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Editor :

J. C. CHOATE

Associate Editor :

SUNNY DAVID

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Pleading for the restoration of pure New Testament Christianity

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EDITORIAL

Restoring the Erring

The Bible clearly teaches that it is possible for a Christian to sin and even to fall away from God. All one needs to do to be convinced of this is to read the story of the father and his two sons of Luke 15:11-32. In this story one of the sons decided that he would take his inheritance and leave for a far country. As it turned out, he wasted all of his good and then found himself in the midst of a famine and in need. In order to survive he was finally forced to take a job from a citizen of that country, feeding swine. As a Jew, to whom pork was unclean, this was as low as he could go. But a good thing came out of that sad situation. The young man came to himself. He began to think about his situation, what he had done, what he had given up, how unnecessary it was for him to remain in that state. So he decided to humble himself and go back to his father and to ask for forgiveness. He did so and he was gladly received. In this same story the other son stayed on with the father, but when the wandering brother returned, he resented the gracious way the father received

him back. So we have a good example of both sons sinning against their father, each in his own way.

Now what does all of this have to do with the Christian? Jesus was teaching a simple lesson. The father depicts God and the two sons represent Christians. When God's children remain faithful to him, they are blessed in every way. But each Christian is left to decide whether he will be faithful or will go back into the world of sin. In this story God's child went out into sin and found himself eventually as far away from the Father, as he could go. But the story shows that it is possible for one in such a condition to come to himself, to repent of his sins, and to return to the Father. The Father, who is loving and forgiving, is more than ready to receive him back as his own. But what about the other son? This lesson necessarily shows that even though a Christian may not outrightly depart from the faith, he may still sin in his heart with un-Christian attitudes and actions. He also needs to repent and seek forgiveness.

Thus we can see that it is possible for a child of God of our own day to sin and to stray away from God. This can happen in all kinds of ways. One can sin in his mind, that is, by having evil thoughts and impure motives. One may likewise sin against his wife or her husband, against a friend, against a business partner and so on. Or one may sin publicly, that is where it is generally known by a number of people. Public sinners would include that one who has quit the church, has become immoral, has gone off after false teaching, or has become unfaithful in numerous other ways.

When one departs from the Lord and his way this means that he is in sin, that he has brought shame and disgrace on Christ and his church, that he may cause others to be lost, that he cannot go to heaven as long as he remains in that state. But this does not mean that he must remain in that condition. It is possible for him to wake up and to realize what he has done, and therefore, to return to the Lord and his church. But how can this be done? What steps must one take to be restored to this former relationship with God? Well, it depends on how public his sins are as to the kind of

response God will expect of him. For instance, if one has sinned in his heart and only he and God know about it then that matter can be settled between that individual and the Father in heaven. It would not be necessary to make the sin public. But God would expect that person to repent of his sins, to confess them to him, and to ask him for forgiveness. When this is done, then God will forgive that erring Christian of his sin and accept him back as one of his own. But, if a child of God has sinned against a marriage partner, against his father or mother, against his children, or against any individual, and only he and that individual and God know of the sin, then that problem can be solved between the parties involved without having to take it before the whole church. This means that the one who has sinned would have to go to the party that he wants forgiveness, and then he must also ask God to forgive him. In this case, if the guilty party is honest and sincere in his actions, then God will forgive him and likewise the party that he has sinned against should forgive him. And finally, if the one who has sinned has committed a sin that is generally known by the church and the people of the community where he lives, then he is required by the Lord to repent of his sins, publicly confess his faults before his brethren, and to ask the church and the Father to forgive him and accept him back as a faithful child of God. Again, when this is done as the scriptures teach, that individual is forgiven both by the church and by the Father and is accepted back into full fellowship.

When sin is in one's life, it must be repented of if one is to be forgiven. For the one who is not a Christian, to be saved from his sins and thus to be a Christian, he must believe in God, and believe in Christ as the Son of God; he must repent of all of his sins, or turn from them; he must confess Christ as the Son of God; and then he must be baptized to have his sins washed away. Read Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; Acts 17:30; Romans 10:10; and Mark 16:16. But what about the Christian who sins or drifts away from God? To be restored to his first love, he must repent of his sins, or turn away from them; he must confess his faults to the one or ones he has sinned against; and he must ask for forgiveness of the one or ones he has wronged. Only then can that person as a child of God be forgiven of his sins and restored

to his first love. Besides the story of the father and his delinquent sons as recorded in Luke 15, have an example of Simon the sorcerer obeying the Lord and becoming a Christian, but then later he sinned when he tried to buy the power of the Holy Spirit. At this point Peter told him, "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Then answered Simon and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me." (Acts 8:22-24). James said to such individuals, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (James 5:16).

Putting it all together then, sin is sin and must be repented of if one is to be forgiven. But as we have already seen, what one does to become a child of God is different to what one does as an erring child of God to be forgiven of his sins. Once one becomes a member of the Lord's family, he will forevermore be a child of God. But he may be a faithful child or an unfaithful child. God does not require an erring child of his to go back and do those things that made him a Christian in the beginning, but as a child he simply requires him to repent of his sins, confess his faults, and to ask for his forgiveness. Once this is done, he is forgiven and accepted back as a faithful Christian.

