

Both Sides of The Music Question

Discussed



A written discussion between Robert H. Bunting
of the Church of Christ and J. D. Marion of the
Christian Church.



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THE PROPOSITION

RESOLVED: The use of instrumental music in connection with songs sung by the church on the Lord's day, when assembled for edification and communion, is opposed to New Testament teaching and is sinful.

Affirms: ROBERT H. BUNTING (signed)

Denies: JOHNIE MARION (signed)

1. This is to be a written discussion.
2. If printed, no material in this discussion may be altered in any way. The one printing the discussion will bear all expense of publication.
3. Each disputant will write four articles to each proposition as nearly like he would deliver them orally as possible.
4. The length of each article will be no more than 2,000 words.
5. Each writer will have two weeks from the day the material is received to answer and return the material.

ROBERT H. BUNTING (signed)

JOHNIE MARION (signed)

FIRST AFFIRMATIVE

Robert H. Bunting

Discussing the word of God can result in good, if the discussion is carried on in the right spirit. My intention will be to maintain the right attitude at all times, and to pray continually for nothing but good to come from this debate. May God help us all to come to a full understanding of His word.

The proposition for discussion is as follows:

“Resolved: The use of instrumental music in connection with songs sung by the church on the Lord’s day, when assembled for edification and communion, is opposed to New Testament teaching and is sinful.”

Being in the affirmative, it is my responsibility to define the terms of the proposition. The words “instrumental music” refer to an “intelligent combination of tones ... having rhythm and melody” (Webster) produced by a man-made contrivance such as an organ or piano. The discussion will be concerning instruments of music and not pitch pipes, song books, lights, or seats. Neither one of us believes song books, lights or seats are opposed to New Testament teaching, so there is no need of bringing these into the discussion. The section of the proposition reading, “in connection with songs sung by the church on the Lord’s Day, when assembled for edification and communion” limits the discussion to that event and no other. This is not a discussion concerning the use of the instrument for entertainment, but the use of the instrument by the church for worship. By “opposed” I mean “set in opposition, contrary, or adverse” to New Testament teaching. I define “New Testament teaching” as the commands, approved examples or necessary inferences in the doctrine of Christ. The word “sinful” means transgression of the law of Christ. I assume these definitions meet with your approval.

Surely, we can both agree the authority in the religion of Christ is the will of Christ. Paul wrote, “If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write

unto you are the commandments of the Lord.” (1 Corinthians 14:37). By the word “commandments”, the apostle shows the words he has written are authoritative. The phrase, “of the Lord” denotes supreme authority. The authority of the New Testament is emphasized when we remember it grants unto us “*all things* that pertain unto life and godliness ...” (2 Pet. 1:3).

Realizing the New Testament is authoritative, faithful children of God have always pleaded with people to unite upon God’s word. Men are right in religion, as far as the name is concerned, if they are wearing a name found in the New Testament. A church is organized scripturally, if the organization is found in the will of Christ. One’s worship is right if it is done in the right attitude, and the actions are specified by God in the New Testament. The terms of entrance into the church are right, if they are the same terms of salvation preached by Christ and the apostles. Surely we can agree the New Testament is the authority in religion today.

Another principle I want noticed is the fact that one must respect the *silence* of the will of Christ. One must abide (stay or remain) in the doctrine of Christ, and the way that is done is to remain silent where the Bible is silent. Having coconut milk and brown bread on the Lord’s table is wrong, because it is going beyond the word of God and thus shows a lack of respect for the necessity of abiding in the doctrine of Christ. John declared, “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.” (2 John 9).

The statement of the apostles on circumcision emphasizes the necessity of respecting the silence of the scriptures. “We gave no such commandment”, declared the apostles of Christ. (Acts 15:24). Circumcision was not to be bound upon the Gentiles, and the simple reason given by the apostles was — “no such commandment.” The great lesson here is — respect the silence of the scriptures. Instrumental music is wrong because the apostles gave “no such commandment.” The only way you can show my proposition to be false is to give the command, approved example, or necessary inference for mechanical instruments of music. I am anticipating the fact that you will not give a command, example, or necessary

inference from the scripture for mechanical instruments of music in the worship. The very fact that there is no scripture for the use of mechanical instruments in the worship of the church proves it is not authorized by the New Testament and therefore sinful. In addition to these principles the New Testament is the final authority in religious matters and the silence of the scriptures must be respected, I intend to introduce several arguments proving instrumental music is opposed to New Testament teaching. Three arguments will be submitted in this article, and others will follow.

(1) *Instrumental music in the worship is opposed to New Testament teaching and sinful, because it violates the New Testament law of unity.* Before His death Christ prayed, “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.” (John 17:20, 21). You should recognize, as do I, that Christ did not pray for an impossibility. It is possible for all to be one, *if* all would abide in the doctrine of Christ. The reason there is division is because some do not abide in the teaching of Christ. When men go beyond the will of God, they disrupt the unity that is based upon the New Testament and that alone.

Paul calls for unity in 1 Corinthians 1:10. “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” The apostle demands unity by the phrase, “that there be no divisions among you.” He tells how this unity is attained and maintained by saying “speak the same thing.” Can we all speak the same thing in religion? We certainly can, if we are willing to take the Bible and that alone as our guide. Division does not come over what the Bible says, but over what it does not say. You and I can agree singing is scriptural music in the worship. We can agree to this because that is the kind of music specified in the New Testament of Christ. We stand in agreement as long as we stand on the Bible. However, when you introduce the mechanical instrument, there is division. We agree as long as we stand on the teaching of Christ, but the unity is broken by the introduction of something not found in the

will of Christ. Who causes the division? It is the one introducing the instrument.

As an illustration of this fact, I would like to quote from an article by Brother J. B. Briney. Brother Briney has just given the illustration of a group of individuals leaving sectarianism and making a complete return to New Testament Christianity. After a period of time the question of the instrument comes up, and the brethren vote whether to accept or reject the instrument. The majority cast their ballot to introduce the instrument, and Brother Briney then represents the minority as pleading for the instrument to be left out of the worship and fellowship maintained.

“We regard it as unauthorized and corrupting; as calculated to carnalize the worship. But, say the majority, we have determined to use the instrument, and you can either accept that or withdraw from the congregation. Here, now, is a new test of fellowship. Who has made it? Certainly the majority, as it seems to me. They say to the brethren, 'You cannot have the fellowship of the congregation unless you accept the organ. We think more of our unauthorized instrument than we do of either your conscience or your fellowship.’”

(Quoted in **Instrumental Music**, page 12, by James Tolle).

The introduction of mechanical instruments in the worship of the church has caused division among God’s people, and is therefore opposed to New Testament teaching. While we both stand on the New Testament there is unity, but the minute one leaves the doctrine of Christ there is division. The one leaving the doctrine is the one causing division.

(2) *Instrumental music in the worship is opposed to New Testament teaching and sinful, because it is a “commandment of men” and as such transgresses the commandment of God.* The crux of this whole discussion is one of authority. Where is the authority for the use of the mechanical instrument, in God or man? If it is from God, it is authorized to be used in the worship of the church. If it is of man, it is opposed to the will of Christ. In reading Matthew

15:2-8 and Mark 7:1-7 one will notice three facts emphasized. (1) Some things, though right in themselves, when used as religious acts, are called by Christ “traditions of men.” (2) Jesus says the traditions of men transgress the commandments of God. (3) If one teaches for doctrines the commandments of men, his worship is vain. There is no command, approved example, or necessary inference for mechanical instruments in the worship. Therefore, it is of human origin and makes the worship of God vain. To disprove my proposition, you will have to show the use of instrumental music in the worship of the church is of God. If you admit the use of the instrument is a “tradition of men”, you are admitting my proposition to be right.

(3) *Instrumental music in the worship is opposed to New Testament teaching and sinful because it is not of faith.* God approves only those actions that are by faith. “Without faith it is impossible to please him ...” (Heb. 11:6). This is why Paul states, “We walk by faith, and not by sight.” (2 Cor. 5:7). God’s children have always had to “walk by faith.” “By faith” Noah prepared the ark. Abraham obeyed “by faith.” Israel passed through the Red Sea “by faith”, and Rahab hid the spies “by faith.” (Heb. 11:7, 8, 29, 31). Every religious action must be done by faith to be pleasing to God. If Hebrews 11 does not teach this, it teaches nothing.

The question is, when does one walk by faith? Since faith comes by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17), one walks by faith when he walks by the direction of God’s word. Noah is a very good illustration of this. “By faith Noah ... prepared an ark ... (Heb. 11:7). Noah built the ark by faith, because he built the ark as God had specified. If Noah would have done something other than what was commanded, he would not have walked by faith. Walking by faith involves a command, and obedience to that command. One cannot walk by faith if there is no command, and neither can one walk by faith if he does something other than what is commanded. Noah received the commandment in Genesis 6:14. “Make thee an ark of gopher wood ...” Noah’s obedience to the command is recorded in verse 22. “Thus did Noah according to all that God commanded him, so did he.” The writer of Hebrews could declare Noah prepared the ark “by faith”, because Noah received a command, and did what was commanded. Could Noah have prepared the ark by faith, if he

had received no command to prepare an ark? Would Noah have prepared the ark by faith, if he had not prepared the ark as God specified?

Singing can be done by faith, because God has commanded it. “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, *singing* and making melody in your heart to the Lord.” (Eph. 5:19). God has given the command — “sing.” When one obeys that command he will “sing.” To “play” an instrument is to do something other than what is commanded and is not walking by faith. Playing an instrument in the worship cannot be done by faith because there is no command. Since “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17), there can be no action by faith without a command, example, or necessary inference from the word of God. There is no such command, approved example, or necessary inference for the use of mechanical instruments of music in the worship. Instrumental music is not of faith, and is therefore displeasing to God.

