

Giving an Answer (I Peter 3:15)

Answering False Arguments for Mechanical Instrumental Music in Our Worship to God

Answer the following **false positions** (there are several in each quote):

Mechanical Instruments of Music are Expediencies:

“There are some who simply will argue to their final breath that "instrumental music is NOT an aid to singing; it is an addition to God's commandment," and thus "a transgression of God's will" [Micky Galloway, The Bible Doctrine of Expediency]. This is the standard argument, but is it true? The reality is, as painful as it is for some to acknowledge, that instrumental accompaniment is no less an aid to singing than song books, pitch pipes, shaped notes, song leaders, four part harmony, PowerPoint, or praise teams. None of these replace or negate singing; none of these in any way are substitutions for singing. Singing still occurs, and it is still just as much "from the heart." If something aids us in carrying out a command of our Lord God, something that is unspecified in Scripture, but which is not contrary to and/or inconsistent with known precepts and principles of Scripture, and which, if used, would not cause one to abandon their walk with Christ and lose their faith in Him, then such is a valid expedient. I am personally convinced that each of the above aids enumerated clearly meet that criteria. Thus, I would simply challenge anyone who differs with that assessment to demonstrate, using the inspired Scriptures and logical reasoning, where any of the above do not meet the criteria for a legitimate expedient.

Does this mean one must employ such expedients? Not at all. You cannot command an expedient. Neither can you forbid an expedient (as long as it meets the standard that Paul has outlined). Nor can one really regulate the particulars or parameters of an expedient. One size simply does not fit all. What may work for one group, may not work for another. The key to our unity and oneness is to accept one another in spite of such differing perceptions as to what is or is not "workable" in our own given locales. We do not have to be clones of one another to be in fellowship. My list of expedients does NOT have to match yours. Both our lists simply have to be consistent with the guiding principles we find in the Scriptures (as noted above), and these are general enough to allow for a significant amount of diversity of choice. And I believe that to be by divine design. Flexibility allows us the freedom to be relevant to our own individual circumstances, and thus more effective in carrying out our mission” (<http://www.zianet.com/maxey/reflx261.htm>).

1. Is the instrument a lawful aid to singing in worship to God? God says the instrument is more than an aid (Psalms 33:2-3, Psalms 147:7, and Psalms 150:3-5). God would tell us if He wanted us to worship Him under the New Testament with mechanical instruments of worship (Psalms 81:1-2; cf. Colossians 3:17). What is written under the Old Law is not lawful for worship today (Acts 15:1-5, Romans 7:1-6, Galatians 5:4, Galatians 6:15, and Hebrews 9:15-17). If mechanical instruments are in, so are other things (i.e. Leviticus 9:3-8, Exodus 21:28-29, and Deuteronomy 5:12).

2. Is the instrument no different than the song book? The song book, song sheet, song on an overhead, etc. does not add any element to worship. Can we sing without a song to sing? No, (Ephesians 5:19). Can we sing without an instrument? Yes, (Matthew 26:30, Mark 14:26, and Acts 16:25). So, is a song book really the same as a mechanical instrument? NO!

3. What about praise teams, pitch pipes, etc.? These would all be additions to the instructions for all to sing in the assembly (Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16; cf. Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32, Proverbs 30:5-6, and Revelation 22:18-19).

4. Does the heart cease to be the instrument when singing with a mechanical instrument? No, it is still an instrument. However, there are then two instruments instead of the authorized one (the heart – Ephesians 5:19)!

5. Does someone's personal conviction matter here? No, (Proverbs 12:15; 14:12; 16:25, 20:24; 21:2, Jeremiah 10:23, and Mark 7:1-9).

6. Are we to be clones to have fellowship with one another? Doctrinally we must be alike (I Corinthians 1:10; 4:17, Philippians 2:2; 3:16, I John 1:3-7, and II John 9-11). In matters of judgment (i.e. song book or overhead transparencies or what time to meet on the first day of the week) we have restricted liberty (Acts 2:46; 20:7; cf. I Corinthians 8:12-13).

7. Can we, through scriptural reasoning, show the instrument is not a lawful expedient? Yes! We've shown the instrument is more than an aid based upon God's instructions of old. Secondly, the instrument is not needed to aid us to

sing whereas a way to sing the same song is (i.e. song book). Finally, God has shown that when He wants us to use mechanical instruments to worship Him, He will tell us. He hasn't told us to do so (I Corinthians 4:6)!

8. Can we regulate the particulars or parameters of an expedient? **An aid cannot become an addition, just than a tool!**

Because the Spirit Said So and It'll Help Reach People...

“The elders of Richland Hills Church of Christ are fully committed to God's mission of loving and saving the world through Jesus Christ. After a three-year period of deep biblical study, prayer, and fasting, the RHCC leadership has been Spirit led to become a more externally focused church, dedicated to that mission and devoted to the message of Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross. The 2020 Vision launched last year was a direct result of God's answers to our prayers and study of His word.

With unity of spirit, the leadership of the Richland Hills Church of Christ has decided to add a third weekend assembly in 2007 that will include instrumental praise as part of this vision and mission. Former elders who participated in the three-year period of studies, fasting, and prayer for God's vision continue to be active members of the church body and are in support of the elders” (<http://www.rhchurch.org/index.cfm?pg=news&id=26>).

“The newspaper said Rick Atchley, senior minister of the church, has been a national leader in recent efforts to improve relations with instrumental Christian Churches. He told a Dec. 3 Bible study at his church that the decision will permit the congregation "to reach more people who need Christ" and also will ease crowding at the church's two Sunday morning services.

"I greatly appreciate a cappella praise," Atchley told congregation members. "There is no intention of this leadership to force anyone to worship any other way if that is their choice. ... But I firmly believe that if Richland Hills is to be most faithful to God's word and Christ's mission, we must become a both/and church with regard to instrumental and a cappella praise” (<http://www.baptisttoday.org/rns/2007/rns010207.htm>).

1. Can the Spirit directly lead us, after prayer and fasting, to be more externally focused? **Not today (II Timothy 3:16-17; cf. Acts 8:12-19). Consider this, if God added new things today to His word that would mean that the revelation we study and learn from is not complete. That would mean that salvation truly cannot be fully understood or known. That would mean that God has lied to us (II Peter 1:3).**
2. Does God directly answer us? **Not today (Hebrews 1:1-2 and John 16:13; cf. Ephesians 3:1-4).**
3. Does mechanical instrumental music have anything to do with the mission of the church? **NO! Such is not even heard of in the New Testament.**
4. Can we improve relations with the “instrumental Christian Churches”? **No, (Ephesians 5:11 and Romans 16:17-18).**
5. Will mechanical instrumental music reach more people? **No, only the Gospel saves (Romans 1:16 and James 1:21). Using bait is dishonest (II Corinthians 4:2). Consider that mechanical instruments of music are an appeal to our flesh. It makes us feel better and sound better. Can we expect to please God under the precepts of the law of Christ with this mindset (Romans 8:5-8)? Those who use mechanical instrumental music also use many other vices to appeal to the flesh (dinners, entertainment, events, praise of men, etc.).**
6. Is scriptural worship based upon what you choose to do? **No, (Colossians 2:20-23 and I Thessalonians 2:4).**
8. Should the church become both instrumental and a cappella in song worship to be faithful to God's word and Christ's mission? **There are simply no Scriptures that even suggest God wants us to use mechanical instruments of music in New Testament worship nor is anything written that includes mechanical instrumental music in Christ' mission.**