If you are not a Christian, you need to become one. But if you are a member of the Lord's family and have sinned or have become unfaithful, then you are encouraged to repent of your sins and to return to the Lord while you have the time and opportunity. Sin and pride can destroy you and cause you to be lost for all eternity if you do not comply with the Lord's conditions of pardon. God loves you and wants to forgive you, and he will forgive you when you obey Him. He is waiting for you now,



associate editorial

How Can We Fully Restore The Pure New Testament Christianity ?

Before the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ Christians or Christianity did not exist. After his resurrection from the dead Christ was on earth for forty days but the church of Christ did not exist at that time, of course Christ had prior to this promised that he would build his church: Just before his ascension into heaven, however, Christ commanded his disciples that they should go and teach all nations or preach the gospel to all creatures, and "he that believeth and is baptizd shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." Further, he said, "Thas it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And the repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upoh you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." (Luke 24:46-49). Ten days later, after Christ gave this command, as the disciples were waiting in Jerusalem for the promise of Christ's to be fulfilled. The record in the Bible says, "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts 2:2-4). Since the Bible says that it was the day of pentecost, an important Jewish feast, there were several thousand Jew from all nations present at that time in the city of Jeru-

salem. The Spirit filled disciples of Christ preached his gospel to this multitude of people in their own languages, and the record in the Bible says that as a result about three thousand people on that day believed in Christ, and they asked the disciples, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Vs. 37). And they said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Vs. 38). Then we read they were gladly baptized immediately, and as soon as they were baptized (immersed in water) not only their sins were forgiven but the Lord added them in the number of his disciples. Thus the church, the body of the saved ones, was established. And then it says in Acts 2:47, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

From reading the books of the New Testament we understand that in the beginning of Christianity, all people became Christians in the same way and they were all members of the same church wherever they were, since the Lord everywhere added to THE CHURCH who were saved. Wherever they lived they were known as Christians only (Acts 11:26; 1 Peter 4:16). All their congregations were called Churches of Christ (Romans 16:16). But it is not the same today, that is, all who today claim to believe in Christ or profess to be Christians are not Christians only and they are not the Lord's church. Some one has calculated, there are about seven hundred different denominational churches and Christians in the world today. The Bible says, God is not the author of confusion, But of peace. (1 Corinthians 14:33). Therefore it follows that all such division is not of God's will. But he wants us all to be just Christians only and members of the church of His Son Jesus Christ.

How then can we restore the pure New Testament Christianity in the world today?

First, let us examine ourselves, how did we become Christians, if we call ourselves Christian, in any way? If we have not obeyed the Lord's plan of salvation, like the three thousand did on the day of pentecost, then we must submit ourselves to do the Lord's will. Then when we do this let the Lord add us to his church. As

the Bible says he does. (Acts 2:47). By becoming members of the Lord's church we should cease to worship and fellowship with those who are in various denominational churches. (2 Corinthians 6:14-18). If you are alone then worship alone, as the New Testament of Christ directs, and in the meanwhile teach others, and when one or more believes in Jesus and repent then baptize them for the forgiveness of sins. As this takes place the Lord would add such person or persons to his church just as he did you. Thus you will be a congregation of the Lord's church in that place, may be a little congregation in the beginning, may be just two or three person, but you will be church of Christ, because Christ has added you to his church. And as you continue to teach others there would be more people who would submit themselves to do the Lord's will and thus the church of Christ would grow. With the help and guidance of the New Testament you can worship together, without any leadership of a so called padri or Reverend, on Pastor. As Christians you should sing, pray, study the Bible, partake of the Lord's Supper, and give your money for the Lord's work as he has prospered you. (Acts 2:42; Ephesians 5:19; Acts 20:7 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2).

Secondly, we should reject all the creed books written by men and followed in various denominational churches, such as Chatechism, The Lord's prayer book, etc., etc. We should understand that the Bible is the complete book of God, it is His complete and final revelation for man. Whatsoever God wants us to do in his worship and service He has revealed for us in the Bible. The Apostle Paul said, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness : That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works". (2 Timothy 3:16, 17). The chief cause of division is various human creeds. If we reject all human creeds and take the Bible as our only authority in religion, there will be no division, because we will all be governed by one authority. Isn't it right?

Thirdly, we should know that today we are not living under the Old Testament law. True, all the sixtysix books of the Bible, Old and the New Testament is the word of God, that is, all of it was written by the inspiration of God. But God Himself says in

the Bible that he has taken away the Old Testament law and had nailed it to the cross by the death of His Son. (Colossians 2 :14). In its place God has given us His New Testament through His Son Christ. (Hebrews 7 : 12; 8 : 13). This means that we must obey the commands God has given us in His New Testament. Any thing we do as Christians must be supported by a command or by an example in the New Testament. The Bible in the New Testament says, all things written in the Old Testament are for our learning (Romans 15 : 4). From the Old Testament we learn how God created the world, we also learn under that law those who obeyed God were blessed by Him but those who rejected his commands were punished (I Corinthians 10 : 11). The Old Testament law was like a shadow of good things which were to come (Hebrew 10 : 1-4), like Christ and his sacrifice on the cross and the perfect way of salvation which the New Testament reveals. We cannot live under two different laws. Those who are trying to follow both the Old Testament and the New Testament are making a great mistake and are not rightly handling the word of God (2 Timotny 2 : 15). When we try to follow two laws at the same time it creates confusion.