FIRST NEGATIVE

J. D. Marion

It is wise that you wish to limit this discussion to instruments of music and not pitch pipes, song books, lights, or seats, etc., in view of the fact that mention of these things will show much inconsistency to the position that you hold. I will, however, grant you this favor in all that I affirm. I will not grant you this favor if I should wish to show that the use of these things in worship is inconsistent with the propositions that you have written down. An example of this will appear in this paper. There is one other definition you offer that I would not necessarily agree with, and that is on “New Testament teaching.” I would not hold that inferences are on the same par with commands and approved examples in view of the fact that it may be necessary for you to infer a thing to arrive at your position and I may not agree to the inference which is purely in your mind. When the meaning of the Scriptures has to be inferred, then it falls into the realm of opinion. Where there is opinion, there is liberty. I’ll admit that often we may infer the same things on many

passages of Scripture, but this may not always hold true. Therefore, I cannot put inferences on the same level with commands and approved examples. Also, I would hold that apostolic precedent and approved examples are synonymous.

I here restate the proposition which I deny:

“The use of instrumental music in connection with songs sung by the church on the Lord’s day, when assembled for edification and communion, is opposed to New Testament teaching and is sinful.”

I deny this proposition first of all on the basis of prophecy. The prophecy that I have reference to is found in Ps. 87:5-7.

“And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there. Selah. As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there: all my springs are in thee.”

That this prophecy is of the church, I give the following argument:

First, Zion is used in reference to the church.

“If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the Scriptures, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.” 1 Pet. 2:3-6.

If in this place the writer has reference to Jerusalem, then the Scripture states that we must offer up our “spiritual sacrifices” in Jerusalem. I do not feel that there will be any objection to the fact that Zion (or Sion) can be used in reference to the church.

Second, “This and that man was born in her.”

Remember what Jesus said to Nicodemus?

“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” Jn. 3:5.

The church is feminine. She is the “Bride of Christ.” (Rev. 19:7). This too, could have reference to the church.

Third, “And the highest himself shall establish her.”

Of what is said here, there can be no doubt. First we see that the Lord “shall” establish her. (Future). Jerusalem had long been established. It was, in fact, a Jebusite city of hardly the character that God would establish when David captured the city about 1000 B. C. to set up his capitol there after he had reigned in Hebron about 7 ½ years.

Jesus said to Peter, “I will build my church” (Matt. 16:18). Paul said, “Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor. 3:11). So the Highest himself did establish her on the day of Pentecost, approximately 30 A. D.

Fourth, “The Lord shall count when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there.”

It is said that on the day of Pentecost, ten days after Christ went back into heaven, that there were 3000 who obeyed the gospel. The Scripture goes further to say that the “Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” (Acts 2:47). In other words, the Lord counted when he wrote up the people that were born there.

Only a novice would try to deny that the prophecy in Ps. 87:5-7 has reference to anything else other than the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. What else is said here?

“As well, the singers as the players on instruments shall be there: all my springs are in thee.” Ps. 87:7.

Who would say that God changed his mind after this prophecy was written, and decided in the final plan of the church to have singers in the service of edification and communion on the Lord’s day, and not have the players on instruments after all? Could it be that God intends at some later date to send an apostle into the world

to introduce the instrument into the church that this prophecy might be fulfilled? I think not. God's revelation to us for the church is complete. Why would anyone say that part of this prophecy (that part that has to do with singing) was fulfilled, and the rest (that part that has to do with players on instruments) was not fulfilled? If you can adequately answer this question for me, it will bring me much closer to the position that you affirm. Until you do answer this question, it remains as part of the overwhelming evidence that causes me to deny that the use of instrumental music in the church is sinful.

I feel that prophecy has a direct bearing upon the teaching of the New Testament. To say that it has no bearing upon this discussion, would be to deny the word of the Lord found in Eph. 2:20. There we see the church:

“... is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone.”

I have begun with the foundation of the problem, which seems to be the evident place to begin. This foundation is of the prophets. In later papers I will set forth other propositions which prevent me from accepting the position that you affirm in hopes that you can answer sufficiently if you expect me to accept the proposition stated to be sinful. At present I desire to use the remainder of my allotted space to iron out some difficulties set forth in your first paper.

I like what you said about respecting the silence of the Scriptures. I am reminded of a great mistake that has been made by so many people today. When a man says we are saved by faith, he has made no mistake, for the Bible says in one place, “... we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified ...” (Gal. 2:16). But on the other hand, when a man adds to the word of God, speaking where the Scriptures do not speak, and says that a man is saved by faith *only*, then he has made a big mistake. He has added to the word of God, and thus causes division and confusion in the church. Now when a man says we are to sing, he has made no mistake, for the Scriptures say, “... singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19). However, when a man adds to the word of God, *speaking where the Scriptures DO NOT SPEAK*,

and says that a man is to sing *ONLY*, then he has made a big mistake. He has added to the word of God, and thus causes division and confusion in the church. To use your own words if I may, "Division does not come over what the Bible says, but over what it does not say." The Scriptures do not say to "sing *ONLY*." Neither is this implied by any rule. If the one who introduces the instrument is the cause of division, then I am afraid you will have to hold your next discussion with the Holy Spirit for guiding Paul to use such awful terms as *psalmois*, *humnois*, and *oidais* in Col. 3:16 and Eph. 5:19.

Psalmois means (even in the New Testament) "to sing with an instrument." *Humnois*, means "praise to God" (without the instrument). *Oidais*, says Lightfoot, Thayer and Roberson, "gathers up the other two and extends the precept to all forms of song." Says Roberson in his *Word Pictures in New Testament*, "The same song can have all three words applied to it." Thus the Holy Spirit has made provision for us to sing with or without the instrument as case may present. Now if Brother J. B. Briney is so disturbed over the introduction of the musical instrument into worship, I suggest he take the matter up with God. As you say, "The one leaving the doctrine is the one causing division." When you say, "sing *Only*", you have added to the word of God, made to yourselves a special creed, and denominated yourselves apart from the body of Christ at large.

You say that instrumental music is a "commandment of men." I refer you back to the above and the meaning of the words Paul used to phrase his instructions in Col. 3:16 and Eph. 5:19. To use again your own words, this time quoted from 1 Cor. 14:37, "... the things that write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." Would you not say that this could also apply to the Colossian and Ephesian letters as well? If so, then instrumental music is a *commandment of God* and not of men.

Again you say, "Instrumental music in the worship is ... sinful because it is not of faith." Then you say, to sum up your words, and not to quote directly, that all things of faith must have commandment. Then you conclude that there is no command (see above) for instrumental music in worship, so it is not of faith and sinful. Now this is interesting, for of all the listings in my *Analytical*

Concordance to the Bible by Young, (1090 pages) I cannot find one command even to *sing* "... when assembled for edification and communion ..." I will go you one further, I cannot find one approved example where the early church sang "... when assembled for edification and communion ..." Acts 2:42 says, "... they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers", but nothing is said about singing. So according to your last numbered statement and argument, you sin when you sing (in our defined period of time) for there is "... no such commandment." Now pertaining to those things that you so wisely wished to leave unmentioned, such as "pitch pipes, song-books, lights, or seats", where is your command for these? Where is your respect for consistency? You have said, "Without faith it is impossible to please him ...", again you say, "Since 'faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God' (Rom. 10:17), there can be no action by faith without a command, example", and you went on to so *conveniently add*, "or necessary inference from the word of God",* upon which I have already remarked in my opening remarks. Now by such a strict rule as you have so neatly lifted Scripture here and there from its context to set forth, you have made it just as sinful to use the pitch pipes, song-books, lights and seats—and even to *sing* "when assembled for edification and communion." I do not find the Scriptures you quoted to have such direct bearing upon the instrument to the exclusion of the other things that are used in worship without command or example. Neither am I upon the force of your first paper, ready to accept your creed, "sing *ONLY*." And upon such an issue as has caused division in the ranks of the church of the Lord Jesus, and in our own great movement, I sincerely hope you can enlighten me much more in your remaining papers why you have done this, than you have in your first.

Seeking to know the truth, I am anxiously awaiting your next affirmative.

*Are necessary inferences **heard from the Word of God**, or are they heard in your mind as they echo, "This is that — if you infer it so"?

SECOND AFFIRMATIVE

Robert H. Bunting

I can not see why you should disagree to limiting the discussion “to instruments of music and not pitch pipes, song books, lights, or seats” since you have declared instruments of music are “commandments of God” (First Negative, page 15). If they are “commandments of God”, they are not parallel to these things that are expedients. You have admitted we are discussing what is commanded, and not what is expedient. In the light of that fact, why complain about keeping expedients out of the discussion?

In the definition of terms it is stated, “I define ‘New Testament teaching’ as the commands, approved examples or necessary inferences in the doctrine of Christ.” You will notice I did not speak of “inferences”, but of “necessary inferences.” There is a big difference. An “inference” may not be a “*necessary* inference.” To prove the Bible teaches by “necessary inference” I will cite two passages. Genesis 13:1 tells us of Abram leaving Egypt. The latter part of the verse states, “Lot went with him.” Although the scripture does not state Lot went into Egypt, we know he did for he could not go *out* of Egypt if he had not gone *in*. The necessary inference is that Lot went into Egypt. Mark 1:10 tells of Christ coming “out of the water.” Although the passage does not say in so many words he went down into the water, the necessary inference is that he did. The Bible does not teach by inference, but it does teach through *necessary inference*. With this explanation, I believe you will agree with the definition of terms, so I will not take any more time on them but spend the rest of my space on other matters.

Your argument based upon Psalms 87:5-7 does not even come close to denying my proposition. You *assume* “Zion” of Psalms 87:5-7 is the church, but your assumption is not proof. 1 Peter 2:3-6 does not prove Zion of Psalms 87:5-7 is the church, but rather the passage proves Isaiah 28:16 refers to the New Testament dispensation. What you need is a New Testament passage that quotes Psalms 87:5-7 and applies it to the church. Our readers are not going to take your assumption. Why not give the New Testament passage that applies Psalms 87:5-7 to the church? I am predicting you will not because you cannot! The Mormon Church

can quote Isaiah 4:1-11 to show in “Zion” seven women shall hold to one man. However, they fall into the same mistake you do. They assume “Zion” always refers to the church, although they cannot find where Isaiah 4:1-11 is applied by the apostles to the church. If Psalms 87:5-7 is your proof text, quote one passage in the New Testament that applies this passage to Christ’s church. Your guesses are not proof.

