

Church of Christ

...Heart to Heart...

The question comes up from time to time: “Is it wrong to use instrumental music in worship?” People want to know because of what the religious world around us practices. I will say that we have no problems here with this issue, but I thought it would be good to address it. Over the years, I’ve heard about every argument offered for and against. *What is addressed most of the time is the instrument and not worship.* What needs to be addressed is worship and what God deems as acceptable to Him. Understanding worship will give us the answer if instruments are acceptable.

What is worship about? Who is central in worship? Read John 4 where Jesus encounters the Samaritan woman. In this discussion with her, Jesus gives great insight about genuine, acceptable worship. She thinks location is what worship is about (v.20-22). Jesus assures her that a change is taking place and worship is not confined to location. True worshipers, He says, worship in spirit and truth (v.23). ***These are two key elements for acceptable worship before God.*** To worship in spirit is to worship from within your being, your heart offering its all in the name of the Lord. It’s being reverent before God. Truth is always according to God and what He deems as acceptable. The Father seeks these kinds of worshipers. God is spirit (v.24) and worship that is acceptable must be spiritual, from within the heart and bound by His truth. We see Jesus use the word “***must***” which is emphatic.

What do we learn? For worship to be acceptable it “***must***” be God and Christ centered! In Phil 3:3, Paul says they “*put no confidence in the flesh*” when they worship. To be God and Christ centered means there is no room for man’s personal ideas. Otherwise, worship is useless in the eyes of God because it becomes man centered, (what pleases us). Worship that caters to man is not acceptable to God and is rejected by God! Worship must come from the truth and our hearts, with God and Christ at the center. That means God must be revered and held in awe (Heb. 12:28-29).

Peter says we are to proclaim His excellencies because we have been brought out of darkness into His light (I Pet. 2:9). Worship is proclaiming His Excellencies, not ourselves! Peter says we are to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus (I Pet. 2:5). ***Spiritual sacrifices***, not physical! It’s all about our hearts going up to God, knit around the truth or it’s unacceptable. God ***seeks*** true worshipers.

Where does that leave instrumental music in worship? Outside, where it belongs! It has no part of acceptable worship to God and is not spiritual. The instrument is for man, not God. It makes our music sound “prettier” but has no heart or spirit and ***no*** appeal to God! God is spirit and seeks spiritual worshipers, who worship in truth! That’s acceptable, and true worshipers do things that are acceptable in the sight of God. Think about it!!!

Brent