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the Christian Church, is WITHOUT the SANCTION and AGAINST the will of God; that they are subversive of the spirit of true devotion, and that they are sinful." "I am an old man, and an old minister; and I here declare that I never have known them productive of any good in the worship of God; and have had reason to believe that they were productive of much evil. Music, AS A SCIENCE, I esteem and admire; but instruments of music IN THE HOUSE OF GOD I abominate and abhor."

**Lyman Coleman**, a Presbyterian scholar commented: "It is generally admitted that the primitive Christians employed no instrumental music in their Christian worship. Neither Ambrose, nor Basil, no Chrysostom, in the noble encomiums which they severally pronounce upon music, they severally pronounce upon music, make any mention of instrumental music. Basil condemns it as ministering only to the depraved passion of men. Musical accompaniments were gradually introduced; but can hardly be assigned to a period earlier than the fifth or sixth centuries. Organs were unknown in the church until the eight or ninth century. Previous to this they had their place in theater rather than in the church. They were never regarded with favor in the Eastern church, and were vehemently opposed in many places in the West."

**W.J. Conybeare** and **J.S. Howson**, both of the Church of England commented on Ephesians 5:19 by saying: "Throughout the whole passage there is a contrast implied between the Heathen and the Christian practice. ...when you meet, let your enjoyment consist not in fullness of wine, but fullness of the Spirit; let your songs be, not the drinking songs of heathen feasts, but psalms and hymns; and their accompaniment, not the music of the lyre, but the melody of the heart; while you sing them to the praise not of Baccus or Venus, but of the Lord Jesus Christ."

**J.H. Garrison** from the Christian Church said: "There is no command in the New Testament, Greek or English, commanding the use of the instrument. Such a command would be entirely out of harmony with the New Testament."

**John Knox**, a Presbyterian preacher called the organ "a kist (chest) of whistles."

**Martin Luther**, founder of the Lutheran Church opposed the use of the instrument in worship. He called the organ "an ensign to Baal." An ensign is a flag, banner, sign, signal or badge. Luther called the organ a banner of idolatry, a sign or signal of sin.

The **Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia** (Vol.2, p.1702): "In the Greek church the organ never came into use. But after the eighth century it became more and more common in the Latin church; not, however, without opposition from the side of the monks. Its misuse, however, raised so great an opposition to

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it, that, but for the emperor Ferdinand, it would have probably have been abolished by the Council of Trent. The Reformed Church discarded it; and though the Church of Basel very early reintroduced it, it was in other places admitted only sparingly, and after long hesitation."

**Charles H. Spurgeon** preached to 20,000 people every Sunday for 20 years in the Metropolitan Baptist Tabernacle and never were mechanical instruments of music used in his services. When asked why, he quoted 1st Corinthians 14:15. "I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the understanding also; I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." He then declared: "I would as soon pray to God with machinery as to sing to God with machinery."

**John Wesley**, founder of the Methodist Church said; "I have no objection to instruments of music in our chapels, provided they are neither HEARD or SEEN."

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"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;"

Ephesians 5:19

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## What Does The Bible Teach About Instrumental Music?



Mike Hughes

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There are many in the religious world today who use Mechanical instruments of music in their worship to God. Let's go to the New Testament in order to make a determination if there is scriptural authority for their use today.

The Bible points out to us in Hebrews 1:1-2 *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by [his] Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;*

In II John 9 John tells us *Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.*

Jesus tells us in John 4:24 *God [is] a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship [him] in spirit and in truth.*

And finally Paul in Colossians 3:17 Says *And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, [do] all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.* Thus we see as we look at this subject we are not interested in pleasing ourselves or some man but what the saith the scriptures on this matter. Notice the ten passages from the New Testament.

**Matthew 26:30** *And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.*

**Mark 14:26** *And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.*

**Acts 16:25** *And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.*

**Romans 15:9** *And that the Gentiles might glorify God for [his] mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.*

**I Corinthians 14:15** *What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.*

**Ephesians 5:19** *Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;*

**Colossians 3:16** *Let the word of Christ dwell in you*

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*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.*

**Hebrews 2:12** *Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.*

**Hebrews 13:15** *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of [our] lips giving thanks to his name.*

**James 5:13** *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.*

It should be obvious that not a one of the passages speak of Instrumental Music. It should be apparent as well to be pleasing to God we should want to follow his will for us today the New Testament. The Old Testament was nailed to the Cross of Christ. (Colossians 2:14) thus we are no longer under its teaching.

Many want to go back to David for their authority for the instrument.

But as God points out in Matthew 17:3-5 *"And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."* We are to hear his son. In the passage under consideration we see two prominent men of Old Testament times. Moses the Law Giver and Elijah a prophet of God. Surely if we were to go by the Old Testament for our authority today in religious matters God would not have intervened Peter's trying to build three tabernacles for Jesus, Moses and Elijah. Those that want to go back to the Old Testament for authority do not want to go back to the Law and reinstate animal sacrifices. Why? If we can go to the Old Testament for authority for Mechanical Instruments of Music surely we could bring animal sacrifices back as well.

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## What Some Denominational People Have Said Regarding Instruments of Music

According to history records, mechanical instruments of music did not have their introduction into Christian worship until 670 A.D. There is not one passage in the New Testament where the use of Instrumental Music was commanded or that its practice is even implied! God specifies the kind of music he wants and in all 10 passages in the New Testament where music is mentioned it is always SINGING, never playing!

Many through the centuries have opposed its introduction and use in the worship. And, even though we find listed here their comments, we must understand the instrument is not wrong simply because men have opposed it. It is SINFUL because the Bible gives us no authority for its use. However, to show that members of the church of Christ are not alone in recognizing this basic Bible truth, note below what many in the past have said concerning Instrumental Music.

The **American Cyclopedia** (Vol. 12, pg 688): *"Pope Vitalian is related to have first introduced organs into some of the churches of western Europe, about 670; but the earliest trustworthy account is that one sent as a present by the Greek emperor Constantine to Pepin, king of the Franks, in 755."*

**Joseph Bingham**, a Presbyterian professor wrote that the Church *"although lapsing more and more into defection from the truth and into corruption of apostolic practice, had no instrumental music for twelve hundred years."*

**John Calvin**, founder of the Presbyterian Church: *"Musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting up of lamps, and the restoration of other shadows of the law."*

**Adam Clarke**, a distinguished Methodist scholar, made these comments concerning Amos 6:5 *"...I further believe that the use of such instruments of music, in*

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