

Why We Sing A-Capella (#2)

Text : **Psa. 150: 1-6, 66: 1-2, 13-15 ; Mark 7: 1-8**

S#1.

A. Most people in America have never given much thought to using musical instruments in their church other than which instruments they prefer.

S#2.

1. In the lifetime of today's church attenders instruments have most always been used.
2. Large churches use their music to compete for members. (*advertisement on radio*)
3. They do so because people would rather be entertained than to worship.

B. In our previous lessons we observed God's attitude toward obedience.

S#3.

1. God has never and does not now accept all worship that is offered to Him.
 - a. **Gen. 4** ... Cain desired to please God but was rejected for non-compliance.
 - b. **Matt. 7** ... Jesus will reject many who think they are actively serving Him.
2. God rejects those do not conform to His instructions .. man must treat Him as holy.

a. **Lev. 10: 1-3** ... Nadab & Abihu were struck dead by God.

Vs -3 **Then Moses said to Aaron, "It is what the Lord spoke, saying,**

S#4.

'By those who come near Me I will be treated as holy, (*not like being entertained in His name*)
And before all the people I will be honored.' "

b. **Num. 20: 1-13** ... Moses and Aaron lost their inheritance in the promised land.

Vs -12 **But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you have not**
believed Me, to treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel, therefore
you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."

S#5.

(Note : *The people did not know the instructions God had given to Moses.*)

3. God's people have always been a singing people. *Under Moses, prophets, Jesus*
4. The clear positive command is that Christians are to sing and that is restrictive.
5. Singing has clearly stated purposes : to edify, to teach and admonish by speaking.
6. The purpose of worship is to express the adoration of one's heart to God.
 To express adoration (worship) one must give what the object of adoration desires.
When purchasing a cake for a loved one do you buy what you like or what they like?

C. Therefore, it gives us cause to consider very carefully the way we worship God.

By this lesson we will consider the following :

S#6.

1. Refute Old Testament justification given for using the instrument in worship.
2. Observe the attitude of the leaders in the early church.
3. See how the instrument was introduced into Christian worship.
4. Document the reformation leaders' purge of the instrument from Christian worship.
5. Contemplate the re-introduction of the instrument in the 18th and 19th centuries.

I. Old Testament justification for the use of instruments of music in worship. S#7.**A. Those who desire to use the instrument point to the Psalms for justification.**

1. "We're commanded to sing psalms and some of the psalms command instruments."
2. Their favorite proof-text is **Psalms 150**. **S#8.**
 - 3 Praise Him with trumpet sound; Praise Him with harp and lyre.**
 - 4 Praise Him with timbrel and dancing; Praise Him with stringed instruments and pipe. 5 Praise Him with loud cymbals; Praise Him with resounding cymbals.**
 - a. There is a specific list of instruments : harp, lyre, timbrel, stringed, pipe, cymbals
 - b. Dancing is also commanded in this verse.

B. The Old Testament (Psalms) is not a buffet; if we take part, we take all. S#9.

1. If we are to take Psalm 150, we must also take Psalm 66. **S#10.**
2. **Psa. 66: 13-15** I shall come into Your house with burnt offerings; I shall pay You my vows, **14** Which my lips uttered And my mouth spoke when I was in distress. **15** I shall offer to You burnt offerings of fat beasts, With the smoke of rams; I shall make an offering of bulls with male goats.
 - a. Burn offerings are required : "fat beasts, smoke of rams, bulls and male goats."
 - b. The rams must produce smoke. (*Man's never been given freedom to choose how worship*)

C. Thank God we are no longer under the law. (law of the spirit of life in CJ) S#11.

1. God gave the law to the nation of Israel in Exodus 20ff and violation brought death.
2. The Law of the Sabbath : **Exod. 20: 7 – Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.**
3. Violation of the Law of Moses was punishable by death.

Num. 15: 32 – Now while the sons of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man gathering wood on the sabbath day. ... 35 Then the Lord said to Moses, "The man shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones outside the camp."
4. **Gal. 5: 2-4** ... If we take part of the Law we are obliged to keep it all.
5. Jesus freed us from that Law, nailing it to His cross.