The parallel you draw between Psalms 87:5 and John 3:5 just isn’t parallel. You will notice the psalmist said, “This man is born *in* her.” Christ said, “... except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter *into* the kingdom of God.” The description in Psalms 87 does not fit spiritual Zion. Men were born “in” literal Zion, but they are “born again” (John 3:3) *in order to* enter spiritual Zion. Are men “born of water and the Spirit” *in* the church? Furthermore, the church being feminine proves nothing, for Jerusalem is described as “her.” (Lamentations Chapter 1). Neither does the fact the psalmist says God “shall” establish her help you. For establish can refer to literal Jerusalem and does in Isaiah 62:7. “And give him no rest, *till he establish*, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.” Thus “establish” can be used in the future, and apply to literal Jerusalem. Every point you have made to show Psalms 87:5-7 refers to the church has failed. In addition to this, the American Standard Version translates verse 7 in the following manner. “They that sing as well as they that *dance* shall say, All my fountains are in thee.” (Emphasis mine, RHB). Is this a prophecy of dancing in the church? Your argument given to prove my proposition false has utterly failed. In your next article we will be looking for the New Testament passage quoting Psalms 87:5-7 and applying it to the church.

So much for your one argument to show my proposition false, now let us consider your attempt at answering the arguments presented in my first affirmative. The attempt to parallel “faith only” and “sing only” is a good try, but it just doesn’t fit. When a Methodist preacher tells us “faith only” will save, I know he has subtracted from the word of God because the Lord said, “He that believeth *and is baptized* shall be saved.” (Mark 16:16). “Faith only” is wrong, because the Bible says there are other things to be done in addition to belief. Now then, how many kinds of music does

God specify in the New Testament? Does he say sing *and* play? If so, to say singing is the only kind of music God specifies is wrong. However, God does not say sing and play but he specifies singing. "... I will *sing* with the spirit, and I will *sing* with the understanding also." (1 Cor. 14:15). You will notice there is no instrument here. God says sing! "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, *singing* with grace in your hearts to the Lord." (Col. 3:16). No instrument here. God says *sing*! Before you can show it is wrong to say singing is the only music commanded by God, you must show where God has commanded *another music*. This same attempt to eliminate God's specification on church music will also eliminate God's specification on the subjects of baptism. The Bible says believers are to be baptized. (Mark 16:16). Does a preacher add to the Word by declaring believers are the *only* ones to be baptized? He does not, for when God specifies believers that means believers only and eliminates everyone else. Likewise, when God specifies *singing*, that eliminates all other kinds of music.

Your definition of *psalmois* is *not* the New Testament definition. Why not tell our readers what the word means in the New Testament? Reliable lexicographers will give the classical as well as the New Testament definition of Greek words. Harper's Analytical Greek Lexicon defines *psalmos* as, "Impulse, touch, of the chords of a stringed instrument; in N. T. (New Testament, RHB) a sacred song, psalm." Notice the distinction between the classical definition and the New Testament definition. Thayer defines the same word as "a pious song, a psalm." *Psalmos* refers to a pious song. What are we to do to the *psalmos*, sing it or play it? The will of Christ says we are to "sing" the "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs." Yes, the one leaving the doctrine of Christ is the one causing division, and one leaves the doctrine of Christ when he adds *play* to God's command to *sing*.

Psalmos (or the plural *psalmois*) is the noun cognate of *Psallo*, and neither one implies the instrument as far as the New Testament is concerned. *Psallo* is used five times in the New Testament, and it is translated "sing" (Rom. 15:9); "sing" (1 Cor. 14:15); "make melody" (Eph. 5:19), and "sing psalms" (James 5:13). Singing does not mean playing in either Greek or English. God commands

singing, and one sins when he goes beyond the doctrine of Christ and adds another kind of music. (2 John 9; 1 John 3:4).

To my question about instrumental music being a commandment of God or man, you answered, "... instrumental music is a commandment of God and not men." The proof you gave was Col. 3:16 and Eph. 5:19. However, these passages command "singing" and mention nothing about instrumental music. God has specified the kind of music he wants, and that kind is "singing." To use your word, any "novice" can see that. Furthermore, if these passages command the instrument, everyone *must* play for these passages apply to *all* Christians and not just one in each assembly. If the instrument is a command of God, the Christian Church would have to have an orchestra with each member participating to obey the command. The truth of the matter is there is no command for mechanical instruments of music in the worship, so it is a commandment of men. Because the mechanical instrument goes beyond the limits of God's law, it makes the worship vain. (Mark 7:7).

The quibble you make on a "command even to *sing* when assembled for edification and communion" does not destroy my argument on singing being of faith while instrumental music is not. My proposition does not affirm singing is sinful if done at any time other than the Lord's day. If God would have specified a time to sing, it would have eliminated any other time for singing, just as God's specification to sing eliminates playing. I have a command to sing; now where is your command to play mechanical instruments? We must walk "by faith" (2 Cor. 5:7), and "faith cometh by hearing" the word of God. (Rom. 10:17). Singing is commanded in the word of God, and therefore it can be done by faith. God has specified the kind of music by saying we are to *sing*. (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). The Christian Church has added to God's specification and in thus going beyond God's word (2 John 9), it has sinned. (1 John 3:4).

Why ask for the command for seats, lights, etc? You declared in the preceding paragraph instrumental music was a command. If it is a command, it is not in the class with these aids. Seats and lights are aids and not commands. If one is *singing* with lights on and sitting in a seat, he has not added another kind of music. He is obeying God's

command to sing. However, if one is singing *and* playing he has added another kind of music — a kind not authorized by God. Lights, seats, and playing an instrument are not parallel. This reasoning you are using would say, one can have lights and seats, therefore one can have jelly on the unleavened bread of the Lord's table. God specifies the kind of food to be used in connection with the Lord's Supper. What right does man have to add another? *God commands singing, and what right does man have to add another kind of music?*

Since my first three arguments have not been destroyed, my proposition is proved to be true. Nevertheless, to make the truthfulness of my proposition as clear as possible, I will present another affirmative argument.

(4) *Instrumental music in the worship is opposed to New Testament teaching and sinful, because it is not according to truth.* While speaking to the woman at the well, the Son of God gives a principle that is to govern worship until the end of time. "God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24). You will notice this is imperative. God *must* be worshipped in the way Christ has stated. If one's worship is not according to this command of Christ, the worship is not acceptable. You will notice there are three things involved in one's acceptable worship to God. (1) The worship must be directed toward the right person — God. (2) Worship must be conducted in the right attitude — in spirit. (3) The worship must be conducted in the right way — in truth. If one worshipped a false god, the worship would obviously be wrong. Worship would also be wrong if it was directed toward God, but it was not conducted in the correct attitude or in the right way. God *must* be worshipped in spirit *and* in truth.

To worship in truth is to worship according to the directions of God's word. Jesus has said, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." (John 17:17). Singing is according to truth because it is commanded by God. (1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). Instrumental music is not according to truth, for God has not commanded it in the New Covenant of Christ. To prove my proposition false you must show instrumental music is according to truth, because God demands it through direct command, approved

example, or necessary inference. This cannot be done, therefore when one is worshipping with a mechanical instrument of music he is not worshipping according to truth. Since worship **MUST** be according to truth, my proposition is sustained.

SECOND NEGATIVE

J. D. Marion

I deny, secondly, that “The use of instrumental music in connection with songs sung by the church on the Lord’s day, when assembled for the edification and communion, is opposed to New Testament teaching and sinful” because the practice was never abolished by command of God in the N. T. Instruments accompanied singing in the Patriarchal dispensation. At the crossing of the Red Sea we read in Ex. 15:1:

“Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto Jehovah ...”

Verses 2-18 relate the song. Verse 20 says:

“And Miriam, the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances.”

Instruments accompanied the giving of the law. Ex. 19:19:

“And when the voice of the trumpet waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.”

Instruments accompanied worship during the time of the law. 1 Chron. 16:4-6:

“And he (David) appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the ark of Jehovah ... Asaph the chief ... and Jeiel, with psalteries, and with harps; and Asaph with cymbals, sounding aloud; and Benaiah, and Jehaziel the priest with trumpets continually, before the ark of the covenant of God.”

“And four thousand praised Jehovah with the

instruments which I made, said David, to praise therewith.” (1 Chon. 23:5).

“David did that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah, and turned not aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.” (1 Kings 15:5).

Instrumental music will be used in heaven. Rev. 14:2b:

“And I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:”

Instrumental music was not commanded to the Patriarchs, and yet it was acceptable to God (Ex. 15). Instrumental music was not commanded in the law of Moses, yet it was acceptable to God (1 Kings 15:5). Instrumental music will be in heaven (Rev. 14:2). All things in heaven are acceptable to God. The law has been fulfilled (Matt. 5:17). The sacrifices have been abolished (Heb. 10). Christians worshipped in the temple where instruments were used (Acts 2:46-47). The apostles preached in the same temple (Acts 5:19-21). Yet the entire New Testament is completely silent to the fact that instrumental music was to be done away with or that it is sinful. For such an awful sin as would condemn one to hell as you say, it would seem to me that the Lord would have made some mention of it in his word when he had so many opportunities to do so. The perfect place would have been in the temple where both the Christians and Jews worshipped for a while. Not together, I suppose, but close enough that if instrumental music is so sinful that the apostles could have so conveniently said — “Now see the men playing the instruments, God no longer wants us to do this.”

Now let us see what we have:

Patriar. Disp.	Moses and the Law	Christ. Church	Heaven
Not commanded	Not commanded	?????	Accepted
but accepted	but accepted		and Used

If instrumental music is accepted by God in every other

dispensation and in the Christian dispensation he does not speak against it, will you answer for me the following questions:

1. Where is any indication that instrumental music is not pleasing to God?
2. In what time or in what place did God change his mind about instrumental music?
3. In reference to singing, why did the apostles use words that are connected with the use of instruments and yet never raise the issue that instrumental music is wrong?
4. Why did Paul never instruct the Gentiles, who were as familiar with the praise of their gods with instruments as were the Jews of Jehovah, that instrumental music was wrong?

If you can answer these questions for me, you will help me considerably to understand your position.

