

Answering The Religious Errors Of Our Family, Friends, and Neighbors 1
“Mechanical Instruments Of Music May Be Used In Worship To God!”
Lesson 23

INTRO:

- A. Mechanical instruments of music have not always been a part of major denominational worship services.
1. What Historians Have Said:
 - a. Introduced By Pope in 670 AD (**Encyclopedia Americana** Vol. 12, p. 688)
 - b. “Singing (there was no instrumental accompaniment of any kind).” (Lorenz, **Church Music**, p. 217, 250, 404)
 - c. “Music in churches is as ancient as the apostles, but instrumental music not so.” (Bingham, **Works**, Vol 3, p137)
 2. What Others Have Said:
 - a. "... the first Christians were of too spiritual a fibre to substitute lifeless instruments for or to use them to accompany the human voice." (**Catholic Encyclopedia**)
 - b. “We do not need them; they would hinder our praise.” (Charles Spurgeon, Baptist)
 - b. Music as a science I esteem,...But instruments of music in the House of God I abominate and abhor.” (Adam Clarke, Methodist)
 - c. “I have no objection to instruments of music, in our chapels, provided they are neither heard nor seen.” (John Wesley, founder of the Methodist Church)
 - d. “Musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting up of lamps, the restoration of the other shadows of the law. The Papists, therefore, have foolishly borrowed this, as well as many other things, from the Jews. Men who are fond of outward pomp may delight in that noise; but the simplicity which God recommends to us by the apostle is far more pleasing to Him." John Calvin, **Commentary on the Book of Psalms**, Vol. I, p. 539.” (John Calvin was a Presbyterian)
- B. Yet, Catholicism and almost all Protestant churches use and encourage the use of mechanical instruments of music in their worship.
- C. Mechanical instruments are so commonplace in denominational churches that the most frequent question we are asked is why we don't have and use them.

I. WHAT DO THE SCRIPTURES TEACH CONCERNING THE USE OF MECHANICAL INSTRUMENTS OF MUSIC IN WORSHIP TO GOD?

- A. God specified singing.
1. Every scripture that mentions music says “sing”:
 - a. **Matthew 16:30** “*And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.*” (Also Mark 14:26)

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- b. **Acts 16:25** *“But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and **singing** hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.”*
 - c. **Romans 15:9** *“and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy, as it is written: ‘FOR THIS REASON I WILL CONFESS TO YOU AMONG THE GENTILES, AND **SING TO YOUR NAME.**’”*
 - d. **1 Corinthians 14:15** *“What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will **sing** with the spirit, and I will also **sing** with the understanding.”*
 - e. **Ephesians 5:19** *“speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, **singing** and making melody in your heart to the Lord,”*
 - f. **Colossians 3:16** *“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.”*
 - g. **Hebrews 2:12** *“saying: ‘I WILL DECLARE YOUR NAME TO MY BRETHREN; IN THE MIDST OF THE ASSEMBLY I WILL **SING PRAISE TO YOU.**’”*
 - h. **Hebrews 13:15** *“Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.”*
 - i. **James 5:13** *“Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him **sing** psalms.”*
- B. When God specifies, we are not at liberty to choose something else.
- 1. God commanded Noah to build an ark. **Genesis 6:14** *“Make yourself an ark of gopherwood;...”*
 - a. God specified the type of structure - “an ark”.
 - 1) Noah was not at liberty to build a row boat or sail boat!
 - b. God specified the material he was to use - “gopherwood”.
 - 1) Noah was not at liberty to make the ark out of pine, oak, or maple!
 - 2. Jesus specified the use of unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine when instituting His supper. **Matthew 26:26-29** *“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, ‘Take, eat; this is My body.’ 27 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you. 28 For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. 29 But I say to*

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you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom.”

(NOTE: We know the ‘bread’ was unleavened because of Luke 22:1 “Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.”)

