

INSTRUMENTS OF MUSIC

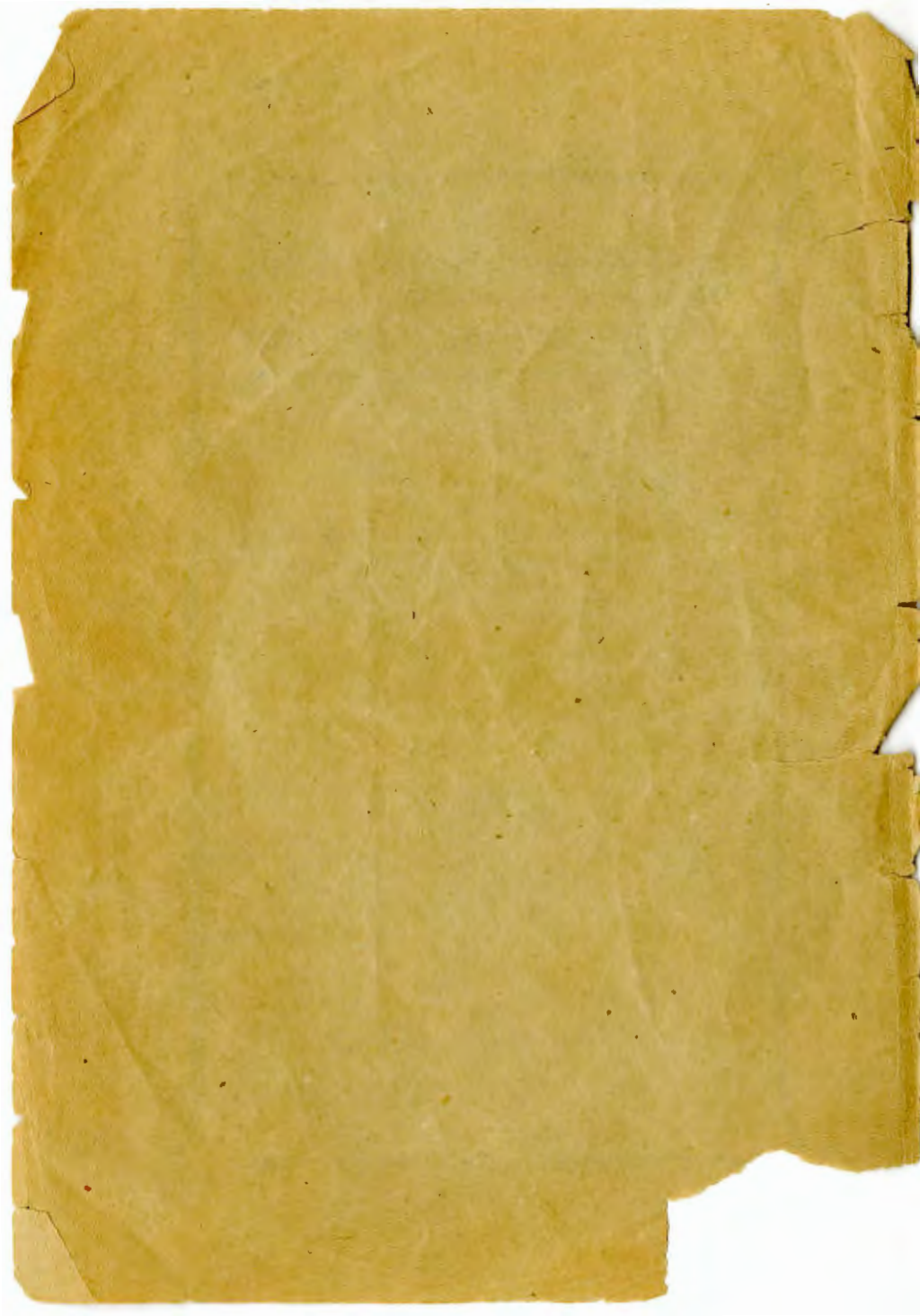
IN THE SERVICE OF GOD

**An Examination of the Subject from the Teaching
of Both the Old and the New Testaments**



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INSTRUMENTS OF MUSIC IN THE SERVICE OF GOD.