Now if you do not understand Psalms 87 to refer to the church, will you please tell me what it refers to? Before I can completely ignore this prophecy as having nothing to do with the question at hand, you will have to give me a better explanation of this text than I was able to offer. You have said that the explanation I gave did not prove this passage to refer to the church, but you did not tell me what it does refer to. For my own good and for the good I may be to others, I wish to understand the meaning of this passage. Will you give it to me? In the meantime I will study all available material myself, in order to have a better understanding.

I would like at this time to tell our readers what the word *psalmois* means in the New Testament. I know of no other way to explain than to refer to scholars of Greek who have written for our learning. I would like to quote definitions as they are written. These I have been able to gather from books that I have, books that I have borrowed in the past two weeks, and information given to me by letter from the library of Atlanta Christian College. They are as follows:

1. Liddell and Scott: “*Psalmos*, 1. A pulling or twanging

musical strings with the fingers.

2. A strain or burst of music: LATER a song sung to a stringed instrument.” (Emphasis mine JDM)

“***Psalmos-Caras***, Delighting in harp-playing.”

“***Psaltar***, A harper.” (Transliterations of characters mine for simplicity. JDM)

2. J. B. Lightfoot: “The leading idea of ***psalmos*** is a musical accompaniment.”

3. Joseph Henry Thayer (Quotes Lightfoot, page 637):
“The leading idea of ***psalmos*** is a musical accompaniment.”

4. S. Newth (Member of N. T. Revision Company):
Psallo, “To sing, to chant, accompanied with instruments, to sing psalms, Rom. 15:9; 1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; James 5:13.”

5. Charles J. Ellicott (Eleven years chairman of scholars on Revision Company; **Handy Commentary** by Ellicott on Eph. 5:19): “The psalm, as the word itself implies, is music with instrumental accompaniment, and can hardly fail to refer to the Old Testament Psalms .

6. Edward Robinson (**Lexicon of 1850**): “***Psallo***— in Septuagint and **NEW TESTAMENT** to sing, chant, properly as accompanying stringed musical instruments.” (Emphasis mine, also transliterations JDM)

“In the noun form, ***psalmos***:—**IN LATER USAGE**, song, properly as accompanying stringed instruments.” (Emphasis mine JDM)

7. S. D. F. Salmond (**The Expositor’s Greek Testament**—on Eph. 5:19): ***Psallontes*** (“singing with” ... etc). “Properly-playing on a stringed instrument, and **THEN** — singing, **especially** to an instrument ...” (Emphasis mine JDM)

8. T. S. Green: ***Psallo*** “To move by a touch, to twitch; to

touch, strike the strings or chords of an instrument;
absol. to play on a stringed instrument;”

Psalmos: Impulse, touch of the chords of a stringed instrument;”

9. W. J. Kickie: ***Psallo***—”To strike a musical instrument; to sing hymns.”

10. Harper: ***Psalmos***—”Impulse, touch, of the chords of a stringed instrument; in N. T. (A secondary meaning JDM) a sacred song, a psalm.”

Now as for Harper saying “in New Testament a sacred song, a psalm” as a secondary meaning, so what? That does not destroy the basic meaning of the word *psalmos* any more than the transliteration of the word *baptizo* to “baptize” destroys the basic meaning of immersion. What Harper is doing is merely telling his readers how to translate the word and he says that it was translated in the New Testament as a *sacred* song or psalm in contrast to an ordinary song. Whether sacred or secular, *psalmos* still means, “to sing with an instrument.”

Notice also the meaning of the word “psalm” that Harper uses to describe *psalmos*:

“The psalm, as the word itself implies, is music with instrumental accompaniment ...” (Ellicott)

Let us also examine more closely your other “Reliable lexicographer.” Joseph Henry Thayer on his definition of *Odos* of Col. 3:16 and Eph. 5:19 and then go on to other authorities and see how they compare the three words used in these two passages:

1. Joseph Henry Thayer (Secretary of the New Testament Revision Company): “Syn. ***Humnos***, ***psalmos***, ***Ode***: ***Ode*** is the generic term; ***psalmos*** and ***Humnos*** are specific, the former designating a song which took its general character from the O. T. ‘***psalmos***’ although not restricted to this, see 1 Cor. 14:15, 26), the latter a song of praise. ‘While the leading idea of ***psalmos*** is a musical accompaniment, and that of ***Humnos*** praise to

God, *Ode* is the general word for song, whether accompanied or unaccompanied, whether of praise or on any other subject. Thus it was quite possible for the same to be at once *psalmos*, *Humnos* and *Ode*.' (Bishop. Lightfoot. on Col. 3:16). The words occur together in Col. 3:16 and Eph. 5:19. See Trench, Syn. Sec. 78." (Page 637-JDM)

2. S. D. F. Salmond (**The Expositor's Greek Testament** on Eph. 5:19): "*Psalmos* is a religious song, especially one sung to a musical accompaniment, and par excellence an Old Testament psalm; *Humnos* is properly speaking a song of praise; *Odos* is the most general term, applicable to all kinds of songs, secular or sacred, accompanied or unaccompanied (cf Trench, Syn., p. 279; Lightfoot, on Col. 3:16)." (Transliterations mine JDM)

3. Robinson (**Word Pictures in N. T.**): "The same song can have all three words applied to it."

Now I understand to one who has his mind already made up and closed to the truth that all of these quotations on the meaning of the word *psalmos* are not going to mean very much in view of the fact that one authority says as a secondary meaning, and not as the basic meaning, that in the New Testament it means to sing. I would like, however, for you to notice that even Harper does not say "Sing *ONLY*." But I am not through telling our readers what the word means in the New Testament.

For instance I would like to quote from Rom. 15:9:

"And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, for this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name."

Our discussion on this passage is not basically interested in what the verse means in its context, (The same applies to 1 Pet. 2:3-6 that you said did not prove the Zion of Psalms 87:5-7 is the church. I did not intend it to do so. The quotation was given to show that Zion is

used as a word for the church), but to prove what Paul meant by the word *Psalmos*. This is a quotation from 2 Sam. 22:50 and Ps. 18:49. The word “Sing” is the Hebrew *Zawmar*. It is in the “Piel” form of the verb which carries the idea of intensity by repetition. For instance—Killed and Killed; applied to many, Killed many; or intense action, Murdered. What did *Zawmar* mean?:

1. Alexander Harkauy (**Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary**): “***Zawmar*** in the ‘Piel’ form means to play, to sing.” (Transliteration mine JDM)
2. James Stewart Perowne (Old Testament Revision Committee): “***Shir***, ‘a song’ the most general name, and ***mizmor***, ‘a psalm’, properly as sung with instrumental accompaniment, **from *Zamar***, which means both ‘to sing’ and ‘to play’.” (Emphasis mine JDM)
“Make melody, or sing and play. The word means both to sing and to play.”
“It is used of a song as accompanied by any instruments, not merely stringed instruments.”

Paul translated the word *Zawmar* in Rom. 15:9, *Psallo*. Paul evidently thought the word *Psalmos* meant to sing with an instrument even in New Testament times, else he would have used additional words or another word to show that *psalmos* had changed its meaning since the Psalms and Samuel were written. So we see that *even in New Testament* times, the word *psalmos* meant to sing with an instrument.

One other thing, however, (if you will be so kind to let me answer your question with additional space so that our readers can know what the word means in the New Testament) before I leave the subject, and that is this: What did the word *Psalmos* mean to the Romans to whom Paul was writing this letter:

1. Alexander Frances Kirkpatric (**The Cambridge Bible**): “The Septuagint translators employed the word ***psalmos*** to render the Hebrew word ***mizmor***, which is the technical term for a song with musical accompaniment — the Greek words have come

down to us through the Latin, *psalmus, psalterium*.”

2. Andrews (**Latin-English Lexicon**): “*Psallo*, to play upon a stringed instrument, espec. to play upon the Cithara, to sing to the Cithara.” “*Psalma*, a song sung to the accompaniment of stringed instruments, a psalm.”
“*Psalterium*, a stringed instrument of the lute kind, a psaltery.”
3. Charleton T. Lewis (**The Latin Dictionary for Schools**): “*Psallo*, to play upon a stringed instrument, play on the cithara, sing to the cithara.”
“*Psalterium*, a stringed instrument, lute, psaltery.”

I am sure that the Latin speaking Romans that read Paul’s letters must have understood Paul to mean “sing with an instrument” whenever he used the word *Psalmos*. (Even after the New Testament was written).

Now you ask another question: “What are we to do with the *psalmos*, sing it or play it?” Chrysostom, (“Most famous of the Greek fathers”, Enc. Brit). who lived about 347 AD, even after the New Testament was written and in use, said:

“*It is possible, even without the voice, to psallein*. ” (Emphasis Mine JM). Now in answer to your question, we can sing it or play it or both. Now to deal with the statement that all must play if any plays, I will try to sum up the remaining objections of your second paper including your fourth argument as quickly as possible and with as few words as possible.

I call your attention once again to the proposition that I deny:

“The use of instrumental music **in connection with songs sung by the church on the Lord’s day, when assembled for edification and communion**, is opposed to New Testament teaching and sinful.”
(Emphasis mine JDM)

Here we are discussing a definite time and a definite place. You have said that instrumental music is sinful in this definite time and definite place because there is no command for it.

You said that you have a command to sing in this definite time and definite place, but you failed to give it to me, and you cannot give it to me because there is none. Now on the basis of your statements, it is just as sinful to sing in this definite time and definite place as it is to play there. The command you have for singing as found in Col. 3:16 and Eph. 5:19 does not refer to this particular time and place that we are discussing. On the contrary the idea of Eph. 5:19 is that of meditation. There is nothing to suggest the thought of actual worship in either of these passages as we have defined it. The sentence in Eph. 5:19 specifies one of the ways in which the condition of being “filled with the Spirit” would express itself. As for Col. 3:16, the teaching and admonishing could be done on the street, in the home, in the church house, etc., and not necessarily limited to an assembly met for edification and communion. I feel that it could be done there, and we follow that practice in our worship services, but it is not commanded that we do it there. And I can see no possible reason why God would object to it being done there any more than in the worship of the Patriarchs and the Jews. He did not command it to them either.

