



INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Instrumental music in the worship service continues to be a question perplexing some of our congregations. It is a very important question as it represents a change in the church's attitude of "speaking where the Bible speaks" to speaking where the Bible doesn't forbid. Instead of doing what the Bible says, one is doing what he or she prefers. It is the substitution of instrumental music for the instructed singing. It is discussed below scripturally and practically.

SCRIPTURAL QUESTION

As was noted in issue #50 of this newsletter, the only New Testament verse teaching on the subject is Ephesians 5:19: "speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, sing and make melody with your heart to the Lord".

Other example verses are Acts 16:25, Paul and Silas singing, Romans 15:9 "I will sing hymns in your name", I Cor. 14:15 "I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind", Col. 3:16 "sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs", Hebrew 2:12 "I will sing your praises", James 5:13 "Let him sing songs of praise".

As instrumental music was introduced into the worship service in AD 667 by Pope Vitalian after much debate, we can be comfortable that it was not used in the first century church. It was available, but not used.

PRACTICAL QUESTION

Aside from whether it is actually a scriptural concern, is instrumental music a good idea? Is instrumental music actually beneficial to worship services or is it detrimental?

To consider instrumental music, do you consider a flute as indicated in the Old Testament, or do you consider a single guitar, go to an orchestra or do you consider an organ. We would suggest to you herein that this is not a guitar question, it is an organ question. On the one hand, no one is going to start the discussion at an organ, they will start the discussion at simply bringing a guitar in to assist. Maybe a small piano.

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SCRIPTURAL QUESTION: 2

It is appropriate to be aware that instrumental music was dictated and regulated as a part of the worship services in the Old Testament. Psalms 150:3-5 indicate that trumpets, harps, lyres, tambourines, cymbals and flutes were dictated and regulated acts of worship, along with dancing. God chose to specifically include and regulate those instruments in the Old Law, but no such specification and regulation happens in the New Law.

If you are going to justify some acts today because they are in the Old Law, would you not need to accept them all. You could have instrumental music and burnt offerings. If you pick one and don't pick another, you are simply making up a religion of your choices.

It seems to be a clear decision that if you are going to do what the New Testament says and what the first century church did, you would have a cappella music.



PRACTICAL QUESTION: 2

There would be little question, however, that the inclusion of instrumental music would make the church more attractive to those who are accustomed to instrumental music. The music they are accustomed to is not guitar music. They would tend to get their "religious" feeling from organ music. Big organ music. As you recruit more and more instrumental music fans to your congregation, you will face increasing pressure to get your organ.

Therefore, we would suggest that this is an organ question, not a guitar question. Guitars are simply a seemingly innocuous step along the way to getting your organ.

That being the case, does an organ assist in singing "with the spirit and understanding", or does simply replace the singing? Basically, does the typical organ simply drown out the singing?

In every case of a worship service with an organ personally observed, the organ overshadowed the singing and as could be observed, the singing was without spirit.

In every case of a visitor from an organ style church recalled, they have commented how good our a cappella singing was.

The starting with a guitar or piano to make yourself more appealing to those accustomed to substantially more instrumental music is likely simply a first step in justifying a variety of choices which will render a congregation to being another denomination.



THE HOUSE OF GOD IS THE HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL NATIONS KURT CASTLEMAN

There were two occasions in Jesus' ministry when He cleansed the temple. In John 2:13, (McCord), Jesus used a whip of ropes saying, "Take these away. Stop turning my Father's house into a market house." The later cleansing occurred after the Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. He stated, "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations, but you have made it a den of thieves." (Mark 11:17)

We are comfortable with the portrait of Jesus the healer, forgiver, or compassionate teacher. We are more at ease with Him blessing children than with an angry Messiah demanding that a temple complex be cleared of animals, tables, chairs and robbers. The stark impressive hues of this man striding through the temple precincts with a whip of ropes in His hands and turning over tables makes us nervous.

We long for a Jesus who is a food provider, having us sit down in green fields, eating fish sandwiches until we are satisfied and also approving of our lives. We don't want someone coming into our lives, upsetting everything as happened in the temple.