The fundamental principle of all true worship or service is, it must be done in obedience to God. Jesus said: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." To change God's appointment or to worship in a way not commanded is to refuse to worship or serve him. "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you." (Deut. 4: 2, R. V.) "Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes. . . . What thing soever I command you, that shall ye observe to do: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it." (Deut. 12: 8-32, R. V.) "Thou shalt hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep all his commandments which I command thee this day, to do that which is right in the eyes of the Lord thy God." We are to seek to do what is right in the eyes of God and to do what he commands, neither adding to nor taking from.

God gave his people judges until the days of Samuel, the prophet. "His sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment. Then all the elders of Israel . . . came to Samuel, . . . and said unto him, . . . Make us a king to judge us. . . . And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them." (1 Sam. 8: 3-7.) To

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ask a change of God's order, even when perverted by bad men to evil ends, was to reject God as their Ruler and King. God warned them of the evils the kings would bring upon them, but granted their request and permitted them to make the experiment of serving God in a government of their own, of seeking earthly greatness through an earthly kingdom, and at the same time trying to serve him in his appointments. He permitted this that they might prove the evil results of supplanting God's order with their own inventions. All that pertained to the kingdom and its earthly greatness is given to us as warning to be avoided, not as example to be followed. In this double effort God permitted them to introduce, and tolerated, things that would promote earthly grandeur and display while seeking to do the things that he commanded. Two accounts of this experiment are given. One of these is by the prophet Jeremiah, as is generally believed, in the books of Samuel and Kings. Jeremiah was a prophet of God. A prophet was the mouthpiece of God and spoke for him to men. He gives especially the efforts to serve the Lord and the failures through the kings. The other account—supposed to have been written by Ezra, the priest—gives the things done to exalt and glorify the nation among other nations, and is contained in the books of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. A priest spoke to God for the people. These last were written to excite the national pride, to arouse the people to reestablish the kingdom in its former glory after the return from the captivity of Babylon. Hosea (13: 9-11, R. V.) tells the origin and the end of the experiment: "It is thy destruction, O Israel, that thou art against me, against thy help. Where now is thy king, that he may save thee in all thy cities? and thy judges, of whom thou saidst, Give me a king and princes? I have given thee a king in mine anger, and have taken him away in my wrath." God gave them kings to punish them for desiring to set aside his government; and when the punishment of the kings drove them away from God instead of drawing them back to him, he took the kings away in

his wrath and left them a prey to their enemies, without either an earthly or a heavenly king to defend them. This whole experiment of a kingdom was a warning to others not to change the order of God. To do so must bring ruin. In the history of these kings, as given by Jeremiah, not a single mention is made of the introduction or use of instrumental music in the regular worship of God; nor is it mentioned with approval by any of the prophets, although all of them, from Isaiah to Malachi, prophesied in the days of the kings, when the instruments were in use. The timbrels and dances by Miriam and the women in their rejoicing over the passage of the Red Sea are mentioned (Ex. 15: 20), when Saul met the minstrels and prophesied (1 Sam. 10: 5-10), and when David attempted to bring up the ark from the house of Abinadab and Uzzah was slain. (2 Sam. 6: 5-7.) It is mentioned as a part of the worship only in the books written by Ezra in his efforts to excite the national pride and to reestablish the kingdom in its earthly glory. When mentioned by him, he is careful always to keep it clear that the use of instruments was ordained by David, as distinct from the things ordained by God for his service. The account of its first establishment by David is given in 1 Chron. 16: 4, 5, R. V.: "He [David] appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the ark of the Lord, and to celebrate and to thank and praise the Lord, the God of Israel: Asaph the chief," and others under him. David appointed these. Distinct from these were "Benaiiah and Jahaziel the priests with trumpets continually, before the ark of the covenant of God." God commanded Moses to make two trumpets to be sounded by the priests. (Num. 10: 2.) "On that day did David first ordain to give thanks unto the Lord, by the hand of Asaph and his brethren." (1 Chron. 16: 7, R. V.) Throughout the chapter the distinction is kept up between the priests with the trumpets appointed by God and the Levites under Asaph appointed by David to perform on the instruments of music. Verse 42, A. V., says, "With them [the priests] Heman and Jeduthun with trumpets and cymbals for those that should