Now as for every one having to play if any plays, I see that you simply will not distinguish between the meaning of the three words. *Psallo* means to sing with an instrument (at any time or place), *Humnos* means to sing hymns of praise, *Odos* means to sing any kind of song, either with or without an instrument, in the church or out of the church, in the worship or out of the worship (service as stated). It is scriptural to sing while someone else accompanies. It is also scriptural to sing without any accompaniment. And, it is scriptural to play without singing in the worship service. The same song can have all three words applied to it.

Now to say that between the hours of 11:00 a. m. and 12:00 noon, on Sundays, in the church house, with an assembly of people gathered for edification and communion, it is unlawful or sinful to use a mechanical instrument of music is absolutely silly and without any scriptural basis whatsoever. To say that it is not wrong to sing praises to God in the home with an instrument and that it is wrong to sing with the same in the church house is likewise as preposterous. To say that it is “legal” to learn the tunes of a hymn with the aid of an instrument, but sinful to sing the same hymn to God with the

same tune learned from the instrument, in the time stated is also absurd. There is such a thing as consistency more precious than jewels, whether it be in our worship to God, our edifying of others, or in the ethics of our own personality. I am anxiously awaiting your reply, and seeking to know the truth of God's will.

THIRD AFFIRMATIVE

Robert H. Bunting

Your plea for additional words to answer my affirmative arguments sounds strange indeed coming from one that felt he had enough extra space to include arguments affirming the use of the instrument, as well as ask four questions. If you are so short of space, why not dispense with your arguments on the use of the instrument and deal with my arguments entirely? Your responsibility is to follow my arguments and then, if you have space left, to present any additional arguments you desire.

The second argument does not stand any better than the argument on Psalms 87. The scriptures you introduced to show the instrument was used in the Old Testament does not prove it was used under the New. The fact God permitted instrumental music under the law is no indication it is permitted under the New Covenant. Are you trying to say everything permitted under the law, and not expressly forbidden by a statement of "thou shalt not" in the New Covenant is lawful? The very passage you used (Exodus 15:20) shows dancing was permitted under the patriarchal age. Since it is not expressly forbidden in the worship of the church, may one dance in Christian worship?

Instrumental music, dancing, and the burning of incense in the worship is sinful because we must abide (stay or remain) in the doctrine of Christ. (2 John 9). There is no command, approved example or necessary inference for instrumental music, dancing in praise to God, or burning of incense in the worship of the church. Therefore, one cannot do these things in the worship and abide in the doctrine of Christ. God commands "singing" (Col. 3:16), and using another kind of music is going beyond the doctrine of Christ.

I deny the Bible teaches there will be instrumental music in

heaven. The passage you quoted does not teach this. Notice the verse. "I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps." (Rev. 14:2). Will there be "many waters", and "thunder" in heaven? No, not any more than there will be harps. John did not hear the playing of harps, but a voice. The phrase, "harping with their harps" is descriptive of "the voice." The American Standard Version gives verse two as follows: "... and the voice which I heard was *as* the voice of harpers harping with their harps." It was not a literal "harping", but "as" harpers harping with their harps. Furthermore, Revelation 5:8 mentions harps and "bowls of incense." Will there be incense in heaven? May we have it in worship? You know as well as I, the harps and incense of Revelation 5 are no more literal than the "water", "thunder", or "harps" of Revelation 14.

The argument on the instrument being used in the temple completely ignores the fact that God's specification restricts man's actions. God does not have to state that an action is wrong for it to be wrong. The silence of the scriptures on instrumental music condemns it as wrong, for God has specified the kind of music he wants, "singing." When God told Noah to build the ark of "gopher wood" that eliminated all other kinds of wood. When God specifies that singing is the kind of music he wants, playing is eliminated. This argument has been completely ignored in your other papers, but we will be looking forward to your dealing with it in your next.

The Jews used instrumental music in the temple worship, but it was not used by Christians. Notice what Qualben says in his book *A History of the Christian Church*. "Singing formed an essential part of the Christian worship, but it was in unison and without musical accompaniment", (page 112). The reason Christians did not use instrumental music was because God had specified the kind of music he wanted, which was "singing and making melody in your heart." (Eph. 5:19).

Now for your questions. (If the reader will turn to Brother Marion's last article, he will find the questions).

No. 1. In 2 John 9 we are told we do not have God, if we do not abide in the doctrine of Christ. The mechanical instrument is not in

the doctrine of Christ, and therefore not acceptable to God under the Christian dispensation. Now, here is a question for you. Where is an indication the burning of incense is not pleasing to God? When you answer this question, you will have answered your own.

No. 2. The New Covenant is not according to the old. (Heb. 8:8, 9). The New Testament commands singing (Eph. 5:19), and warns about going beyond the doctrine of Christ. (2 John 9). Here is a question for you. Dancing was accepted (although not commanded). In what time or in what place did God change his mind about dancing connected with worship and praise?

No. 3. The apostles never used words connected with the use of instruments in the worship. This was clearly shown in my last article, and it will be emphasized again in this article. In the first negative, you admitted the silence of the New Testament must be respected. Singing was the music commanded by the apostles (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19), and we have no right to add to their word. (2 John 9).

No. 4. He did instruct the Gentiles instrumental music was wrong when he specified singing. (Col. 3:16). Christians during New Testament times knew they must not go beyond what was written. (2 John 9). God commands singing, and to use any other kind of music would be going beyond the doctrine of Christ. Why did Paul never instruct the Gentiles that holy water, candles, incense, and vestments were wrong when he knew they practiced these things in their pagan worship? Answer this and you will have answered your own question.

The reference you made to Psalms 87 in your second affirmative was merely begging the question. I have clearly shown Psalms 87 does not refer to the church, and I am under no obligation to give an explanation of the passage. I do not intend to take up valuable space in my affirmative on subjects off the issue. By the way, we are still waiting for the New Testament passage applying Psalms 87 to the church.

With reference to *Psallo* and *psalmos* you made the same mistake you made in your last article. The only difference is, this time you referred to more lexicographers. Why do you persist in

quoting the classical definition of the words instead of the New Testament definitions? Reliable lexicons will give the evolution of the word, but all the meanings given are not necessarily the New Testament definition. For example, Thayer defines *Psallo* as “pulling out the hair”, and “playing on a stringed instrument”, as well as “sing.” However, all of these definitions are not the New Testament definition. At one time *Psallo* meant to pull the hair, or a bowstring, or a carpenter’s chord. Later on it came to mean to play an instrument, and finally it came to mean sing. In quoting the lexicons, you do not go far enough. You quote the classical meaning and stop before you get to the New Testament definition.

Now let us notice your lexicons. I was interested in seeing you quote Robinson as well as Liddell and Scott. Both of these lexicons give the classical meaning instead of the New Testament definition of *Psallo* and *psalmos*. I have Robinson in my library, and I find him no more reliable on *psalmos* and *Psallo* than he is on *baptizo*. You will notice he (as well as Liddell and Scott) define *baptizo* as “*affusion*.” Lightfoot in his commentary does not give the complete definition of the words, while Thayer in his lexicon does. Why did you not quote Thayer’s *definitions* of the words as they appear in the New Testament? Thayer says *psalmos* means “a pious song, a psalm” and then gives Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16 as examples. In reading these passages you will notice we are to “sing” the psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. As for *Psallo*, the definition is varied. Thayer defines it as “to pluck off, pull out: the hair” (Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon, page 675). Should one “pull out the hair” as worship to God? No, because that is not the New Testament definition of the word. Thayer goes on to say *Psallo* also means to “play on a stringed instrument” (page 75). Are we to play instruments of music in the worship? No, for that is not the New Testament definition of the word. What is the definition of the term as it is used in the New Covenant of Christ? Notice Thayer, “... in N. T. (New Testament, RHB) to sing a hymn, to celebrate the praises of God in song.” (page 675). Why did you not go on and give Thayer’s definition of the words *Psallo* and *psalmos* as they are used in the New Testament?

You used this same trick (stopping before the lexicon gave the New Testament definition) in your other quotes. For example, you

quoted Green as saying, “*Psallo*: To move by a touch, to twitch; to touch, strike the strings or chords of an instrument; absol. to play on a stringed instrument;” That is fine as far as you went, but why did you not quote the rest of it? Thomas Sheldon Green went on to say, “In New Testament, to sing praises, Rom. 15:9; 1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; James 5:13.” Why did you not let our readers see the New Testament definition of the word?

Five typewritten pages were taken to attempt to tell our readers the New Testament definition of the words *Psallo* and *psalmos*, and then you quoted the New Testament definition of only one lexicon. The New Testament definition of these words can be given in less than half a page.

“***Psallo***; ... in New Testament, to sing praises, Rom. 15:9; 1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; James 5:13” (T. S. Green)

“***Psallo***; ... in N. T. to sing a hymn, to celebrate the praises of God in song.” Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament).

“***Psallo***; ... in N. T. to sing praises, Rom. 15:9; 1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Ja. 5:13.” (Analytical Greek Lexicon, Harper)

“***Psalmos***; ... in New Testament, a sacred song, a psalm, 1 Cor. 14:26; Eph. 5:19, et al.” (Green)

“***Psalmos***; ... hence a pious song, psalm, ... Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16” (Thayer)

“***Psalmos***; ... in N. T. a sacred song, psalm, 1 Cor. 14:26; Eph. 5:19” (Harper)

Several pages of your space could have been saved if you would have given the New Testament definitions of the words, and left the classical definitions alone.

The quibble you make about Harper giving the “secondary meaning” does not hold up. Harper was giving the New Testament definition, and he said nothing about a “secondary meaning.” That is your addition to his definition. The order of listing is not necessarily a primary and secondary meaning. For example Thayer listed *Psallo*

first as “pulling out hair.” Is this the primary meaning in contrast with the “secondary meaning” of “sing a hymn”? Harper said “sing praises” was the New Testament definition of *Psallo*. You say it is the “secondary meaning.” Do you know more about this than Harper? Furthermore, I know Harper does not say “sing only.” He would not do this anymore than he would say “immerse only” in defining *baptizo*. When Harper says *Psallo* is to “sing praises” he is giving the definition of the word, just as he is defining *baptizo* when he says “immerse.”