1 Timothy 3:15 states that the church of God is the house of God, or the family of God. Some

churches have become a den of thieves because human hearts and lips that ought to be filled with prayer and praise seek nothing but comfort, security and approval for sinful behavior.

"Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have from God..." (1 Corinthians 6:19). "Do you not know that you are God's temple, and that God's Spirit lives in you? (1 Corinthians 3:16) The collective Body of Christ constitutes "God's dwelling place in the Spirit". (Ephesians 2:22) If the Galilean Son of Man came walking into the temple of your body, would He find a den of thieves? If the Son of God walked into the church, would He find only robbers who were more interested in themselves than prayer?

Churches that are overly time conscious, ritualistic and somber are dens of robbers. The den of thieves is cold, legalistic and judgmental. The house of God, whether the individual or the whole congregation, is where there is meaningful spiritual worship. It is open to all and filled with love for all. (John 3:16; 1 Timothy 2:1-6) It is prayerful and evangelistic, the fragrant aroma of lives purified and available to Almighty God.

Quotable Quotes

Worry is like a rocking chair, it will give you something to do but won't get you anywhere. (From a refrigerator magnet)

IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION: VENUS FLY TRAP

If you have ever tried to swat a fly with your hand, you have an appreciation for just how fast they are. If you want to hit one or catch one, it helps to know that they tend to take off to the rear, so swat slightly behind them.

If you ready yourself with your hand near the fly and then move as quickly as possible, you are likely to miss the fly. From the fly's point of view, after your hand starts moving the fly must recognize that your hand is coming and accelerate out of the way or it is dead. Most of the time the fly will beat you. It would be interesting to know how many "g's" a fly pulls when taking off, but it must be several.



Whereas we would characterize the movement of plants as being too slow to even see, the Venus Fly Trap, a native to the east coast of the United States in North and South Carolina, moves quickly enough to catch a fly.

The Venus Fly Trap is a plant, reaching maturity in 4-5 years and then can live another 20-30 years.

When ready, the fly trap had to decide when to snap shut as it does little good to snap shut on a falling leaf or raindrops. There are hair triggers which sense when they are contacted, but do nothing. If a second hair trigger is contacted within 20 seconds, the trap concludes an appropriate prey is in position and snaps shuts. This is important as it takes about 12 hours for the trap to reset so it prevents the waste of energy in closing on objects of no nutritional value.



The trap snaps shut in a period of about 1/10 second. The snapping is generally causing the lobes on each side to go from a convex (bent outwards) shape to a concave (bent inwards) shape. The scientists which will assure you that this zero I.Q. plant came up with the idea to do this will admit that they are not smart enough to know how it happens.

After the trap is shut, it seals around the edges to prevent leaking during the digestive process. It doesn't get to experiment around with this, if the trap does not seal, the prey cannot be digested and it simply doesn't work.



IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION: VENUS FLY TRAP, P. 2

After sealing, it must inject gastric juices which will dissolve the soft parts of the prey. It is important to realize that the gastric juices to dissolve the prey had to be invented and stored in the plant, without harming the plant. This also involves inventing a container for the gastric juices, a valve mechanism to keep the gastric juices stored, and a signaling mechanism for opening the valve at the right time. (Keep in mind that the plant which was inventing all this had a zero I.Q.).



After the gastric juices dissolve the soft parts of the prey, the fly trap must suck them out so that it can benefit from the nutrients, sort of an invented vacuum cleaner. The digestion takes about 10 days.



Then in about 12 hours, the fly trap opens again and drops the chitin (exoskeleton of the prey) to restart the process.

WORDS THAT CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE

APPRECIATE your life today! Live in the present moment. Celebrate now.

BEGIN, get started, do something. Sort first, and then you will see where to go next.

BELIEVE good things will happen today. God is with us, Jesus saved us and the Holy Spirit is empowering us for our best life.

CHOOSE an attitude of gratitude.

CONNECT with someone. Smile, speak, pray, care about others and they will care about you.

FORGIVE others. Forgiveness empowers us to handle the traumas of life in a godly way.

GIVE what you have in your hand today. Don't wait until you have more or can do more.

