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# BIBLE TALK

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This week the question is: **Are instruments of music in worship sinful?**

**FIRST:** Let's begin by admitting that instruments of music were used in OT worship with God's approval (2 Chron 29:25). If you take the time to read that passage, you will see that instruments were not only permitted – they were required. To leave instruments off would have been sinful since God commanded their use.

So when we ask the question, “*Are instruments of music in worship sinful?*”, people read about music in the OT and quickly conclude that instruments of music are acceptable today. Yet no one is thinking, “*Hey ... wait a minute. They also had animal sacrifices in the OT, but we don't offer animal sacrifices any more.*” In the OT, circumcision was required, eating pork was forbidden and a hundred other things which people are not willing to accept today.

**LISTEN:** It is inconsistent to refer to the OT for one practice and reject all the other requirements of the OT. If a person is going to go to the OT for one single practice, that person is obligated to accept the entire OT law. Notice carefully:

## **Galatians 5:3**

<sup>3</sup> And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep **the whole law**.

What this passage is saying is that if you're going to go to the OT for one practice, you must also keep all the other laws of the OT. You are not entitled to go to the OT and select only those things which you like.

Some people quote Heb 13:8, “*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*” They think this means, “*If Jesus allowed instruments in the OT, He must allow them today.*” When people make this argument, they are not thinking very critically. A person can be the same person without always doing the same thing.

- Jesus died on the cross one time, but He will never do it again (Heb 9:28).

- God destroyed the world with a flood, but He will never do this again (Gen 9:15).
- Likewise, God commanded instruments of music in worship during the OT times, but He did not issue that command in the NT.

So, even though God does not change, He has changed His law (Heb 7:12). The OT was “nailed to the cross” (Col 2:14). We live under a NT today and from the NT comes our instructions on how to worship God.

This brings us to our second point:

**SECOND**: The church of the NT did not go by the rules and regulations of the OT. They went by the instructions of Jesus and the apostles.

**Acts 2:42**

<sup>42</sup> And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

**Colossians 3:17**

<sup>17</sup> And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

This means: Everything we teach and everything we do must be authorized by either Jesus or one of His official representatives – the apostles (2 Cor 5:20). Furthermore, that authorization must be in written form (2 Tim 3:16-17). If there are no written instructions for instruments of music in worship, we are not permitted to add them.

**Revelation 22:18-19**

<sup>18</sup> For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone **adds** to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; <sup>19</sup> and if anyone **takes away from** the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

Listen carefully: We are not permitted to add to nor to take away from the NT scriptures. Serious consequences follow those who would tamper with the word of God.

Now ... here's what we have learned:

- Col 3:17 – says everything taught and practiced today must be authorized by either Jesus or His apostles.
- 2 Tim 3:16-17 – says that authorization must be in written form.
- But there is no written authorization from either Jesus nor the apostles to use instruments of music in the NT church.
- Therefore, in order to use instruments today, we would have to add something into the worship which the word of God left out.
- Rev 22:18 – says that anyone adding to the word of God will be punished by God.

Yes, instruments of music are sinful in worship today because there is no NT authorization for them.

When the NT was silent about instruments of music, it was purposefully silent. God did not overlook instruments accidentally. He specifically told His people to sing to Him in worship (Eph 5:19), but He was purposefully silent about instruments. It is wrong and it is sinful to add to the word of God and violate the silence of scripture. Instruments of music are wrong in worship today.

Every church today using instruments of music are doing so with absolutely no authorization from God.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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