Therefore the only remedy for the restoration of the pure New Testament Christianity is to accept the New Testament of Christ alone as our guide in religion today.

Do Musical Instruments in Worship Really Make that much Difference?

By Stafford North

One of the first things that strikes the guest at a church of Christ is that there is no piano or organ. I recall one visitor who said, "With this many people coming, you should soon be able to afford a piano".

While most people realize it is not for a lack of money they do wonder just why we do not have a piano. And they wonder, too, just why we are so firm in opposing the introduction of instruments into our worship. To them it appears a rather small matter to be concerned about.

May I assure you that we have no desire to be "hard to get along with", nor do we seek merely to be "different". With us it is a matter of principle and of conviction, and you will soon understand why.

Since there are many tracts, books, and sermons containing the reasons why we do not choose to use musical instruments in worship, it is not the primary purpose of this study to present these reasons again. They will only be summarized in order to provide a background for answering the question, "Do musical instruments in worship really make that much difference?"

A SUMMARY OF REASONS WHY WE DO NOT USE INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN THE WORSHIP

1. We do not use instrumental music in the worship because there is no command to use it. For Christian worship we are commanded to give (I Corinthians 16:1, 2), to partake of the Lord's Supper (I Corinthians 11:20-29), to stir each other to love and good works (Hebrews 10:24, 25), to pray (I Corinthians 14:14, 15; Matthew 18:19, 20), and to sing (I Corinthians 14:15; Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19; James 5:13). The four verses listed with singing are the only verses in the New Testament that make any commandment about music of any kind in Christian worship, and, in each case, singing only is commanded. There is no mention of playing a musical instrument. [Those who wish a thorough study of the Greek word psallo should consult M.C. Kurfees, *Instrumental Music in Christian Worship*, (Nashville, Gospel Advocate Co., 1950).]

2. We do not use instrumental music in the worship because there is no example of it in Christian worship during the period when the church received direct divine guidance. We have a des-

cription in the Bible of many occasions when Christians met for worship, but there is not even a hint that their singing was ever accompanied by instruments of music. The Scriptures are clear that the music in Christian worship was vocal only.

3. We do not use instrumental music in the worship because the word of history is unanimous that musical instruments in Christian worship were not used during the period of direct divine direction of the church. One quotation from a recognized authority will indicate the type of comments by all reputable music and church historians. Dr. Frederic Ritter, one-time Director of the School of Music at Vassar College, wrote in *History of Music from the Christian Era to the Present Time* (p. 28) :

We have no real knowledge of the exact character of the music which formed a part of the religious devotion of the first Christian congregations. It was, however, purely vocal. Instrumental music was excluded, at first, as having been used by the Romans at their depraved festivities; and everything reminding them of heathen worship could not be endured by the new religionists. [Quoted in Kurfees, *Instrumental Music*, p. 144.]

In fact, there is no record that instruments were used in church worship any earlier than about 650 A.D. when, over opposition, a pope allowed an organ installed. Even as late as 1250, however, the noted Catholic theologian Thomas Aquinas commented that "Our church does not use musical instruments, as harps and psalteries, to praise God withal, that she may not seem to Judaize" [Quoted in Kurfees, *Instrumental Music*, p. 153]. With most churches using them, we may tend to forget that instruments were not generally accepted in churches until the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

4. We do not use instrumental music in worship because Bible scholars of all ages and from many different churches have believed it out of harmony with the scriptures. The list of those who did not use instruments and who opposed their introduction into Christian worship includes the leaders in many religious groups: John Calvin, the wellknown reformer whose doctrine formed the

base of much in Presbyterian and Baptist teaching; John Wesley, founder of the Methodist Church; Adam Clarke, the Methodist commentator; Charles H. Spurgeon, the famous Baptist preacher in London; Theodore Beza, scholar and friend of John Calvin and Alexander Campbell, leader in the Restoration Movement of the nineteenth century. Until mid-way through the twentieth century, the Greek Orthodox Church never permitted the use of musical instruments in their services.

Very briefly, then, these four points summarize why we do not believe we should use instrumental music in Christian worship.

The facts upon which these reasons are based are clearly established. Many however, are inclined to say, "But does it really make any difference?" "So," they say, "instruments were not used in the early church. If we like them and they seem to help establish a good mood for worship, can't we use them anyway?" This is probably the sentiment of most who use instruments in worship today. To these it appears a small matter and not worthy of the attention given it by members of the churches of Christ. "Why can't you go ahead and use them," they say to us, "or at least, not oppose their use since they are now common in most churches."

This brings us to the basic question of this study.

Do Musical Instruments in Worship Really Make That Much Difference?

I am sure you are expecting me to say "yes," for otherwise I would not have gone to the trouble of this study; and I will not disappoint you. I do hope, however, that you will consider carefully the reasons why.

