

Schedule of Meeting Times:

WKAC 1080 AM Sunday 7:30 AM
Speaker, Robert Emerson
 Study Sunday 10:00 AM
 Worship Sunday 11:00 AM
 Worship Sunday 5:00 PM
Singing every 2nd Sunday evening
 Study Wednesday 7:00 PM

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." —Psa 119:105



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Servants during December:

Songleader: Peter (1), Dwight (8), Stanley (15), Larry (22), David (29)

Reading: Robert

Announcements: Marty

Table: Larry, Mike, Lakin, Stanley

Wednesday Lesson: Larry (4), Stanley (11), Kris (18), Larry (25)

Lawn Mowing (week starting): On Break...

Singing: The Vilander's (22)

Area Meetings: South Cullman (1/17-19)

Hays Mill church of Christ

21705 Hays Mill Road
 Elkmont, AL 35620

The Bible .
Examiner

"Examine everything carefully..." —1 Thessalonians 5:21 NASB

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Analyzing Arguments in Favor of Instrumental Music (Part 1)

By Mark Mayberry

Although churches of Christ are well known for worshipping God with acapella singing, it seems that brethren at times have difficulty verbalizing to others why they do so.

This is part one of a two part article dealing with the first two of six common arguments that are often made in favor of instrumental music.

Christianity is a religion of faith. To walk by faith means that we live in harmony with God's Word. This has special application to our expression of worship: It must be according to God's will! Our faith, practice and worship must be grounded in the teachings of the Bible. The New Testament furnishes us with a pattern for worship. Sadly, many people are content to follow manmade systems of religion

without ever determining whether or not they are pleasing to the Lord.

Let's consider one specific issue: What kind of music should we use in worship? Every so often one of our neighbors will ask, "Why is it that churches of Christ do not use instrumental music in worship?" The answer is simple. We do not use mechanical instruments of music in worship because there is no New Testament authority for such a practice. Vocal music is all that God ever authorized. Of those passages in the New Testament that speak of music in worship, without exception the focus is on singing: Mt 26:30; Mk 14:26; Acts 16:25; Rom 15:9; 1 Cor 14:15; Eph 5:19; Col 3:16; Heb 2:12; Jas 5:13. The New

Testament teaches that God desires us to worship him in song, and we must be content with that divine decree. Ephesians 5:18-19 says, "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."

Colossians 3:16 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."

In spite of the plain teaching of Scripture, many still try to justify the use of mechanical instruments of music. Let us examine some of the arguments made in favor of instrumental music. A diligent study of each point will show that these arguments do not hold water.

"It Is An Expedient."

Some try to justify instrumental music by saying, "It is an expedient." Webster defines an expedient as something "useful for effecting a desired result; suited to the circumstances or the occasion; advantageous, convenient." Certain things in religion can be justified as expedients, but there are biblical principles that must be respected.

In order for a thing to be an expedient, it must first be lawful. It must fall within the bounds of that which God has authorized. If there is no command, approved example, or necessary inference in the New Testament to justify a practice, then we should avoid it, Mt 15:7-9; Col 3:17; 2 Jn 9.

Consider the tragic example of Uzzah in the Old Testament, 2 Sam 6:6,7. He surely thought he was justified when he reached out to steady the ark when the oxen stumbled, but he sadly discovered that an act cannot be an expedient if it is unlawful, Num 4:15.

Furthermore, an expediency has to do with a best choice among various options. Certain things may fall within the realm of God's commandments, and assist us in obeying his will. For example, communion plates and cups help in serving the Lord's Supper. A church building is often the most expedient way of carrying out God's command to assemble. When Jesus gave the great commission, he said, "Go teach." Since the Lord did not specify how they were to go, the apostles were free to choose the most expedient method of travel.

However, man has no options when the Lord specifies exactly what he wants done. In such cases

we are not free to do something else and call it an expedient. If we go beyond what is specified, and offer a substitute, we are guilty of adding to God's Word, Deut 4:2; Lev 10:1,2.

In giving the great commission, Jesus said, "Preach the gospel." He specified what they were to preach. No one is at liberty to preach anything other than the gospel of Christ, Gal 1:8,9. This principle is also illustrated through the Bible's teaching on baptism. The New Testament repeatedly pictures baptism as a "burial," Acts 8:38,39; Rom 6:3,4; Col. 2:12, and the Greek word itself means "to dip, plunge, or immerse." Some would claim that sprinkling is simply one way to carry out God's command regarding baptism. Not true! Sprinkling is a substitute. God has specified the "mode" of baptism he desires, and no other will do.

When God commanded us to make music in worship, he specified what kind of music he desired: "singing," Eph 5:19; Col 3:16. Thus we cannot justify instrumental music as an expedient. It is not merely an aid, but is in fact an addition to God's commandment. The use of instrumental music is

unauthorized and cannot be practiced "by faith."

"It Was Used In the Old Testament."

Many would defend the use of instrumental music by saying, "It was used in the Old Testament," 2 Chron 29:25; Ps 150. True, but we are no longer under the Old Testament! The Law of Moses served its purpose and it has now been abolished, Gal 3:22-25; Eph 2:13-16; Col 2:14-16. Those who are living today are under law to Christ, 1 Cor 9:21. As a result, no one can seek to be justified by the Law of Moses, Gal 5:14. The Old Testament called for animal sacrifices, burning incense, circumcision, a distinction between clean and unclean meats, etc. You can't take one and leave the rest. Paul warned the Judaizing teachers, saying, "I testify to every man that is circumcised that he is a debtor to the whole law," Gal 5:3. The same statement could be made to those who would reach back to the Law of Moses in an effort to justify instrumental music.

—via *Guardian of Truth*, 1/18/90 

Remember in Prayer

Robert has been feeling ill for a while now, and **Buddy** had been suffering from a sinus infection. Remember both **Ruth Black** (Limestone Health Facility) and

Madelene Britnell (Valley View, 206); as well as **Lois Adams**, **Carolyn Dennis**, **Tim** and **Dot Hice**, **Polly McNatt**, and **Hazel Teeple**. 

