end, we could substitute any item of worship if we think it makes it better.
  - 1. We could substitute items in the Lord's Supper because we could get it to taste better.
  - 2. We could substitute giving our means with something that is better.
  - 3. We could substitute prayer for something that made things flow better.
- F. Singing is not judged by how man is pleased but how God is pleased.

**VIII. It was used in the Old Testament.**

- A. Some will point out that instruments were used in worship to God under the Mosaic Law.
- B. It seems to me that the person who makes this argument at least sees the need to for some type of authority to use instruments in worship.
- C. The fact is, we are not under the Old Law (Colossians 2:14-17).
- D. The Old Testament which allowed is has been replaced by the gospel of Christ (Romans 7:4; Galatians 3:23-25; Hebrews 8:6-13).
  - 1. The New Testament only authorizes singing (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16).
  - 2. If we use instruments like David did, will we:
    - a. Offer animal sacrifices (Psalm 66:13-15);
    - b. Dance before the Lord (2 Samuel 6:14);
    - c. Keep the Sabbath (Exodus 20:8);
    - d. Have multiple wives (2 Samuel 5:13)?
- E. There are many things they did under the Old Testament that we don't practice: because we are not under the Old Law.

From an outline by Arthur Pigman.