1. We believe using instrumental music in Christian worship makes a difference because God has never permitted man to devise the plan or means for his own worship. Cain's sin was that he did not worship as God directed (Genesis 4; Hebrews 11:4). Cain, it appears, wished to choose what he could submit to God for

worship rather than doing as God asked. During the Mosaical Age, God was very specific about the worship, Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, were consumed by fire because they obtained fire to use from a source other than that which God directed (Leviticus 10:1, 2). Saul thought that since he was the King, he could vary from God's prescribed plan of worship by offering a sacrifice even though he was not a priest. As a result Samuel told him, "Thou hast done foolishly; thou hast not kept the commandment of Jehovah thy God" (I Samuel 13:13). He also told Saul that because he had not followed exactly God's system of worship, God would raise up someone else to be King.

Equal strictness was also applied to observing God's plan of worship in the New Testament. Christ condemned the Pharisees because they had added their traditions to God's commandments. His words to them were, "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9). Paul, moreover, gave warning about the departures from true pattern of Christian worship in the Corinthian church (I Corinthians 11:17-34; 14:1-40).

When man has attempted to develop his own system of worship, he has sometimes developed a degrading system of human sacrifice, drunkenness, fornication, and revelry as worship. The crimes society generally regards as the most repulsive—murder and immorality—have been chosen by men to express their worship to their gods. To prevent any such possibilities, and because as our Creator and the object of our worship He has the right, God has specified our plan of worship.

To add to the plan God has commanded, then, by adding a new kind of music, which He has not commanded for Christian worship is to take a liberty which God has never allowed. It also, at the very least, is taking an unnecessary chance that could make all our worship unacceptable.

2. Instrumental music in Christian worship makes a difference because Christian worship is basically spiritual rather than physical, thus making mechanical instruments inappropriate. Under the

Law of Moses, God permitted musical instruments as worship. Timbrals, harps, trumpets, pipes, and cymbals were actually used to praise God (Psalms 150). The Israelites actually used these along with dancing, burnt offerings, and incense to offer their praise to God (II Chronicles 15:11-15; 29:25-28). Yet, as we have seen, when the Christian era began, there was no such use of instruments of music, nor, indeed, of any of the other outward, ritualistic forms of worship. Why? Why were these forms of worship which God approved under the Law of Moses not practiced by the church when it began under direct divine guidance? We should recognize that if these were in use before and then they were not included in the Christian worship, God must have directed the early church away from such. Christ explained why this change was made when He indicated that Christian worship was to be of a completely different nature than the Jewish. When the woman of Samaria asked Him whether Mt. Gerizim or Jerusalem was the place to worship (John 4:20), He took the occasion to teach her and us about worship under His new covenant. No longer, He said in effect, will worship to God be confined to a certain place requiring special physical equipment and surroundings. Since "God is a Spirit," those who worship Him will worship "in spirit and in truth." While this passage includes the idea that we must have the proper "spirit" in the sense of "attitude," its meaning goes beyond this. Since God is a spirit being, and since each of us also has a spirit, Jesus' plan for worship is centered in getting our spirit in contact with God. Christian worship, thus, is concerned with the spiritual rather than the physical.

The method of Christian worship, of course, is prescribed just as was the Mosaical, but it is based primarily on the involvement of the spirit, inward mental activity, rather than on the outward physical activity. Under the Law, worship appealed to the physical: the priest wore special clothing and performed a ritual of sacrifice which appealed to the eye; incense appealed to the sense of smell; feasts appealed to the sense of taste, and the trumpets and harps appealed to the ear.

But under Christ's plan of worship for Christians, the spirit or mental aspect of man is primarily engaged. Thus the ceremony

and indirect approach through a priest is taken away, and in its place comes a plan in which each person participates directly himself, and that primarily in mental activity. No longer is public worship a sort of spectator arrangement in which the person watches, hears, tastes, and smells certain physically appealing rituals. Now worship to God through Christ involves every worshippers as a full participant as he expresses that he loves God with his "heart, mind, and soul" (Matthew 22:37). There is prayer and meditation in which all speak directly to God with no human priest. There is the giving, a personal matter with no sacrificial ritual. There is the simple reading, instruction, and exhortation with no ceremony attached. There is the observance of the Lord's Supper in which one "thinks" his way back to Calvary and forward to the second coming and personally "examines himself." Finally, there is the singing in which all participate. And, in keeping with this spiritual kind of worship, there is no mechanical music.

This contrast is made in Ephesians 5:19 where Paul says, "singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord." No longer do we accompany our singing with the harp or lyre or trumpet; now we accompany it with the heart. It was not out of harmony with the Old Testament form of worship which was filled with outward ritual to accompany singing with the sound of musical instruments. But under the new plan of Christ, the singing of the human voice is to be accompanied by the heart or inner man or spirit. Thus, mechanical accompaniment is out of harmony with the type of worship given for Christians under the New Covenant.

Conybeare and Howsen, in their highly respected *Life and Epistles of St. Paul* (II, 503), give this explanation of Ephesians 5:19 :

Throughout the whole passage there is a contrast implied between the Heathen and the Christian practices, q. d. When you meet, let your enjoyment consist not in fulness of wine, but fulness of the Spirit; let your songs be, not in 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; which you sing them to the praise, not of Bacchus, or Venus, but of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In this commentary on Ephesians, B. F. Westcott, the noted Greek scholar and professor in the University of Cambridge, explains the phrase "making melody in your heart" in this way: "The outward music was to be accompanied by the inward music of the heart" (p. 82).