Col. 2: 14 – having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. **S#12.**

D. Authority for Christian worship cannot be derived from the Law of Moses. S#13.

We have a clear, positive N.T. command : **Sing and make melody with your heart**

II. Early church leaders were unanimously opposed to adding an instrument. S#14.**S#15.****A. We have seen there was no mention of instruments being used in first century****B. Justine Martyr was a prominent Christian scholar in the second century. S#16.**

1. This is the first generation after the Apostles and there were still those with gifts.

2. In an early description of worship in his *Apology*, Justin Martyr (100–165 AD) recognized music as a part of culture, but rejected instruments in worship since “musical organs pertain to the Jewish ceremonies and agree no more to us than circumcision.” (Born in Judea, but a self-described gentile and well educated.)**S#17.****C. Clement of Alexandria was the leading Christian scholar of the third century.**

1. Clement was recognized as a highly educated scholar before becoming a Christian.

2. Clement was the teacher of Origen, another famous “church father.”

3. Clement of Alexandria (165–215 AD) “Music (*musica instrumentalis*) is then to be handled for the sake of the embellishment and composure of manners (*musica humana*)... But we must reject superfluous music, which enervates men’s souls, and leads to variety – now mournful, and the licentious and voluptuous, and then frenzied and frantic.” It was with such arguments that the third century church fathers rejected musical instruments. (Clement’s point is : Mechanical music is from man, but human music is from God.)4. Clement further stated, “Let the pipe be resigned to the shepherds, and the flute to the superstitious who are engrossed in idolatry. For, in truth, such instruments are to be banished from the temperate banquet, being more suitable to beasts than men.” (*Many early Christians views instruments as evil everywhere.*)**S#18.****D. Late in the fourth century Ambrose (337-397 AD) was named bishop of Milan.**

1. Ambrose was a very popular leader and wrote responsive chants.

2. From his writings it is clear that instrumental music was beginning to creep in. “Psalms are being sung, and you take up the psalter or the tympanum? Woe unto you indeed, because you relinquish salvation and choose death.”

E. One of the most influential church fathers was Augustine of Hippo**S#19.**

1. By this time there was a battle for the purity of worship. (354-430 AD)

2. Describing the worship of the church in Alexandria under Athanasius.

“Musical instruments were not used. The pipe, tabret, and harp here associate so intimately with the sensual heathen cults, as well as with the wild revelries and shameless performances of the degenerate theater and circus, it is easy to understand the prejudices against their use in the worship.”

III. How was instrumental music introduced into Christian worship ?**S#20.****A. Most reference works ascribe the introduction of the instrument into worship to Pope Vitalian I (657-672):****S#21.**

1. The Catholic .Encyclopedia .(1913 edition) states that "according to Plating ('De vitis Pontificum', Cologne, 1593), Pope' Vitalian (657-72) introduced the organ into the church service. This, however, is very doubtful. At all events, a strong objection to the organ in church service remained pretty general down to the twelfth century, which may be accounted for partly by the imperfection of tone in organs of that time. But from the twelfth century on, the organ became the privileged church instrument . . ." (Vol. XI, pp. 300-301). **S#22.**
2. In 757, a great organ was sent as a present to King Pepin by the Byzantine Emperor, Constantine, and placed in the church St. Corneille as Compiègne." (Chambers Encyclopedia, Vol 7, p. 112)
3. Everett Ferguson (Phd) states that "it is quite late before there is evidence of instrumental music, first the organ, employed in public worship of the church. Recent studies put the introduction of instrumental music even later than the dates found in, reference books. It was perhaps as late as the tenth century when the organ was played as part of the service . . . When introduced in the Middle Ages, the organ was still not part of the liturgy proper. That is, it did not initially accompany the hymn service, but was a separate item in the service." (A Cappella Music In The Public Worship of the Church, p. 81). **S#23.**

S#24.**B. This introduction of instruments into the worship caused great controversy.**