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make a sound, and with musical instruments of God;" but the Revised Version more correctly says, "with instruments for the songs of God"—instruments invented by David for the songs of God.

Again, in 1 Chron. 25: 1, 2, R. V., it is said: "Moreover David and the captains of the host separated for the service certain of the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should prophesy with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals: and the number of them that did the work according to their service was: of the sons of Asaph; Zaccur, and Joseph, and Nethaniah, and Asharelah, the sons of Asaph; under the hand of Asaph, who prophesied after the order of the king [David]." At the consecration of the temple of Solomon, the instruments were used. (2 Chron. 5: 11-14.) The service is described in 2 Chron. 7: 6, R. V.: "And the priests stood, according to their offices; the Levites also with instruments of music of the Lord [margin, "for the songs of the Lord"], which David the king had made to give thanks unto the Lord." Solomon "appointed, according to the ordinance of David his father, the courses of the priests to their service, and the Levites to their charges, to praise, and to minister before the priests, as the duty of every day required." (2 Chron. 8: 14, R. V.) "Jehoiada appointed the offices of the house of the Lord under the hand of the priests the Levites, whom David had distributed in the house of the Lord, to offer the burnt offerings of the Lord, as it is written in the law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, according to the order of David." (2 Chron. 23: 18, R. V.) In all of these examples the services commanded by God and the instrumental services commanded by David are kept distinct and in contrast.

Hezekiah "set the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet: for the commandment was of the Lord by his prophets." (2 Chron. 29: 25, R. V.) While the command to use the instruments was by David, it is said

that "the commandment was of the Lord by his prophets;" but what commandment? Clearly not the instrumental service which here as elsewhere is said to be commanded by David; but if this be the correct reading, the feast of the passover, which was now observed, was commanded by God through his prophets. While I believe this is true, there is no doubt that the Lord tolerated the instrumental service as he did the kingdom. He did not approve the kingdom. When they asked it, he told them, "They have rejected me, that I should not reign over them," and warned them of the evil it would bring upon them; yet he tolerated it, and it was called "the kingdom of the Lord." (2 Chron. 13: 8.) The Septuagint Version, the one used by Christ, reads: "For by the commandment of the Lord, the order was in the hand of the prophets, and the Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets." The Syriac, the Arabic (two of the oldest translations), and the Vulgate agree with this. It certainly does not mean that God commanded the use of the instruments, when it is so often said that David commanded them, in contrast with the things that God commanded.

"And the Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets. . . . And when the burnt offering began, the song of the Lord began also, and the trumpets, together with the instruments of David king of Israel." (2 Chron. 29: 26, 27, R. V.) Josiah observed the passover feast. "And the singers the sons of Asaph were in their place, according to the commandment of David." (2 Chron. 35: 15.) The contrast is kept up between the things commanded by God and those commanded by David. Ezra went up to Jerusalem from Babylon and made an effort to reinstate the kingdom after the captivity. "And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the Lord, after the order of David king of Israel." (Ez. 3: 10, R. V.) Remember, the priests with the trumpets

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were ordained by God through Moses; the cymbals and other instruments, by David. Nehemiah gives an account of the dedicatory services held in the days of Zerubbabel. In chapter 12: 24, R. V., he says: "And the chiefs of the Levites . . . to praise and give thanks, according to the commandment of David the man of God, ward against ward." Verse 36 says: "And his brethren, . . . with the musical instruments of David the man of God." Verse 45 says: "And they kept the ward of their God, and the ward of the purification, and so did the singers and the porters, according to the commandment of David, and of Solomon his son."