Some who wish to justify the instrument in worship, however, suggest that instruments are not a part of the worship itself, but are only aids to the worship, and that they are, therefore, acceptable. But there are several problems with this position. In the first place, the Jews used the instruments, not as an aid, but as an actual part of their worship. As shown in the passages referred to earlier, they offered the music of instruments as praise to God, not as merely an aid to worship. If instruments were so used along with animal sacrifice and incense under the law, it would be difficult for the same type of music today to be considered only an aid any more than incense or robed priests could be considered as aids today.

Moreover, the assertion that mechanical instruments aid the spiritual worship may be seriously questioned. The whole tone of Christian worship is away from that which appeals to the outward, to the eyes and ears. It is, rather, a spiritual response to God, expressed in the methods he has instructed. Mechanical music, then, is not only adding a new method not commanded, but it is both out of harmony with and a hindrance to the worship of the mind and heart that is to characterize Christian worship. While Christians should sing the best they can, it is not the quality of the musical sound which determines the acceptability of this singing to God; it is, rather, the harmony of the man's spirit with God that pleases Him. God listens more closely to the heart than to the voice. The use of instrumental music puts the emphasis in the wrong place—on the outward rather, than the inward. To say, then, that you want to use an organ because you like the beautiful sound is to attempt to justify something in worship on the basis of outward sound rather than inward devotion.

3. Another reason why instrumental music in the Christian worship makes a great difference is that it is an element of division. If this were the only reason why it matters, this alone would be enough. For centuries the church existed without using instrumental music and whenever it has been introduced into various religious groups, it has always been a source of trouble and division. Case after case could be cited. In the Restoration Movement, particularly, has this been a problem. About 1800, when a number of persons from various denominations decided to attempt to go back beyond both the Protestant Reformation and the Catholic digression, they took as their guiding principle to do only what they found taught for the Christian age by scriptural command, example, or inference. Seeking to "rebuild" or "restore" the church in its essentials like it was in the beginning when it was under direct divine guidance, they wanted to find that core of fundamental truths upon which all Christians could unite. Since musical instruments in Christian worship were neither commanded nor used in New Testament times, they believed it in keeping with their principles not to use them. Singing was their universal practice for half-a-century, but eventually, about 1870, instruments began to be introduced. They were strongly opposed and many said it would violate (1) the Scriptures, (2) the plea of the Restoration Movement, and (3) their conscience for them to be used. In some places they were taken out, but in others they were retained. While those who used the instrument did not believe they must be used, and often said one could worship with or without it, they still insisted on forcing those who opposed either to sing with the instruments or to leave.

The use of the instrument is and has been divisive and has been the cause of much strife and separation of fellowship. Since it is, admittedly, a non-essential using, it is contrary to the spirit of both the love and the unity commanded in the scriptures as well as to the principles of the Restoration Movement.

4. The use of instrumental music in the worship makes another important difference because it opens the door for other departures. In the eyes of some it seems a little thing whether one uses an organ or piano in a worship service. If we were to grant

that it made, no difference in itself, which we could not grant, it would still be unwise to use it. So long as we apply the principle that we will do only that which we find taught for us in the Scriptures, we can have both unity and consistency. Since one, obviously, cannot follow this principle and still justify the use of musical instruments in the church, he must move away from the stand of doing only what the Bible authorizes. And this is exactly what those in the Restoration Movement who used the instrument have done. Now, instead of standing on the principle of doing only that which the Bible specifically authorizes, they have moved to the position that a thing is not wrong unless the Bible specifically condemns it. (See Wallace-Barber Debate, pp. 51-56, 63, 171, 172). Thus the original position is weakened to get the instrument approved and, at the same time, the new principle allows other departures. In fact, to follow a rule that one could do in worship anything not specifically forbidden would allow almost anything from coffee on the Lord's table to "bobbing" for apples.

With this principle in operation to make room for instrumental music, other departures follow—missionary societies, conventions, human decision about what we believe. A candid look at the history of the Christian Church or Disciples of Christ since about 1900 will show how rapidly some have moved from doing only what is authorized in the Scriptures once the door is opened by the instrument. To do only what is authorized rather than anything which is not forbidden is a much safer course to follow.

CONCLUSION

In this brief study we have outlined some reasons why it is not wise to use musical instruments in Christian worship and some reasons why we believe it is a matter of considerable importance. Those who believe their souls will be the safest by walking as close to the Scriptures as possible must adopt the principle of doing in worship only what the Scriptures authorize. Once this position is surrendered, there is no suitable place to stop the retreat.

With this study before us, surely you can understand why this

question is of importance to those trying to be Christians only. We hope you will agree that musical instruments should not be used in Christian worship. At the very least, we hope you will say there is enough truth in what we say that you will not risk either your soul or division among those seeking to follow Christ on this point by ever using musical instruments in worship.

Why Need I Become A Christian?