1. Edward Dickinson states that "since harmony was unknown during the first one thousand years or more of the Christian era, and instrumental music had no independent existence, the whole vast system of chant melodies was purely unison and unaccompanied, its rhythm usually subordinated to that of the text" (Music in the History of the Western Church, p. 129). **S#25.**
2. The use of instruments in worship was one of the causes of the Eastern church (Greek Orthodox) splitting off from the Western church (Catholic) in 1054.
3. *The Catholic Encyclopedia* says that Thomas Aquinas was a "philosopher, theologian, doctor of the Church (Angelical Doctor), patron of Catholic universities, colleges, and schools." (1225–1274 AD) Regarding the instrument, Thomas Aquinas wrote, "Our church does not use musical instruments, as harps and psalteries, to praise God withal, that she may not seem to Judaize." [Thomas Aquinas. Bingham's Antiquities, Vol. 3, page 137.] **S#26.**

C. The organ did not receive general acceptance until the late 1200s.

1. For years after its introduction the organ was played alone ... not with singing.
2. For many years the organ was the only instrument used in churches which had.

IV. The reformation leaders universally condemned the use of instruments. S#27.**A. Martin Luther S#28.**

"The organ in the worship is the insignia of Baal ... The Roman Catholic borrowed it from the Jews." (Mcclintock & Strong's Encyclopedia Volume VI, page 762)

B. John Calvin S#29.

"Musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting of lamps, and 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 apostles is far more pleasing to him." (John Calvin, Commentary on Psalms 33)

Note : Though Huldrych Zwingli, the Swiss Reformer, was an accomplished musician in his own right, he agreed with Calvin that instruments were not approved by God in public worship.

C. Leaders of contemporary denominations were opposed to adding instruments. S#30.

1. PRESBYTERIAN "Question 6. Is there any authority for instrumental music S#31.
in the worship of God under the present dispensation? Answer. Not the least, only the singing of psalms and hymns and spiritual songs was appointed by the apostles; not a syllable is said in the New Testament in favor of instrumental music nor was it ever introduced into the Church until after the eighth century, after the Catholics had corrupted the simplicity of the gospel by their carnal inventions. It was not allowed in the Synagogues, the parish churches of the Jews, but was confined to the Temple service and was abolished with the rites of that dispensation." (Questions on the Confession of Faith and Form of Government of The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, published by the Presbyterian Board of Publications, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1842, pg. 55.)
2. BAPTIST .. Charles Spurgeon is called the prince of preachers. (1832–1892) S#32.
"Praise the Lord with the harp. Israel was at school, and used childish things to help her to learn; but in these days when Jesus gives us spiritual food, one can make melody without strings and pipes. We do not need them. They would hinder rather than help our praise. Sing unto him. This is the sweetest and best music. No instrument like the human voice." (Commentary on Psalms 42:4) (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.)
3. METHODIST ... John Wesley, the reputed founder of the Methodist Church, S#33.
is quoted by Adam Clarke to have said: "I have no objection to instruments of music in our chapels, provided they are neither heard nor seen." Clarke's Commentary, Vol. 4, page 684.

4. EPISCOPAL ... Conybeare and Howson, famous scholars of the Church of England (*which is Episcopal in the U.S.*), in commentary of Eph 5:19 say, "Make melody with the music of your hearts, to the Lord...let your songs be, not the drinking of heathen feasts, but psalms and hymns; and their accompaniment, not the music of the lyre, but the melody of the heart." Life and Epistles of St. Paul, v 2, p 408.

5. There are many others but time and space limit what is practical to present. **S#35.**

Note : Others refuse the instrument : some Baptist (Primitive, Old Regular, German) some Presbyterian, Plymouth Brethren, Greek Orthodox, Amish, Mennonite

CONCLUSION :

A. So, here is my question for you. Why do folks assume that instruments ought to be used in worship? When we are asked why we do not use instruments in worship, behind that question is the thought that using instruments is normal and using voice only is abnormal. But, during most of church history that would not have been true. In fact, during most of church history, instruments in worship would have been forbidden. So, why do so many assume that instruments ought to be used in worship?

S#38.