These are the places in which instrumental music in the service is mentioned in the Bible, and it is always attributed to David in contrast with the things ordered by God. No service appointed or approved by God is attributed to any man as this is to David. God tolerated it as a part of the kingdom, itself a rebellion against him—as a part of the experiment to maintain a kingdom with earthly glory and to serve God at the same time. After David invented the instruments of music, he, in the psalms, exhorted that they should be used to praise God.

In 1 Chron. 22: 5 David gives the spirit that prompted the kingdom and use of instrumental music: "David said, Solomon my son is young and tender, and the house that is to be built for the Lord must be exceeding magnificent, of fame and of glory throughout all countries: I will therefore now make preparation for it. So David prepared abundantly before his death." This service was introduced to add earthly splendor to the kingdom among the nations, not to obey God. That this earthly splendor and glory were not pleasing to God is clear. Haggai (2: 7-9, R. V.), the prophet, said of the second temple: "I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. . . . The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts." Jesus, the Prince of Peace, came to the latter temple, though so greatly inferior in earthly

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splendor to the former. That God condemned David for introducing this service is clear from Amos 6: 1-6, R. V.: "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and to them that are secure in the mountain of Samaria, the notable men of the chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel come! . . . Ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near; that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; that sing idle songs to the sound of the viol; that devise for themselves instruments of music, like David; that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments; but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph." The invention of instruments of music by David is plainly condemned and placed among sins offensive to God. Every time it is said to be ordained or appointed by David, it is condemned by God, since no service added by man could be acceptable to God. This explains why all the writers are so careful to keep it distinct from things ordained by God, and that it should be understood as an invention and addition of David.

Instrumental music was brought into the temple service as a part of the effort to build up an earthly kingdom and to give earthly glory and fame to that kingdom. God tolerated it as he did the kingdom, which he warned was rebellion against him—a rejection of him, that he "should not reign over them." This music came in to give glory to the earthly kingdom and passed away with it. It is not mentioned in the lengthy history of the kingdom as given in the books of Samuel and Kings; nor is it mentioned by any prophet with approval, although the prophets all lived and wrote during the days of the kings. It is mentioned only in the books of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, which are taken up largely with genealogical tables and such things as would arouse the national pride of the people and excite them to build again the temple and city of Jerusalem and reinstate the kingdom of Judah after the return from captivity in Babylon. It was tolerated by

God, as polygamy, war, slavery, and earthly kingdoms were tolerated (and while tolerated these were not accounted sin to those using them); but it bears the clear marks of the disapproval of God even in the Mosaic dispensation.

Read this defense of polygamy by a Mormon: "Abraham was a polygamist and the friend of God. God knew he was a polygamist when he made him his friend. Jacob had four wives; and their polygamous sons, we are informed, are to be honored by having their names inscribed over the pearly gates of the beautiful city. Suppose that you were to fool St. Peter and get into heaven; how would you feel clasped in the bosom of polygamous Abraham? Do you suppose that you can sufficiently humble yourself to go in at one of those polygamous gates and mingle with the polygamous sons of Jacob? Moses had more than one wife, and yet he was a prophet of God. Just think of a polygamist's leading the people of the Lord! All the judges of Israel and all her chosen kings which were appointed by God—including Saul, David, and Solomon—were polygamists, and the descendants of those polygamists were highly honored by the Lord. The prophet Samuel, and even Jesus, our Savior, came through polygamous lineage. The Bible also says that polygamous relations should exist in the last days, when men should be so decimated that their scarcity would cause seven women to take hold of one man and desire to be called by his name to take away their reproach. (Isa. 4: 1.) Are we not informed that David did not sin, except in the case of Uriah, the Hittite? Did not the Lord, through Nathan, the prophet, tell that he (the Lord) had given David Saul's wives? If all these parties could find favor with God, although they were polygamists and God knew it, would it be unscriptural to believe that polygamists might find favor with our Heavenly Father in these days? The Bible does not say that we shall have no more than one wife, and can we get anything out of these instances than that the Bible sanctions polygamy? Of course you will say that Paul says a bishop is to be the husband of one wife, but we ask:

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Does he say that a bishop cannot have more than one wife? Now, from these passages of scripture, I ask that the prisoner, the Bible, be convicted and be punished under the laws of Tennessee." (Elder Rich, of the Mormons.)

Who can make a better argument for instrumental music in connection with worship than that, or who can make an argument for instrumental music in worship that does not equally justify polygamy? There is no evidence that Moses had more than one wife at one time; nor are Saul and Solomon anywhere held to be saints. Then Jesus himself tells polygamy and easy divorce were permitted or tolerated, not approved. Jesus says: "Have ye not read, that he which made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the twain shall become one flesh? So that they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why then did Moses command to give a bill of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it hath not been so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery." (Matt. 19: 4-9, R. V.) Jesus gives the reason God tolerated polygamy; for the same reason he tolerated the kingdom and instrumental music. He gives his reason for these when they established the kingdom. While he tolerated them, he did not impute them as sin.

Even if it had been approved in the Jewish dispensation, this would not justify it in the Christian any more than it would justify animal sacrifices, infant church membership, polygamy, and the burning of incense. The old covenant was fulfilled, nailed to the cross, and taken out of the way by Christ. (Read 2 Cor. 3: 6-10; Gal. 4: 21-31.) But instrumental music was only tolerated for a time, not approved by God, in the Old Testament.

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Ps. 87: 7—"As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there"—is claimed to be a prophecy of what will be under Christ, and foretells instrumental music will be used; but the Revised Version translates this, "They that sing as well as they that dance shall say, All my fountains are in thee," which would nearer prove that dancing should be in the worship than instrumental music.

THE LEXICONS.

It is claimed that "psallo," translated "sing" in the Scriptures, carries with it the idea of instrumental accompaniment. This is not correct. Liddell and Scott's "Standard Greek-English Lexicon" defines it: "'Psallo'—to touch, feel, stir, or move by touching." It means the twanging or vibrating of a cord. Because singing is done by the twanging or vibration of the vocal cords, and is the most common form of music, it came to be applied exclusively to singing. Just as the word "bury." Its original meaning was to cover up with anything. It is so generally applied to burying in the ground that we always understand "to bury" means to bury in the ground, unless a modifying word, such as "water," "clothing," or other substance, is mentioned, in which the thing was buried. "Baptize" and "bury" mean the same thing; but to baptize in water is so common that unless the word is modified by "spirit," "cloud," "suffering," or something used to bury or baptize in, all understand, to baptize is to baptize in water. "Psallo," unless modified by the name of an instrument, always means to sing. "Psallo" is frequently used in the Bible, and is never translated "to sing with an instrument" or "to play the instrument." When it is said that the harp or other instrument was played, the instrument is always named. This is true in all Greek literature. Bagster gives the same definition, and adds: "In the New Testament, to sing praises." Liddell and Scott say: "Later, in New Testament, to sing with instrumental accompaniment." This means that it was never found so used in Greek literature; but in recent times