HOPE is what sustains us in face of harsh realities. It conquers fear and replaces it with optimism.

IMAGINE how much more God can do through you when you submit to his will!

LEARN with intention and intensity! Look, listen, touch, taste and feel all that God has provided for our development.

LISTEN to the other point of view.

PRAY for God to transform and strengthen your spirit through his discipline and training to accomplish HIS purpose in your life.

PRACTICE wellness.

READ for knowledge, skill and personal growth.

RELEASE all those worries. Put them in God's hands and relax. Grieve appropriately then move on.

STRETCH outside your comfort zone, learn something new. Do something challenging.

STEWARDSHIP is recognizing that all we have comes from God.

THINK positive thoughts! Think first and speak later.

WISDOM comes from God as we seek to know and do his will.

WORDS challenge us to become more than we are today.

Put your words on paper, express emotions, organize your thoughts and keep a journal. Words have power!

Elizabeth Brown



A READY ANSWER: ONLY ONES GOING TO HEAVEN

We are often put on the defensive when others say we believe Church of Christ members are the only ones going to Heaven. How do you respond to that statement?

We do believe that only those in Christ's church will be going to Heaven, however, Christ's church is not synonymous with the name "church of Christ" on a building. If a person simply picked up a Bible and attempted to follow what the New Testament says he would likely start a Church of God as that is the most frequently used name of the 45 or so names for Christ's church. As a practical matter, the name "church of Christ" is the least frequently used name in the scriptures, being used only once in Romans 16:16.

That being said, the goal of the church of Christ is to "speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent". Clearly, follow-

ing what the Bible teaches gives you the best chance of going to Heaven.

On the one hand, if you attend a religious group which chooses to do what they prefer rather than what the Bible teaches, it is not our role to judge whether the departure will cause you to not go to Heaven. On the other hand it is also not our role to give you comfort that not following what the Bible teaches will be acceptable to God on judgment day.

We urge you to attend a church which closely follows what the Bible teaches, and we understand that this is what the churches of Christ do.

DO
YOU
BELIEVE
THE
BIBLE?

The Bible teaches we are not subject to any of the Old Law (Gal 3:24-25).

If your religious group teaches something else, you might like to visit your local Church of Christ.

The Churches of Christ attempt to speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent. (Rev. 22:18-19)



AREA WIDE ACTIVITIES

2nd Tues. Houston Preacher's Luncheon, confirm with Dale Foster at dalefoster@gmail.com for address.

**9/13/14 Women's Renewal Day, Conroe Church of Christ
<http://www.conroechurch.org/womens-renewal-day.html>**

9/26-28 North Carolina 1st Young Adults Conference (See Attachment)

**9/28/14 Eastern European Missions Million Dollar Sunday
www.milliondollarsunday.org**

11/13-15 North Carolina State Lectureship (see attachment)

5/20/15 Houston Foster's Home For Children Golf Tournament—Blackhorse

YAHOO GROUP

HoustonCofC is a Yahoo group hosted by Steve Sandifer [steve.sandifer@sbcglobal.net] for the purpose of communicating Houston area news among the brethren. It is open to any member of the church at no cost.

The Christian Array E-Magazine

This e-magazine is sent to members of the church on a monthly basis as an attempt to promote scriptural teachings, area wide activities and church growth. If you do not want to receive this e-magazine, send an e-mail to bbaugh@thearray.org and it will be stopped.

E-MAIL ADDRESSES

A goal of this newsletter is to develop a mailing list of as many members of the church as possible and to communicate church related information to as many members as possible. In that light, we would appreciate it if you would:

1. forward the church member e-mail addresses which you have,
2. send the directory of the congregation you attend or any other directories which you might have, and
3. give us an idea of how to collect church member e-mail addresses.

The Christian Array is dedicated to support the sustained scriptural growth of the churches of Christ. It is published by BCE Publications, a 501(c)(3) organization with Benton F. Baugh, Ph.D., P.E. as editor BCE is solely responsible for the content. Any announcements, requests for publication, or comments should be e-mailed to bbaugh@thearray.org.