Delton Haun

The word "Christian" occurs three times in the Bible: (1) "And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." (Acts 11:26b) (2) "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." (Acts 26:28) (3) "...if a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name," (1 Pet. 4:16 ARV).

The name "Christian" is, no doubt, the new name promised by Isaiah, "And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory; and thou shalt be called by a new name," which the mouth of the Lord shall name," (Isa. 62:2).

After Christ's ascension those who obeyed were sometimes called saints, disciples, brethren and children (sons) of God but these names were not new. (See Deut. 33:2; Isa. 8:16; Psa. 33:1 and Gen. 6:2). The name "Christian" is the only new name. Its use in the church age is comparable to the name "Israel" in the Jewish age.

But what is meant by "Christian" It is a name applied to all who have obeyed the gospel of Christ and who, by virtue of that obedience, become the children of God. The name "Christian" was given to those who became members of the heaven approved church that began on Pentecost long before the days of digression, and division. I am encouraging sinners to become Christians, only,

such as they were in New Testament times and to be members of the one church they read about in the Bible.

Now why should anyone become a Christian? What will he gain in becoming one? What does he lose if he does not?

1. No one should become a Christian because he thinks it is going to be easy. Jesus said, "...strait is the gate and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matt. 7:14). The gate is constricted and the way is narrow. The drunkard, the covetous and all other worldly souls must turn away from their sins in order to pass through the strait gate. This requires no little effort.

Many of the early Christians were arrested and persecuted even unto death. (Jno. 16:2; Acts. 7). Although the day of martyrdom seems to have passed, some in our day have lost friends and employment on becoming Christians. The world will not receive Christians with open arms and it need not be expected. (1 Tim. 1:12).

Although Jesus promised the way would be rewarding, He did not suggest that it would be easy. He never held out false hope to entice men to follow Him. He made no political promises of an easy time. No one should ever think of becoming a Christian because he believes it will be easy. He must be ready to suffer. He who is unwilling to make all sacrifices needed does not really know the way.

2. No one should become a Christian because the majority are Christians. In the first place the majority aren't Christians and in the second place if they were it would not be a justifiable reason for my becoming one. Right never becomes wrong nor wrong right just because the majority stand on the other side.

In New Testament times the matter of majority was surely not considered seriously. Throughout the apostolic days Christians were in the minority and suffered persecutions in some instances of the most horrible description. To them death must have been a welcome relief. Yet they would not renounce Christ.

They did not become Christians because they wanted to be with the majority. There were other—far greater, reasons.

3. No one should become a Christian just because his friends and relatives are Christians. One is fortunate to have grandparents, parents, brothers and sisters who are Christians. But he makes a mistake if he reasons he must also become a Christian because he can not afford to break the tradition. It is one thing to hand down teaching that leads to clear understanding, faith and intelligent obedience and quite another to expect children to obey because their parents have done so before them. The church would soon depart from the faith if a sufficient number became members who were not first indoctrinated. The Lord wants men to be taught the truth and to be convinced of it before they become Christians. You will do yourself a favour and others a service if before you obey you become fully convinced in your own heart that it is the thing and the only thing, for you. Yours must be no meaningless acceptance of Christ. It is as essential the man without Christian relatives obey. The more important reasons for becoming a Christian apply equally well to the sinner who has no Christian relatives.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THESE REASONS ?

1. I need to become a Christian because I am lost. (Rom. 3:23; Gal. 3:22). I am guilty. I am a sinner. I need pardon. My own sins bar me from heaven. (Jno. 8:21). I need forgiveness for today's sins and for the sins of yesteryear, Time alone will not erase even one sin nor will good deeds make up for even one wrong. Past sins may seem to lie buried under the weight of more recent events but they will be brought to light in the judgment unless before that time I obtain divine pardon. I need forgiveness and the assurance that my sins will not be remembered against me any more forever. (Heb. 8:12).

2. I need to become a Christian because I must be born again. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (Jno. 3:3); I need to become a new creature in Christ with new aims and new hopes. (2 Cor. 5:17). By this birth of

water and Spirit (Jno. 3:5), I will become an adopted son of God. (Eph. 1:5). What a privilege!

3. I need to become a Christian to obtain peace in my soul. I need the rest Jesus promised. (Matt. 11:28) I need the peace that comes by being right with God. I need the burden of guilt lifted from my soul. (1 Pet. 3:21). My heart will be cleansed when I obey the word of truth. (1 Pet. 1:22).

4. I need to become a Christian to make my life count for eternity. Paul taught us to live "soberly, righteously, and godly." (Titus 2:12). There is no system that requires any more virtuous life than that taught by the apostles and demonstrated by Christ. I do not want to live a wholesome moral life in vain. I want to make every day count for eternity.

5. I need to become a Christian so that I may have the assurance of the earthly blessings promised to those who seek first the kingdom. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things (food, raiment and shelter, D.H.) shall be added unto you." Jesus promised to bless His own and to meet their needs. I want to live the kind of life He blesses.

6. I need to become a Christian so that my every prayer will be heard and answered. If I turn away He will not hear me. "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be adomination." (Prov. 28:9). "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." (1 Pet. 3:12).