B. Those who added it, admit that it is an addition not authorized by scripture.

"We need not shrink from admitting that candles, like incense and lustral water, were commonly employed in pagan worship and the rites paid to the dead. But the Church, from a very early period, took them into her service, just as she adopted many other things indifferent in themselves, which seemed proper to enhance the splendor of religious ceremony. We must not forget that most of these adjuncts to worship, like music, lights, perfumes, ablutions, floral decorations, canopies, fans, screens, bells, vestments, etc. were not identified with any idolatrous cult in particular but they were common to almost all cults."

(Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. III, pg. 246.)

C. Thus, the essence of the discussion is :

S#40.

1. We must have bible authority for everything that we do.
2. We have a direct positive command is to sing and make melody in our hearts.
3. The absence of a negative command does not consent to anything not forbidden.
4. We have been freed from the Law of Moses. If we go back to it we must obey all.
5. The history of the church reveals instruments as an unsanctioned addition.
6. Mechanical instruments are a relatively recent addition to please men.
7. Worship that is not according to God's pattern is rejected by God.

S#41.

C. Mk 7:13 – But in vain do they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.

S#42.

INVITATION : *Is it your deeply held belief that Jesus is the Christ the son of God* **S#43.** ... Communion Slide

Lesson Text :**Psalms 150: 1-6**

1 Praise the Lord! Praise God in His sanctuary; Praise Him in His mighty expanse. **2** Praise Him for His mighty deeds; Praise Him according to His excellent greatness.

3 Praise Him with trumpet sound; Praise Him with harp and lyre. **4** Praise Him with timbrel and dancing; Praise Him with stringed instruments and pipe. **5** Praise Him with loud cymbals; Praise Him with resounding cymbals. **6** Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!

Psalms 66: 1-2, 13-15

1 A Shout joyfully to God, all the earth; **2** Sing the glory of His name; Make His praise glorious. ... **13** I shall come into Your house with burnt offerings; I shall pay You my vows, **14** Which my lips uttered And my mouth spoke when I was in distress. **15** I shall offer to You burnt offerings of fat beasts, With the smoke of rams; I shall make an offering of bulls with male goats.

Mark 7: 1-8

7 The Pharisees and some of the scribes gathered around Him when they had come from Jerusalem, **2** and had seen that some of His disciples were eating their bread with impure hands, that is, unwashed. **3** (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands, thus observing the traditions of the elders; **4** and when they come from the market place, they do not eat unless they cleanse themselves; and there are many other things which they have received in order to observe, such as the washing of cups and pitchers and copper pots.) **5** The Pharisees and the scribes asked Him, "Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with impure hands?" **6** And He said to them, "Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far away from Me. **7** But in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrine the precepts of men.' **8** "Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men."

Additional reading for study :

Christian worship was first patterned after synagogue worship ... (reform party)

- Instrument first added to synagogue in 815 in Berlin, Germany
- Instrument first added in American synagogue in 1840 S.C.
- considered a sin to play any musical instrument on the Sabbath

Church of Christ

http://www.god-answers.org/Online_Tools/Sermons/Instruments.htm

<https://www.apologeticspress.org/apcontent.aspx?category=11&article=868>

<http://www.bible.ca/H-music.htm>

Reformed Presbyterian

<http://presbyterianreformed.org/2014/04/instruments-worship/>

<http://messiahchurch.org/articles/why-we-only-sing-psalms-without-instruments/>

<http://www.westminsterconfession.org/worship/instrumental-music-in-worship-commanded-or-not-commanded.php>

Primitive Baptist

<http://www.letgodbetrue.com/bible/church/musical-instruments-in-the-church.php>

<http://www.pb.org/PBDocs/GuessOnInstruments.html>

Greek Orthodox

<http://orthodox-church.info/answer/38/>

Mennonites

http://gameo.org/index.php?title=Musical_Instruments

<http://www.truthmagazine.com/archives/volume24/TM024135.html>

<http://www.museeprotestant.org/en/notice/protestant-music/>

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/history/2008/august/when-did-churches-start-using-instrumental-music.html>

Fun to listen

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NvrtPF0vulK>