With reference to *zamar*, you assume it means to play in Psalms 18:49. The very lexicons you quoted say the word can mean either to sing or to play. How do you know it means “play” in Psalms 18:49? The 148 scholars that translated the King James and American Standard Versions translated the word “sing praises.” Here are 148 Greek and Hebrew scholars that declare *zamar* (Psalms 18:49) should be translated “sing praises.” The same Bible that has *zamar* translated “sing praises” in Psalms 18:49 also has *Psallo* translated “sing” in Romans 15:9. Surely you would not claim to have a better knowledge of Greek and Hebrew than these 148 scholars!

In either Greek or English, the apostle Paul says “*singing* and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Eph. 5:19); and *sing* unto thy name” (Rom. 15:9). *Paul specifies singing as the kind of music God wants. Psallo* is used five times in the New Testament and it is translated in every case either “sing” or “make melody.” It is translated this way because that is the New Testament definition of the word.

Anything that proves too much proves nothing. Through your lexicons, you define *Psallo* as— to play on a stringed instrument.” Since every Christian is commanded to *Psallo* (1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19), every Christian must play a stringed instrument in order to obey the command. The definitions of psalms, hymns, and songs does not change the fact that all Christians are to *Psallo*. If *Psallo* means to play an instrument, every Christian must play an instrument. Your argument proves too much, and therefore proves nothing.

I do not disagree with the fact that one can teach and admonish

through song “on the street, in the house, or in the church house.” My proposition does not affirm singing cannot be done at any other time. The question is, can one use instrumental music in the worship. That is the issue, and why raise false issues? If God had specified *where* one could sing, that would have eliminated every other place. However, if one does “teach and admonish” through song on the street, in the house, or in the church house; what kind of music should be used in the teaching and admonishing? There are only two kinds of music, vocal and instrumental. Which has God specified? God says *sing* (Col. 3:16), and that specification eliminates all other kinds of music. This question was answered in my last paper, but so far you have chosen to pass over my answer. Ignoring arguments is not answering them.

Where did I say it was not wrong to “sing praises to God in the home with an instrument”? You are raising false issues. The place of worship is not the point. The issue is, what kind of music has God commanded? We have shown conclusively that God commands singing. (1 Cor. 14:15; Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19). God has specified the kind of music that is acceptable to him, and he has warned us not to go beyond the law of Christ. (2 John 9). I have a command for singing; do you have a command, example, or necessary inference for playing instruments of music?

You stated Ephesians 5:19 has reference to “meditation” rather than an assembly. If this passage did refer to private meditation”, it would not destroy the fact that 1 Corinthians 14:15 and Colossians 3:16 does not refer to private meditation. However, if we will investigate the facts, we will discover Ephesians 5:19 is not discussing a private meditation. Paul is pointing out the fact that they were to speak to one another in song. The American Standard Version translates this passage in the following manner. “Speaking *one to another* in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;” Ephesians 5:19 is a parallel passage with Colossians 3:16, which says we are to teach and admonish *one another* through song. If you want more proof the early church engaged in singing when assembled together, read the fourteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians. Paul is discussing the things done while the church is assembled together and mentions singing. (1 Cor. 14:15).

My proposition is sustained. It is sinful to use instruments of music in the worship, because it is going beyond God's specification in regards to music. God commands "singing" (1 Cor. 14:15; Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19), and we do not abide in the doctrine of Christ if we add another kind of music.

THIRD NEGATIVE

J. D. Marion

The third objection that I have to our proposition as set forth is the idea that the language conveys when it speaks of the act of singing. (Now I know that you must feel that I am merely talking in repetition to place this as a third objective, but I have left off believing that you even care to see the other side of the position that you hold, that you can be convinced that there is anything wrong with the position that you hold, that you would even consider such a possibility, and also I have left off believing that you can give me any new information on the subject that I have not already heard or read and considered, neither do I believe that you still hold to the original purpose of this discussion as was stated at our meeting to be an informative discussion to present each side of the question for consideration to each other. You seem now to have changed your purpose into that of making this a "debate" for "our readers." I have no objection to any one reading these papers, but that was not my primary concern in the beginning. There are many books and tracts for our "readers" so much better than these, I would refer them to. I thought we were trying to see if we ...you and I ... could iron out our differences on this matter, but now I see that you wish to turn this into a "foolish argument" and to make additional rules by such means as telling me what my "responsibilities" are. Thus, I place this as a third objective and turn my thoughts now, not to you, but to those who may be interested enough to read these humble comments).

Readers, Mr. Bunting has said that the word *psalmos* does not mean to sing with an instrument in the New Testament. To the long list of definitions, both in Greek and Latin, I would like to add this definition by G. B. Gray, from an article on "psalms", which is

undoubtedly where this word is derived from, when he says in *Hastings Dictionary of the Bible*, one volume ed. page 769:

“*Psalmos* in classical Greek signified the twanging of strings and especially the musical sound produced by plucking the strings of a stringed instrument; **as used** here it means poems played to the music of (stringed) instruments. The **Greek word thus corresponds** (not corresponded, **JDM**) closely to the Heb. *Mismer* of which it is the translation in the titles of individual psalms.” (Emphasis mine **JDM**)

Now if you will notice, Mr. Bunting has not given us even the approximate date when this word changed its meaning as he says. He brushes the issue off by saying it changed its meaning. We do know these things to be facts:

1. That a Greek verb never outgrows its original meaning. Even Mr. Bunting admits that the word evolved on page 4 of his last affirmative. Evolution is a growing process stemming from one basic thought or thing, in this case, thought. It never outgrows the original thought. Now it is true that we are not to pull our hair in worship, however, that original meaning and idea still remains behind the word *psalmos* and nothing can remove it. Now our task is to determine exactly what the word meant when it was written by Paul, and we must keep in mind also that a Greek verb does not outgrow its original meaning.

2. The Septuagint version of the Old Testament (A translation of Hebrew to Greek, after the classical age of Greece) was begun approximately 285-247 B. C. and revised in the beginning of the 2nd Cen. A. D., app. 100 A.D.). and accepted by the Christian Church shortly after this period. This translation, even *after the New Testament* was written translates the words *Zawmar* and *Mizmor* as some form of *Psallo*. Even the 148 scholars that Mr. Bunting mentions on page 38 of this booklet, translate *Zawmar*, “*I will play unto thee on the harp*” (Emphasis mine JDM) in Psalms 71:22 to mention only one reference. These words are translated interchangeably as “to play and “to sing.” “To sing” is the secondary meaning.

3. Chrysostom, “Most famous of the Greek fathers” and an early Church leader who was born no sooner than 347 A.D. said that one could *psallein* even without the voice. In other words; play.

Now the classical Greek period was over before any of these dates came to pass, and if the apostle Paul wrote the text in question, he must have written it before the 2nd Cen. If the word *Psallo* does not mean to sing with an instrument in the New Testament, then we must place the date of the writing of the New Testament somewhere after 347 A.D. which would of course destroy the authority of any of the New Testament, or we must conclude that at the time of the writing of the New Testament in the first century the word *Psallo* meant to sing with an instrument. I prefer to take the last conclusion.

Also I repeat again the meaning of the word *Ode* used in the same verses (Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16) which means to sing with or without an instrument. I noticed that Mr. Bunting hasn’t said anything about this word. Could it be that this word has changed its meaning too? Even if it hasn’t, he evidently will not accept its meaning. But of course that would destroy his position, wouldn’t it?

Now the words that are here used give to us the liberty to sing with an instrument or without the instrument or even to play without singing.

This leads me to my fourth objective which is: because of the liberty we have in Christ.

Paul sets down a principle in 1 Cor. 6:12 and 10:23 when he says:

“All things are lawful, but not all things expedient.
All things are lawful; but not all things edify.”

Now this principle set here by the example of eating meats (and every iota does not have to have a direct parallel) will apply to this same question. We have seen that it is possible to sing with or without the instrument and still be pleasing to God. Now why is my liberty judged? If I find it acceptable and expedient and even edifying (though it does not have to be edifying Paul says ... see above) to use an instrument in worship, why is my liberty questioned? Paul says “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” By the use of three

different words *with three different meanings* used in commanding us to sing, it gives me the liberty to use an instrument, or sing without an instrument, and I do both and no man can take that liberty from me. This is my liberty in Christ governed by the direction of his word.

I hope I have not disturbed Mr. Bunting too much by using this method of presenting my views even after he has stated my “responsibility” in his third affirmative, but this too is my liberty which can not be taken away by man, or by man’s particular ideas as to how things unspecified should be done.

Now to comment on as much of his last paper as possible, I will begin by answering the idea of dancing and burning incense in the worship service. The burning of incense was commanded in the Old Law, Ex. 30:8. It was also specified how to burn it, Ex. 30:9. The law was fulfilled, Matt. 5:17, and done away, Col. 2:14. The burning of incense has no common parallel with my second argument.

As for dancing, it would be just as allowable if it were just as expedient. Having no expediency in our worship of today and being so closely associated with the ways of the world, I feel that it should be left out of the program of the church. This, however, is my own opinion. There are those who use dancing as a form of social recreation even in the church house, and I know of some that have even gone so far as to use it in the worship service by such bold acts as interpreting such songs as “The Lord’s Prayer” by dance. I shall leave it to God who is wise and just to judge these according to their motives, and I shall continue to do the best I can with the ability that I have. I do wonder, however, that if I had mentioned these two items if Mr. Bunting wouldn’t have cried “*FALSE ISSUE!*”

As for instrumental music in Heaven, I refer you also to Rev. 5:8-9. John must have thought that the music of harpers was the most beautiful of all to have described (as Mr. B says) the voices of heaven as the voice of “harpers, harping with their harps.”

Mr. Bunting says, “God does not have to state that an action is wrong for it to be wrong.” (See page 34) Paul says, “... I had not known sin, except through the law: for I had not known coveting, except the law said, Thou shalt not covet: ... for apart from the law,

sin is dead.” Rom. 7:8-9. Personally, I’ll take the word of the Scripture.

I wish Mr. Bunting would tell me who Mr. Qualben is, (Page 34) and with what authority does he speak? He must be or must have been quite a man for to have made the statement he made he would have had to have been at or had some source of knowledge of every meeting of Christians down through the ages, or else state which particular meeting he had reference to and what period of the history he was speaking of. I doubt that he had the knowledge of the former, and he does not state the latter. Thus his authority is as naught.