7. I need to become a Christian so I can enjoy the fellowship of Christ and the apostles. "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." (1 Cor. 1:1). "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another." (1 Jno. 1:7). I want to work with Jesus and to know that I have joined hands in a common effort with the finest who have ever lived.

8. I need to become a Christian so I can serve Jesus. "... he

became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." (Heb. 5:9). I do not enjoy the prospects of continuing to serve a master who makes no promises and who, were he to make one would break it, and whose destiny is eternal banishment apart from all that is good and noble and pure. I need to become a Christian so I can serve the triumphant Lord.

9. I need to become a Christian to help influence others in the right way. Young folks probably do not feel the weight of their example as strongly as they will later on, when they come to realize their children and perhaps others are following in their footsteps. This is not the main reason for obeying Christ of course, as those without children need to obey, but the fact one is influencing others is an additional reason for his obeying. I want others to become Christians too.

10. I need to become a Christian so I will be prepared for death. I know death is inevitable. It is "appointed unto men once to die." (Heb. 9:27). Death is no respecter. Sometimes it tiptoes softly by the beside of the babe in the crib. With those who live out the three-score and ten the abrasive years wear out the body until, at last, the iron gates of the earthly tabernacle swing out and the spirit, ever strong, departs to return unto God who gave it. I want the day of my death to be my emancipation day from sorrow and suffering. I want my family to rejoice that when that inevitable moment arrives I shall have served Him who can and will safely guide me through heaven's portals. Unconcern, worldly pursuits and present interests may satisfy for a little while but they wear threadbare as the years pass by and can give no comfort in the hour of death.

11. I need to become a Christian because I do not want the Bible to condemn me. My mother read it to me when I was just a child. It is loved and respected by my family. It has been read during the most serious and sobering moments of my life.

It promises an abundant and a triumphant life, yet with all its cheer, if I go through life failing to obey the Lord, it will turn on me in the last hour and condemn me for my neglect and unbelief.

I want the approval of God's word and I want it to comfort those I love whom I must leave behind.

12. I need to become a Christian because nothing else will satisfy me. Pagan idolatry with its superstitions is confusing and disappointing. Judaism is outdated. Worldly gain is no substitute. It would be better that financial failure crown my every effort here below than in gaining all, lose that everlasting crown promised to the obedient. Atheism too is empty, denying but promising nothing. For me it is Christianity or nothing.

13. I need to become a Christian so that I will be among those raised to meet Him when he comes again. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. 5:16, 17).

14. I need to become a Christian so He will say "Well done," when I stand before Him in the judgment where there will be no deception and above which there will be no court of appeal. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (2 Cor. 5:10). That day of reckoning when the Lord will vindicate the righteous and will send from His presence the impenitents is before me. In that day wrongs will be righted and sacrifices rewarded.

In many a home is a tape recorder enabling folks to keep a permanent record of the voices and events they and theirs cherish through the years. Memories they fail but the magnetic tape does not. Every syllable and every note is faithfully preserved. Long after the sound of voices has died away and lips have been stilled in the sleep of death others may hear these voices. Is it too difficult to recognize God is able to remember our words and deeds?

There is also a small mechanism available, so I have been told, that by electrical impulses every sound on a small roll of

magnetic film can be erased in a few seconds. How so like the pardon granted by the Lord when one becomes a Christian. All sins gone forever! Why should I wait? How can I wait longer! I do not want the Lord to deny me in that crucial hour. I am sure He won't if I become a Christian and remain true to Him.

15. I need to become a Christian so I can spend eternity with Jesus and with the bravest, finest and purest souls that have ever lived. I want to be with the patriarchs of old and with the faithful of all ages. I want to dwell where I shall hear only that which is inspiring and elevating and where there will be no pain, no sorrow, no death and no parting while the eternal ages roll on and on.

But who else will be in heaven? Draw near a moment. Stand with me beside heartbreak's casket wherein lies a tiny form that housed a spark of that celestial fire but for a moment. The hope of once happy parents now lies before us in the iron grip of death. Little eyes are closed. Little hands lie cold. A tiny heart no longer beats. Little ears do not—cannot, hear. But they shall some day. When the archangel's trumpet sounds that long loud blast the voice of the Lord Jesus Christ shall penetrate the sepulchre of every innocent that lies beneath the sod. Here is one whose resurrection is just as sure as God's book is true. He shall rise! Jesus promised it! To stand before such purity is an experience not easy to forget. How insignificant material things! How revolting sin! How lovely innocense! How precious His promise! "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." I want to spend eternity with such as this!

CONCLUSION

God loves me. Jesus wants me and invites me to obey Him. The apostles have pointed out the way and have urged me to enter into it. My better judgment prompts me to become a Christian even now lest I delay too long. (Matt. 16:26).

Because God loves me, He sent His Son to suffer and die for me and to shed His blood for my sins. Now what must I do?

(1) I must believe. (Mark 16:16; Heb. 11:6) (2) I must repent of my sins. (Acts 2:38) (3) I must confess my faith in Christ. (Rom. 10:10; Acts 8:37) and (4) I must be baptized (immersed) at which time the Lord will pardon me—I will then be a child of God—a Christian!

