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# Words of Truth

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## We Don't Have To Work So Hard To Disprove Error

By: Brian A. Yeager

False doctrine causes people to lose their souls (II Peter 2:1). When people are lead astray, both the teacher and the student are going to be lost (Isaiah 9:16 and Matthew 15:14). Thus, we certainly want to be capable of answering false doctrines (Jude 3-4). We need to do all that we can to prevent false doctrines from being taught (I Timothy 1:3-7). This requires us to spend time rightly dividing the word of truth (II Timothy 2:14-18).

We get it. Preventing false doctrine is a significant part of our role in teaching God's word. Amongst many cautions in the work of exposing error is to be sure that we ourselves don't teach error while trying to prevent it.

There are times where we want to be able to show someone that what he or she is doing is wrong, yet we cannot find a clear Scripture to do so. There are times where we have all likely wished we could find the verse that specifically says "you can't do \_\_\_\_\_ and be saved". Yet, the New Testament really is not a book of "do not's". Jesus commanded the disciples to teach all things that He had commanded them (Matthew 28:20). He did not send the disciples out to teach people what not to do. We have to accept that. We have to understand it. We have to be able to explain it to others. God expects us all to look for what is pleasing in His sight rather than looking to where He has not spoken to do what we want to do.

### Understanding That God's Silence Is Not Permissive

It is just as wrong to do something that God didn't say we could do, as it is to do something He said we couldn't do. Notice: *"For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the LORD: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it. And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart"* (Jeremiah 7:30-31). Even if one has good intentions, if God did not tell us to do something we cannot do it (II Samuel 6:6-7 and II Samuel 7:1-7). It is just as wrong to add to God's word, as it is to take away from it (Deuteronomy 4:2, Deuteronomy 12:32, Proverbs 30:5-6, Galatians 1:6-9, and Revelation 22:18-19).

As Christians, we have to accept the fact that we can only do what we know is pleasing to God (Luke 6:46, Luke 11:28, John 14:15, Ephesians 5:10, Colossians 3:17, I Thessalonians 5:21, and I Peter 4:11). We have to also accept the fact that if we do not know something is pleasing to God we cannot do it (Romans 14:23). If we grasp those truths and can teach others those truths, studying the Scriptures will not be so difficult. Yet, if we don't get it, we'll end up making Scriptures say things that they do not say to try and prove our point.

### **Don't Reach Too Far**

When I was a teenager I remember hearing my first, of many lessons, against mechanical instrumental music in worship to God. In many of those lessons it was established that we couldn't follow the pattern of Old Testament worship because we are not under the Old Law. That was correct (Romans 7:1-6, Ephesians 2:11-17, Colossians 2:14, Hebrews 9:15-17, and Hebrews 10:1-22). Then, there was a statement that I have heard many times in regard to who introduced mechanical instruments of music into worship in the Old Testament.

This Scripture is often used to claim that David introduced mechanical instrumental music into worship: *"That chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of musick, like David"* (Amos 6:5). First off, David did not "invent" (in the sense of being the first person to do something) mechanical instruments of music (Genesis 4:21). Secondly, David was not the first one to use mechanical instruments of music when praising God in worship to Him either (Exodus 15:20-21). Thus, you have to know that the premise of the argument often presented is wrong. Therefore, you know you have to look at this Scripture more closely.

The word translated "invent" (chashab; Strong's # 2803) means, "to think, to weave, to fabricate, to regard, to value, etc.". You did not have to look up the word to know that it didn't mean that David created musical instruments or was the first to introduce them. Using this argument to disprove mechanical instrumental music in worship to God makes you a false teacher. You would be the one twisting this Scripture to your own destruction (II Peter 3:15-17). Rather than making this far reach and twisting a Scripture into proving the point, we have to keep it simple.

### **Keeping It Simple**

You do not have to prove that mechanical instrumental music in worship to God is wrong. The person who wants to practice this has the burden of proof. Remember, if something is a good work the Scriptures will tell us that (II Timothy 3:16-17). The New Testament clearly teaches us to sing to God (Matthew 26:30, Mark 14:26, Romans 15:9, I Corinthians 14:15, Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16, Hebrews 2:12, and James 5:13). Nowhere, in the New Testament, does God tell us to praise Him with mechanical instruments of music. It's that simple. We shouldn't lose our minds in argumentation. We show the pattern and hold fast to it (II Timothy 1:13). All we need to do is be sure that we serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear (Hebrews 12:28). We do not have to find ways to prove that something is wrong.

### **Conclusion**

Yes, let's be concerned with exposing error, knowing about false doctrines, and helping others to steer clear of those false doctrines (Romans 16:17-18). Yet, let's not allow ourselves to fall into the trap of thinking we need to find verses that forbid things from being taught or practiced. Let's remember to ask others to prove what is right about what they are doing. They are bound, just as we are, to be able to answer those questions (I Peter 3:15). We should never take the long road to exposing error by getting into drawn out debates (II Timothy 2:23).