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persons have claimed it was so used in the New Testament, just as "baptize" has come to mean to pour or sprinkle water upon people. Sophocles, a native of Greece, and long professor of Greek at Harvard University, published a lexicon, the title-page of which is: "A Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods (from B.C. 146 to A.D. 1100.) It embraces the period of Jesus and his apostles." He enumerates the Greek writers embraced in, and bearing on, the period. In making a lexicon for that period he consulted all the writers of nearly two thousand years, embracing the New Testament and the Septuagint edition of the Old Testament. During this period he did not find a single example of "psallo" being used to mean anything else, save to chant, to sing. He defines "psallo" and its derivatives: "'Psallo'—to chant, to sing; 'psalmos'—psalm; 'psalmodia'—psalm singing; 'psalmodas'—psalmist; 'psaltarion'—psalter, or collection of songs; 'psaltes'—a chanter, church singer; 'psaltria'—chantress; 'psaltos'—played upon the psaltery, sung; 'psaltodeo'—to sing to the harp." Only "psaltos" carries the idea of playing on the instrument. "Psaltodeo" is composed of two words—the "psalm" and the "ode." The ode refers to lyric poetry, or poetry to be sung with the lyre. Hence the two words combined mean to sing to a harp or instrument. This shows "psallo" alone cannot refer to both the voice and the instrument. Had he found "psallo" used in a different sense during this period by an accredited writer, he would have been dishonest not to give this additional meaning. I do not believe an example of a different use of it can be found in the Greek literature of any age of the world.

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

If the laws of the Old Testament, sealed by the typical blood of animals, could not be changed, much more is it true that the laws of the New Testament, sealed by the blood of Christ, cannot be changed. To change an appointment of the New Testament is to turn from the blood

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of Christ that has sealed the New Testament. "Moreover the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry he sprinkled in like manner with the blood. And according to the law, I may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and apart from shedding of blood there is no remission. It was necessary therefore that the copies of the things in the heavens should be cleansed with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. . . . But now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin." (Heb. 9: 21-26, R. V.)

Here are examples of service in song: Jesus and the disciples, after eating the Supper, "when they had sung a hymn, . . . went out into the mount of Olives." (Matt. 26: 30.) In the Philippian jail, Paul and Silas, with hands and feet fast in the stocks, "at midnight . . . sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them." (Acts 16: 25.) "I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." The context shows that he meant: I will so sing that those who hear may understand the words sung—1 Cor. 14: 16: "Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?" "Be not drunken with wine; . . . but be filled with the Spirit; speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord." (Eph. 5: 18, 19, R. V.) "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." (Col. 3: 16.) These passages from Ephesians and Colossians mean exactly the same. To be filled with the Spirit and to have the word of God dwelling in the heart richly are one and the same thing; to sing and make melody in the heart to the Lord and to sing with grace in the heart to the Lord are one and the same thing, and mean to bring the thoughts and feelings of the heart into harmony with the sentiment sung. It is the sentiment that is sung that

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constitutes the worship; there is no acceptable worship in music distinct from the sentiment sung. The music of the song is only a means of impressing the sentiment sung more deeply on the hearts of both singer and hearer. What is sung must be the outgrowth of the word of God "dwelling richly" in the heart. It is to be done by speaking that word of God in song. The purpose is to praise God and teach and admonish one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in the heart to the Lord. No performance of an instrument can possibly grow out of the word of God in the heart; an instrument cannot speak that word either to praise God or to teach and admonish one another. The sound of the instrument drowns the words sung and hinders the teaching and admonition.

The use of the instrument hinders and destroys the essential purpose of the worship in song. It works an entire change in the song service; it sooner or later changes it from a service of praise to God and of teaching and admonishing one another in hymns and psalms and spiritual songs into a musical and artistic entertainment that pleases and cultivates the fleshly and sensuous nature. A more hurtful change could not be made in the worship than this change in its spirit and purpose. If it was a sin to change the appointments of God in the patriarchal and Jewish dispensations, which were sealed by the typical blood of animals, much more is it a sin to change the ordinances and appointments of the Christian dispensation, sealed by the blood of the Son of God. "A man that hath set at naught Moses' law dieth without compassion on the word of two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, think ye, shall he be judged worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Heb. 10: 28, 29, R. V.) To change the appointments of God, sealed with the blood of his Son, and to introduce into his service things not sealed with his blood, is to trample un-

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der foot the Son of God, count his blood unholy, and do despite to the Spirit of grace. It is a fearful thing to tamper with the appointments of God.