A Strange Necessity

H.L. Franklin

In the Roman letter the grand old apostle and soldier of Christ spends precious time in God's word convicting the world, Jew and Gentile, of sin. In the first chapter beginning with verse twenty-six Paul points out a most heinous sin—the sin of homosexuality.

This is a strange necessity. It is not strange that man would stoop of this sin. When every imagination of man's heart can turn to evil, surely he could dream up this repulsive sin. It is not strange that Paul would rebuke sin and exhort to faithfulness. The strange thing is that this rebuke was necessary. Could his readers not realize homosexuality was a sin against God? Possibly not.

Man today seems to have difficulty realizing this is a sin. This that was not spoken of some years ago is paraded as normal activity today. Movies are made which feature the hero as a homosexual. Books are written with this as the central theme. But, worse, some religions defend this as normal expression human emotion.

It is strange that it is necessary to remind people, especially those considering themselves Christian, that homosexuality is a sin. A strange necessity, but let us consider God's attitude toward this sin.

By the law is the knowledge of sin. From iniquity man has

known of this sin! ("If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them" (Lev. 20:13). Is this a normal expression human emotion? More accurately, it is a sin against God.

Because of the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah, God completely destroyed them from the face of the earth. What were their sins? Very likely every sin known to man. We know the action now in question was prevalent. It was so prevalent that Sodom now lends its name to the word sodomy, "carnal copulation in any of certain unnatural ways."

When the angels visited Lot the night prior to the destruction, the men of the city came looking for them. They called to Lot to bring them out "that we may know them." Lot offered them his daughters, who had "not known man," for their sexual gratification. They would not have this. They wanted men. These men were stricken blind and the entire city was eventually destroyed in flames. A normal expression of human emotion? More accurately; a sin against God.

Paul discussed this matter in the aforementioned passage. He concluded by saying "that they which commit such things are worthy of death." Now, today we are told this is not really a sin, but it would be a sin if the individual was unkind to his fellow man. The impression is left that it is alright as long as both are agreeable. And the explanation is that this is what Paul means, God forbid! Paul says this is sin and that they which do such things are worthy of death."

What must a Christian do in regard to this sin? Flee from it as he would flee any sin of the devil. What must a Christian do in regard to any psychologist or normal expression human emotion? Shun them as we would "abstain from all appearance of evil."

For Christ's Sake --- The Cause is First

Maxie B. Boren

Nothing in this world is more important than the "cause" of Jesus Christ! Everything else is secondary! The true Christian willing to suffer for it, to endure hurt, privation, and discouragement for it. And to weep for it.

The apostle Paul wrote, "...what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ. Yea verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may gain Christ, and be found in him..." *Philippians 3:7-9a*. And obviously, Paul really meant what he said! Review his life, recorded in the book of Acts, and gain insight from his epistles, and you will quickly see **THE CAUSE OF CHRIST WAS FIRST** with him. Note carefully his listing of things he incurred as a result of his fidelity to Jesus: read *II Corinthians 11:24-28*.

When the "cause of Christ" is threatened, the Christian will stand "in his place!" When the truth is challenged, the Christian will courageously defend it! When the church is troubled or disturbed, the true Christian will bend over backwards to maintain peace and unity! When the proverbial "chips are down," the Christian will put the "CAUSE" first and sacrifice whatever is necessary that it be not maimed or defamed in any way.

Jesus said, "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness..." *Matthew 6:33*. This is always uppermost in the Christian's mind and heart. Not any thing, nor any person should take precedent over the good of the kingdom.

"Wherefore I take pleasure in weakness, in injuries, in neces-

sities, in persecutions, in distresses, *for Christ's sake*....." *II Corinthians 12:10*. Paul knew what really mattered. And we should know it still does! The "cause of Christ, "His kingdom, His way.....yes, "for Christ's sake," that is what is vitally important!

"Words Of Life"

Several times in the New Testament we read that "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:21; Romans 10:13). Many believe that the only thing involved here is to "accept Christ as your personal Saviour." While it is certainly true that we must accept Jesus as our personal Saviour, there is more required than just stating these words, or saying yes to a preacher when he asks "Do you accept Jesus as your personal Saviour?"

In Acts chapter 22 we can read of a classic example of a man who was saved by calling upon the name of the Lord? But exactly when and how did he call upon His name? Now, if Acts 2:21 and Romans 10:13 are to have any value at all we must know when and how one calls upon the Lord. Please read carefully the first fifteen verses of Acts 22. Then notice exactly what verse sixteen says, "And now why tarriest thou, Arise and be baptised, and wash away thy sins, **CALLING ON THE NAME OF THE LORD**". Notice now, Ananias did not say, "Saul, do you accept Jesus as your personal Saviour?" But he did tell him what he had to do in order to call upon His name, and therefore be saved. Saul was not saved on the Damascan road (it's obvious that he was a believer, but not saved), but in the city of Damascus after obeying the divine command to be baptised for the remission of his sins.

You too can be saved like Saul of Tarsus. "And now why tarriest THOU, arise and be baptised, and wash away thy sins, **CALLING ON THE NAME OF THE LORD**", Acts 22:16. Won't you do it now?

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