- a. We are not at liberty to use cornbread and buttermilk in observing the Lord’s Supper!
3. If we can understand these two points, surely we can see the same when it comes to music in worship.
 - a. Had God commanded “music”, we would be at liberty to choose any kind of music and that would certainly include the use of mechanical instruments.
 - b. However, God specified “*singing*” and that limits it to vocal music not mechanical instruments of music.

II. THREE MOST COMMON OBJECTIONS:

- A. “Where Does The Bible Say **NOT** To Use Mechanical Instruments!”
 1. **Acts 15:24** “*Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, ‘You must be circumcised and keep the law’—to whom **we gave no such commandment—***”
 - a. No commandment! - No Authority!
 2. **Hebrews 7:11-14** “*Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron? 12 For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law. 13 For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar. 14 For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, **of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood.***”
 - a. **Exodus 28:1** “*Now take Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister to Me as priest, Aaron and Aaron's sons: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.*”
 - b. When God commanded Moses to appoint Aaron to be High Priest, He didn’t have to name the other eleven (11) tribes of Israel for it to be understood which tribe would serve as the priesthood.
 - c. God’s silence must be respected!
 - d. Therefore, when God commands us to “sing” He did not have to say, “Thou shalt not play a mechanical instrument of music in worship to me!”

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- B. “Mechanical Instruments Of Music Are An Aid Like Songbooks!”
1. We must not add to or take from the word of God. **Deuteronomy 4:2** “*You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.*” (Also see **Proverbs 30:5-6**; **Revelation 22:18-19**)
 - a. Aids are authorized within the command, approved example, or necessary conclusion; additions are not!
 - b. When we use an aid, we are doing nothing more than what has been commanded!
 2. Noah was commanded to build an ark. (**Genesis 6:14**)
 - a. If he had used tools (which I’m sure he had to use) or animals to transport the wood, they would be aids for he would still be carrying out the command to build an ark.
 - b. If he had used cypress, oak, or cedar that would have been an addition because it was a different kind of wood than gopherwood.
 3. Baptism is a command. **Matthew 28:19** “*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*”; **Acts 10:48** “*And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord...*”
 - a. To fulfill that command we could use a river, pond, lake, baptistry, pool, etc.
 - b. All of these would be aids in helping us to carry out the command to baptize/immerse because we’d be doing exactly what the command states.
 - c. Sprinkling or pouring is not an aid but an addition because it is not longer baptizing/immersing!
 4. Yes, songbooks are an aid for they help us in carrying out the command to sing.
 - a. Mechanical instruments of music in worship to God are an addition because they involve a different kind of music.
- C. “There Are Mechanical Instruments Mentioned In Heaven!”
1. **Revelation 14:2** “*And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps.*”
 2. To use these verses as proof to justify mechanical instruments of music in worship is wrong for two reasons:
 - a. First, this scene is taking place in Heaven not on earth.
 - 1) What angels can do in Heaven does not prove what can be done by us here on earth.

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- a) Jesus stated angels “*neither marry, nor are given in marriage*” (**Matthew 22:30**).
 - b) Should we apply this to ourselves today?
 - c) To not apply this is to be inconsistent!
- b. Second, we need to consider the full statement in Revelation 14: 3 *They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth.*
- 1) What John actually heard was ‘voices’ which sounded like ‘harpers harping with their harps’.
 - a) There is no actual mentioning of the playing of harps!
- NASV** “And I heard a voice from heaven, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder, and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps. And they sang a new song before the throne...”
- RSV** “And I heard a voice from heaven like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder; the voice I heard was like the sound of harpers playing on their harps, and they sing a new song before the throne...”
3. There is no justification for mechanical instruments of music in worship to God based upon ‘harpers in heaven’!

CONCLUSION:

- A. The only command and example we have in the New Testament concerning the music to be used in worship unto to God is to be “**singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord**” (Ephesians 5:19).
- B. To use mechanical instruments of music in worship to God is to add to His word. “*Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar.*” (**Proverbs 30:6**)