IN HISTORY.

Jesus Christ and the apostles did not use instruments of music in the service of God, although instruments easily carried about were common in their day. It is not certain the instruments were used in the Jewish worship in the time of Jesus on earth. They could not use them when in captivity, and the whole land was now in bondage to the Roman Empire. Their use had been common in the Jewish worship, and was at that time common in heathen worship; they were not used in connection with the worship of God for hundreds of years after Christ and the apostles. Whenever an effort to use them was made, it excited such commotion in the churches that they were reported in history that comes down to us.

Hilary (A.D. 355) says: "In the songs of Zion, both old and young, men and women, bore a part; their psalmody was the joint act of the whole assembly in unison." Chrysostom says: "It was the ancient custom, as it is still the custom with us, for all to come together and unitedly join in singing. The young and old, rich and poor, male and female, bond and free—all join in the song." Jerome says: "Go where you will, the plowman at his plow sings his joyful halleluiahs, the busy mower regales himself with his psalms, and the vinedresser is singing one of the psalms of David."

"Thus it is reported that at Alexandria, in A.D. 200, it was the custom to accompany the singing with the flute, which practice was forbidden by Clement as too worldly, and the harp was substituted for it." "The general introduction of instrumental music can certainly not be assigned to an earlier date than the fifth and six centuries. Even Gregory the Great—who, toward the end of the sixth century, added greatly to the existing church music—absolutely prohibited the use of instruments." "The first or-

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gan is believed to have been used in church service in the thirteenth century. Organs were in use before this in the theaters. They were never regarded with favor in the Eastern church and were vehemently opposed in the Western churches. In Scotland no organ is allowed to this day, except in a few Episcopal churches. In the English convocation held A.D. 1562, in Queen Elizabeth's time, for settling the liturgy, the retaining of organs was carried only by a casting vote." "The early reformers, when they came out of Rome, removed them as monuments of idolatry. Luther called the organ an 'ensign of Baal;' Calvin said that instrumental music was not fitter to be adopted into the Christian church than the incense and the candlestick; Knox called the organ a 'kist [chest] of whistles.' The Church of England used them, against a very strong protest, and the English dissenters would not touch them." These extracts are from Strong and McClintock's Encyclopedia; article, "Music." John Wesley and Adam Clarke strongly opposed them, and Alexander Campbell refused to speak when one was used. They have come into use as Christians have lost their zeal and devotion and fidelity to the appointments of God, as parties do as they grow numerous, and have sought to be popular and fashionable and have catered to the fleshly and sensuous tastes and feelings of the world. It cannot be otherwise than sinful to use them, as they constitute no part of the worship of God.

It seems there cannot be a doubt but that the use of instrumental music in connection with the worship of God, whether used as a part of the worship or as an attractive accompaniment, is unauthorized by God and violates the oft-repeated prohibition to add nothing to, take nothing from, the commandments of the Lord. It destroys the difference between the clean and the unclean, the holy and the unholy, counts the blood of the Son of God unclean, and tramples under foot the authority of the Son of God. They have not been authorized by God or sanctified with the blood of his Son. A Christian loyal and true to the Lord Jesus Christ cannot use them, nor in any way countenance

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the setting aside the order of God by adding to or taking from his appointments, even in the smallest matters, as washing of hands. While forbearance and love should be exercised in showing them the error of the way, when the church determines to introduce a service not required by God, he who believes it wrong is compelled to refuse in any way to countenance or affiliate with the wrong. To do so is to commit a double sin. It is to sin against God and his own conscience and to encourage by example others to violate their consciences and the law of God; it is to lower the standard of regard for the authority of God.

