

Question: Why don't churches of Christ enrich their worship to God in song with musical instruments? (Final)

In our first article on this subject, we listed all the New Testament scriptures that pertain to worshipping God, instructing and edifying Christians in song. We noted that all the passages indicate singing only, not playing or performing with instruments of music. Last week we reprinted the quotes of historians, reformers and scholars on the subject. Their statements concurred with the conclusion we reached in our first article. This week, we want to address certain statements people often use to justify incorporating the use of musical instruments in the worship of God.

“IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN A TRADITION IN OUR CHURCH.”

Actually, history reveals the use of instruments to be an innovation of recent origin. In most cases, it has been used only during the last two centuries. Even so, as “*traditions of men*” it qualifies as “*vain*” worship (*Mt 15:9 2Th 2:15*).

“I DON'T SEE ANYTHING WRONG WITH IT.”

The men and women of Athens worshipped at an altar “*TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.*” They didn't see anything wrong with that, but Paul told them they worshipped God “*ignorantly*” (*Ac 17:22-23*). God, the Father, wants us to be informed about the type of worship He desires. That information will come from Him through His Son and the apostles. Our views one way or another are not under consideration.

“I LIKE IT IN MY WORSHIP TO GOD.”

Paul speaks, at some length, in his epistle to the Colossians about the subject of “*will worship (self-imposed religion, nkjv -- Co 2:16-23)*.” This is when people impose on themselves and others a form of worship patterned after their own logic and not after the will of God. Many people like to use instruments of music to worship God, but to do so is to impose a form of worship that originated with the will of man instead of the will of God.

“THEY WERE USED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.”

The fact that God commanded and/or allowed the Israelites to do certain things in Old Testament times does not mean we are permitted to do the same things. King David married several women; we would be hard pressed to justify that by New Testament teaching. The “*fleshly ordinances,*” which include instrumental music in the Jewish Temple, were “*imposed until the time of reformation*” (*He 9:10*). That time came when Christ came, and now God expects His people to worship Him differently (*Jn 4:23-24*).

In *Amos 6:5* there is an indication that King David introduced musical instruments into worship in the Temple. God seemed to tolerate this for a time, but now He very clearly commands vocal music by His people (Christians) in worship. These are the “*true worshippers.*” In other words, “*worshippers of what is true and spiritual.*”

Thank you for reading; continue to study your Bible and search the Truth. Do so with an open mind. Do not make up your mind about anything that pertains to your soul until you have searched the Scriptures. – C. Boyd Jennings