As for questions asked on page 35, No. 1 and No. 2 have already been answered above. As for the last question about holy water etc., if Mr. Bunting can show me words in the New Testament instructing Christians in the use of holy water, candles, etc. then I will discuss the question. In the meantime I will beg his excuse, “False Issue!”

As for his statement on page 38 that I imply that I have “a better knowledge of Greek and Hebrew than these 148 scholars!”, I would say this: It is one thing to know what a word means; it is another to translate that word as what it means. For an example, these same 148, if that be the number, Greek and Hebrew scholars knew what the word *Bapto* means but in the nearly 100 different times that some form of this word is used in the New Testament they did not translate a one of them accurately, but transliterated the forms as “baptize” etc. rather than to offend those who practice affusion. Now is it transliterated this way because this is the New Testament meaning? I don’t think Mr. Bunting would, but some could beg this excuse as easily as Mr. Bunting does about *psalmos*.

Mr. Bunting says again that “every Christian must play in order to obey the command.” Paul says “... all members have not the same office.” Rom. 12:4. Every Christian does not function in every detail of every part of worship. This would only end in confusion. However, if every Christian had the ability to play, every Christian should certainly use that ability for the Lord. Must all Christians sing? ... What about the dumb? Even Mr. Guy Robinson, minister of Central Church of Christ in Walterboro told me once that he did not sing because he couldn’t. He said he made a joyful noise. A joyful

noise is not necessarily singing, and he said he didn't sing ... Now will God hold Guy accountable for something he is not able to do?

Mr. Bunting also said, "If God had specified *where* one could sing, that would have eliminated every other place." He also said, "The place of worship is not the point." Notice, however, what he said in defining the terms on page 5 as to the songs sung by the church. He says that our time and place is limited "to that event and no other," that event being "on the Lord's day, when assembled for edification and communion." I am still waiting for Mr. Bunting's command for singing at this particular place and time.

He suggests also that I read the 14th chapter of 1 Cor. which I have done many times and happen to be familiar with its contents. He says that there I will find proof that the early church sang when assembled together. I find in the 15th verse these words ... "I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." Does this mean the worship service? If it does I am glad because in the same chapter, verse 7, Paul says, "Even things without life, giving a voice, whether pipe or harp, if they give not a distinction in sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?" Now if verse 15 is a command for singing, verse 7 is a command for playing! By the way, verse 8 is merely an illustration ... war has nothing to do with the worship service.

I anxiously await for you, our readers, Mr. Bunting's reply.

FOURTH AFFIRMATIVE

Robert H. Bunting

This discussion is for the benefit of the disputants, but that does not excuse us from abiding by the rules of discussion. The fact that the ones writing the discussion serve to gain the most from the debate does not eliminate the fact that both should press their arguments to the best of their ability. I must confess you took me by surprise when you stated you did not know this was to be "a 'debate' for 'our readers'." You, as well as I, signed the statement to the effect that the debate could be published. The very idea of publication indicates the intention of the debate going to hands other than ours. Furthermore, members of the Christian Church asked me

if they could read the debate. Neither I nor other members of the church of Christ told them of the debate, but they said Jack Hudson had mentioned the debate to them. Why did not you and Jack keep the debate quiet, if no one else was to read the discussion? In addition to this, you stated you wanted the members of the church here to read the debate. Your own words were, "I certainly hope that you will not deprive your own congregation of this privilege (reading the debate, RHB) if they so desire." (Letter of February 13, 1956). I fully intend to write this discussion for "our readers" as well as you and I.

The first objection introduced in your third negative has already been answered. We have shown the Greek words *psalmos* and *Psallo* have no reference to instrumental music in the New Testament. All reliable lexicons will show the distinction between the classical definition and the New Testament definition of the word. Your own authority, Edward Robinson, in his lexicon of 1855 gave these facts. "The language of the New Testament is *the later Greek language, as spoken by foreigners of the Hebrew stock, and applied by them to subjects on which it had never been employed by native Greek writers.*" (Robinson's Lexicon of the New Testament, preface; emphasis his). In the same preface he further states, "It follows from all these considerations, that in constructing a Lexicon of the New Testament, it should be a matter of prominent importance, to exhibit each word in its true character and relations, as a component part of the Greek tongue; as compared, on the one hand, with the Hellenistic idiom; and on the other, with the usage of classical Greek writers." (Ibid). Thus, it can be seen there is a distinction between classical and New Testament Greek. In our third affirmative we pointed out Green, Harper, and Thayer gave the New Testament definition of *Psallo* as "sing" and the New Testament definition of *psalmos* as "a sacred song, a psalm." Your request for a date when classical Greek became New Testament Greek is useless for both classical Greek and New Testament Greek existed at the same time. One overlapped the other with reference to time. Classical Greek was the Greek of the "native Greek writers." The question is not what *psalmos* and *Psallo* mean in the classical usage, but in the New Testament. Gray plainly gives the classical usage rather than the New Testament definition of the word. He does not

help you any more than did the other authorities quoted. You have given the New Testament definition in only one of your authorities, and in quoting him you tried to eliminate his New Testament definition by calling it a “secondary meaning.”

The Septuagint Version does not help you, for if you have a Greek-English interlinear of the Septuagint Version you will find *Psallo* in Psalms 18:49 translated “sing.” As for *zamar*, it can mean either “sing” or “play”, but where did you get “play with the harp” out of Psalms 71:22? The 148 scholars you said translated *zamar* “play with the harp” in Psalms 71:22 did no such thing. Notice the verse, “... unto thee will I *sing* with the harp, O thou Holy One of Israel.” That is the way the 47 translators of the King James Version translated the word *zamar*. Now, let us look at the way the 101 scholars connected with the American Standard Version translated the verse. “... unto thee will I *sing praises* with the harp ...” *Zamar* is translated “sing praises” in Psalms 71:22 and Psalms 18:49. However, Psalms 18:49 is the one we are interested in, because it is the verse quoted by Paul in Romans 15:9. In Psalms 18:49 *zamar* is translated “sing praises” and in Romans 15:9 *Psallo* is translated “sing.” One hundred and forty-eight scholars had a part in translating the King James and American Standard Versions, and they find no instrument in Psalms 18:49 or Romans 15:9. Your efforts to set them aside have failed.

As for the word *Ode*, it means a “song or hymn” according to the *Analytical Greek Lexicon*. Thayer defines the word, “... in the scriptures a song in praise of God or Christ: ...” (Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament). I accept the meaning of the word as it is used in the New Testament, but I do not accept your addition to its meaning. The objection you make to my proposition on the basis of the Greek language has failed along with the previous objections.

The last objection you raise to my proposition (it must be your last of the debate for no new issues can be introduced in the fourth negative) does not allow instrumental music in the worship. The passages in 1 Corinthians chapters 6 and 10 do not teach all things one wants to do in the worship are lawful. These verses point out all things that are expedient must first be lawful. You must first show

instrumental music in Christian worship is lawful before you can claim it as an expedient. Not all lawful things are expedient, but something must first be lawful before it can come under the heading of expedient. Paul here is discussing meat (something lawful) and not instrumental music (something unlawful). God has specified “singing” as the kind of music he wants (Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:16), and no man has the “liberty” to add to God’s specification. God has specified believers are to be baptized (Mark 16:16), and no man has the “liberty” to baptize babies. God has specified the kind of music he wants is singing (Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:16), and no man has the “liberty” to add playing. Not only is instrumental music not under consideration in these passages because it is unlawful, but it cannot be under consideration for it is not an aid. We have just seen instrumental music is an *addition* rather than an aid. Furthermore, singing and playing are coordinates, so one cannot expedite the other. It is as absurd to say playing can aid singing in worship as it would be to say orange juice aids the fruit of the vine on the Lord’s Supper. Orange juice and fruit of the vine are coordinates and they cannot aid one another. Likewise, singing and playing are *coordinates* and *not aids* to one another. We must abide in the doctrine of Christ. No man has the liberty to add to God’s word.

You admit the burning of incense cannot be used in the worship because the law has been nailed to the cross. For the same reason instrumental music is not to be used in Christian worship. In the book of Psalms instruments of music are commanded in praise to God (Psalms 150:3-5). Psalms is a part of the law (John 10:34; Christ quotes Psalms 82 and refers to it as “law”). The law was nailed to the cross (J. D. Marion). Therefore, instrumental music has been nailed to the cross. I told you before if you would tell me why it is wrong to use incense in the worship, you would tell yourself why it is wrong to use instrumental music in the worship. Your statement that the church can “dance” in worship, if it is expedient, shows how far the Christian Church is led astray by a disregard for the silence of the scriptures. I am glad to hear that you personally do not approve of dancing in the worship, but I am sorry to see the basis of your disapproval is “opinion.” Dancing in the worship is condemned in the same manner as is instrumental music, the burning of incense, counting beads and the burning of candles. God has specified the

acts of worship under the New Testament, and man cannot go beyond God's specification and still be pleasing in his sight. Since the doctrine of Christ mentions none of these things, one cannot use them and still abide in the doctrine of Christ. (2 John 9).

Your reference to Revelation 5:8, 9 has already been answered in the third affirmative. It was shown the harps are not literal but figurative. You admit the figurative use of the word "harps" in your third negative by saying John *describes* the voices of heaven as "the voice of harpers, harping with their harps."

Yes, "God does not have to state that an action is wrong for it to be wrong." However, let us notice the context of that statement of mine. I went on to say, "The silence of the scriptures on instrumental music condemns it as wrong ..." Paul's statement in Romans 7:7, 8 supports this statement of mine instead of repudiating it. Paul knew sin through the law (Rom. 7:7, 8) for sin is the transgression of the law (1 John 3:4), and "transgression" is to "go beyond the limits" (Webster). Thus, when one goes beyond the limits of the law or steps outside of the law he has sinned. God has specified, "*Sing* with grace in your hearts to the Lord." (Col. 3:16). To add another kind of music is to go beyond the limits of God's law and thus sin.