It is generally insisted that the peace of the congregation should not be disturbed by as small a matter as the use of instruments. The test of a congregation of Christ is: It recognizes God as the only Lawgiver. It serves God alone. When it consciously changes the smallest appointment of God, it dethrones God as the only Lawmaker and ceases to be a church of God. The test of personal discipleship to God is: That in all matters in which God has given order we will do what God commands, adding nothing thereto, taking nothing therefrom, and we will forsake anything that leads us to violate this rule. To add as simple and harmless a thing as the washing the hands before eating, as religious service, destroys discipleship to Christ. (Matt. 15: 5-15.)

“Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt. 5: 19.) “He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much: and he that is unrighteous in a very little is unrighteous also in much.” (Luke 16: 10, R. V.) Our fidelity to God is tested as easily in little things as in great ones; rather, nothing is little where God’s authority is at stake. Witness the sin of our first parents. Paul kept a good conscience in all things; so God honored him and chose him to be the great apostle to the Gentiles.

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Sometimes when a part of a church insists on and adopts the wrong, had I not better yield than to create division in the church? A church that requires disobedience to God to maintain peace in it is already an apostate church; it has rejected God as its only Ruler. For one to go with a church in a wrong is to encourage them in apostasy. It injures both the church and the person going with the church in the wrong. While forbearance and love should be exercised in seeking to show them the right and persuading them to do it, it is sinful to so affiliate with them as to encourage and build up a church that is going wrong. It is a greater sin for those who know it is wrong to go with those in the wrong than for those who think it right, because those who know it wrong sin against light and knowledge. The greater sinners in every congregation that departs from God's order in these things are those who know the wrongs, yet remain with and build up the congregations in the practice of the wrongs. "That servant, which knew his lord's will, and made not ready, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes." (Luke 12: 47, 48, R. V.) There can be no doubt that those who cling to the church and build it up, knowing that it is maintaining practices contrary to the word of God, are worse sinners before God than those who introduce them believing they are right. Sometimes persons think that as the Lord tolerated these sins in Israel he will tolerate them under Christ. This would be to subvert the purpose of his examples so as to make what he gave as a warning to be avoided an example to be followed. It would nullify the purpose of the Jewish law. (See 1 Cor. 10: 1-10.)

Often our lifelong friends and associates are in the church, our children and grandchildren are there, our brothers and sisters. Shall I leave them or remain with them? To leave them is to bear earnest testimony to them for the truth and to warn them there is danger and ruin in departing from the law of God; to go with them is to

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affiliate with and build up the wrong and to encourage them in the way that leads to ruin; to depart from the order of God to go with them is to love friends, father, mother, brothers, and sisters more than God. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." (Matt. 10: 37.) "If any man cometh unto me, and hateth not his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." These mean that a man must separate from and give up all these to be true to Christ. True love to these friends and ourselves demands the same course. There is no real kindness in going with them in wrong courses and encouraging them in setting aside the law of God; it may gratify the fleshly feelings, but it only helps them and ourselves forward to ruin. Love is the fulfilling of the law. True love to every creature in the universe is perfected and manifested in doing the will of God. That is love to God, and love to God is the only true love to every being in the universe of God; and be sure God is not pleased when his children violate his law to preserve standing in and harmony with a church setting aside his order. It will be no alleviation of the torments of hell to think we encouraged our children and friends in the course of rebellion by going with them. God especially warns: "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to turn aside after a multitude to wrest judgment." (Ex. 23: 2, R. V.)

Then my faith is that it is the duty of those who believe a church sets aside the order of God to strive to correct that wrong, to be patient and forbearing in it; and if they fail in this, to withdraw and at once go actively to work to form a true church and observe the true service of God. If they quit work because others have gone wrong, they will die and the cause of truth will perish in their midst. Go to work to maintain the truth of God and to induce others to accept it, and God will bless you. "I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I

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have set before thee life and death, the blessing and the curse: therefore choose life, that thou mayest live, thou and thy seed: to love the Lord thy God, to obey his voice, and to cleave unto him: for he is thy life." (Deut. 30: 19, 20, R. V.)