Lars P. Qualben is of St. Olaf College and his book *A History of the Christian Church* is a standard work used in many outstanding colleges and universities. Doctors Carl Mellby, George Fritschel, and O. M. Norlie assisted in bringing this book into being. The statement, "Singing formed an essential part of the Christian worship, but it was in unison and without musical accompaniment", is true. Your disregard for these historians does not repudiate their statement.

You are beginning to see the light on where your definition of *Psallo* has placed you. In your third negative you placed playing on a par with singing by showing every Christian must sing to the best of his ability, and all that can play are to play with the best of their ability. Certainly "all have not the same office", but that does not excuse any from singing because *all* are commanded to sing. (Col. 3:16, Eph. 5:19). Neither does it exclude any from "*Psalloing*" for all are commanded to *Psallo*. (Rom. 15:9; Eph. 5:19). Since every

Christian is commanded to *Psallo* (and you say *Psallo* means to “play on a stringed instrument”), every Christian is commanded to play an instrument to the best of his ability. Your argument on *Psallo* proves too much. Therefore, it proves nothing.

The fact the 148 scholars that translated the King James and American Standard Versions transliterated *bapto* does not change the fact that they translated *Psallo* and *psalmos*. You cannot get around the fact that you are at variance with their translation of these words. They translate Romans 15:9 “sing unto thy name”, and you say it means “play.” You disagree with their translation. I repeat. Do you have a better knowledge of Hebrew and Greek than these 148 scholars?

I have limited the discussion to the singing in the worship for a specific reason. We do not disagree as to the use of the instrument in entertainment, parades and such; but we do disagree over the use of the mechanical instrument in the worship. The issue is, what kind of music has God specified? We have shown God commands “singing” (Rom. 15:9, 1 Cor. 14:15, Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:16), and this “singing” is to “one another.” Furthermore, the church engaged in singing when assembled together. (1 Cor. 14:15; see verses 12 and 23). In verse seven the apostle uses the illustration of a trumpet giving an uncertain sound, but this is not a trumpet in the worship. This is merely an illustration concerning speaking clearly and understandably.

Every argument you have advanced has been answered. My proposition stands as true. *The use of instrumental music in connection with songs sung by the church on the Lord’s day, when assembled for edification and communion, is opposed to New Testament teaching and sinful because:*

1. *It violates the New Testament law of unity.* Christ prayed for his followers to be one. (John 17:20, 21). We stand united upon God’s word, but when one departs from the word by introducing a kind of music not authorized by God division results.

2. *It is a “commandment of men” and as such transgresses the commandment of God.* Christ tells us worship is vain if it is based upon human tradition. (Mk. 7:7). Since instrumental music is of

men and not God, it causes one's worship to be vain.

3. *It is not of faith.* God approves only those actions that are of faith. (Heb. 11:6). Since faith cometh by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17), one walks by faith when he walks by the directions of God's word. Singing can be done by faith, because God has commanded it. (Eph. 5:19,) Playing an instrument cannot for the word of Christ gives no command, example, or necessary inference for its use in Christian worship.

4. *It is not according to truth.* God must be worshipped in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24). The word is truth. (John 17:17). Singing is according to truth because God has commanded it. (Col. 3:16). There is no command for instrumental music in the worship. Therefore, it is not according to truth.

God has indicated the kind of music he wants when he said, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, *singing and making melody in your heart* to the Lord." (Eph. 5:19). In addition to this, God has stated it is a sin to go beyond the doctrine of Christ. "Whosoever *transgresseth*, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God ..." (2 John 9). "... Sin is transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4). Since it is sin to go beyond the law of Christ, my proposition is sustained. May we all love God enough to abide in the doctrine of Christ in regards to the music of the church, as well as all other matters in religion.

FOURTH NEGATIVE

J. D. Marion

Looking back on the paper we signed in the beginning I find the first rule to read, "This is be a written *discussion*" I feel that a discussion such as we talked about and agreed on can be very profitable, thus the reasons for this one, but a debate is useless and profits nothing. We agreed to give our viewpoints on each side of the question at hand, but when I ask Mr. Bunting for information (on Psalms 87), he replied: 'I am under no obligation to give an explanation of the passage.' So thus I concluded that Mr. Bunting was not interested in me at all, but only to "win a debate" before "our readers." Thus fulfills the Scriptures, "Ye fast for strife and

debate.” (Isa. 27:8). I can find no place where the instrument is questioned in the New Testament, however, debating is in question in at least two places: Rom. 1:29 and 2 Cor. 12:20. Therefore, I prefer not to debate, I will, however, enter into a fair discussion with anyone who is willing to give his views and listen to mine in return. May you our readers get this feeling from this discussion, and not that of a debate where two argue to show that they are right and cannot be proven wrong.

I would like to suggest as the fifth and final objection to this proposition that I do not believe instrumental music to be sinful in the worship because the Scriptures do not prescribe how we are to conduct a worship service. (If Mr. Bunting had not said that I could not do this, I would not have entered another argument in my last paper out of politeness to him, but since he says I *cannot*, I will show him that I can!)

This reason must be clarified in order to close it to objection. Singing is not commanded in the worship service, but we sing in order to adjust the mind to a spirit and attitude of worship to receive the message or the emblems of the Lord’s Supper. Singing aids the worship service, yea we even worship by singing ... we admonish by singing, but it is not commanded that we do so in a public worship service. We are not commanded to pass plates for an offering during the worship service or even to take an offering during a worship service, but we do. If it is justifiable to sing and take an offering during the worship service, then it is just as justifiable to worship by the medium of instrumental music in worship. If God had prescribed what to do in a worship service, that would have eliminated everything else. Since he made no such prescription, he has left this to our convenience and opinion, so long as our opinion is guided by the harmony of the Scriptures.

Now to some of Mr. Bunting’s statements in his last affirmative. He said, “... both classical Greek and New Testament Greek existed at the same time.” If so, how in the world are we going to distinguish the meanings of the two languages? That is to say that to all of the Greek speaking people the word *Psallo* meant to sing with an instrument, but the word in the New Testament ... (*There and nowhere else!!*) ... meant just to sing. You see how difficult it

becomes to try to change the meaning of a Greek word to fit your own ideas and prejudices. Let us notice also a definition that Mr. Bunting quotes describing “New Testament” Greek. Edward Robinson: “The language of the New Testament is *the later Greek language ... and applied to subjects on which it had never been employed by native Greek writers*” (Emphasis his). Compare this to Robinson’s definition of *Psallo*: “—in Septuagint and *New Testament to sing, to chant, properly as accompanying stringed musical instruments*” (Emphasis mine, JDM). It would be a nice excuse to say that the word changed its meaning, but it would be an entirely different thing to prove it! I do not claim to have a better knowledge of the Greek than “the 148 scholars”, I claim to get my knowledge *from* the scholars. Where does Mr. Bunting get his? ... from those in his denomination.

He says also that “... instrumental music ... is not an aid.” How deceptive can one be ... How blind can one be? If I am not greatly mistaken, and please forgive me if I am, you can go into the worship service of the church where Mr. Bunting preaches, pick up a hymn book, and find over and below the words which are sung: lines, notes, etc. Now what do these things mean and what do they relate to? Everyone knows that they are symbols that denote the melody of the hymn. Where do they get the melody? FROM A PIANO ... A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT. *They go to a piano, learn the melody of a song, come to the worship, use that same melody symbolized by the notes*, and Mr. Bunting has the audacity to say “... instrumental music ... is not an aid.” ???

Mr. Bunting says that the information given by Mr. Qualben *is true*. So let us now canonize Mr. Qualben, and put him on the same par with the New Testament writers. He must have been there or have had some access to knowledge of *every* meeting of Christians in New Testament times. This would of course put him above Paul, and on a near equal with Christ himself. We are thankful to Mr. Qualben for preserving this wonderful bit of information for the Christian world. (No disrespect meant to the authority of Mr. Q). Alas, what Mr. Bunting has done to a fellow preacher. This man told me while I was visiting in his home one Sunday afternoon, that he did not sing, but made a joyful noise. Mr. Bunting says that this is no excuse, for “... *all* are commanded to sing ...” Does Mr. Bunting

mean that this man will be condemned to hell, even after he has given his life for the wonderful service in which he is engaged, just because he does not sing? Personally, I have more respect for his efforts to do the best he can by making a substitute with a joyful noise, than it seems his fellow worker has for him for not being able to sing. Mr. Bunting comes mighty close to giving in when he says on page 51: “since every Christian is commanded to *Psallo*” then he admits the correct meaning and says, “(and you say *Psallo means* to “play on a stringed instrument”), every Christian is commanded to play on an instrument to the best of his ability. I haven’t seen this command, but at least Mr. Bunting is finally admitting to the meaning of *Psallo*. ???

I find Mr. Bunting making rules again in his fourth affirmative when he says of my “last objection” ... “(it must be your last of the debate for no new issues can be introduced in the fourth negative)” ... This type of rule-making he delights in. Watch his reaction to the breaking of this rule. It is this same type of rule-making that he applies to his rule, “Thou shalt not use the instrument in worship.” If Mr. Bunting had convinced me that I should follow this rule and come into the fellowship of *his* Church of Christ, I would not for the life of me know which one of the sects of this body he belongs to. I belong to the First Church of Christ in High Point, N. C., and was ordained by the elders there and sent out to preach by that congregation, but God forbid if I should ever make such rules for men to follow that some of my brethren in Christ have bound for others to follow. Some love to make rules so well that I would like to list a few of them that you might be aware of them:

1. Thou shalt have no mechanical instrument in the worship.
2. Thou shalt have no organization other than the New Testament to do the work God gave his church to do. (Paper organizations, colleges, benevolent institutions and the like that are endorsed by certain journals excepted).
3. Thou shalt not believe in the premillennial coming of Christ. (If you have become a Christian in the past 30 years).

4. Thou shalt have no minister or evangelist to serve regularly one church.
5. Thou shalt not have more than one communion cup.
6. Thou shalt have no Bible-Colleges.
7. Thou shalt have no homes for orphans and aged separately organized.
8. Thou shalt have no money for church-owned meeting houses.
9. Thou shalt have no Sunday classes with separate teachers for respective ages.
10. Thou shalt have no uninspired lesson helps or literature but the Bible only. (Literature found in the “Gospel Advocate” and other such reliable journals excepted).

There are more, but this will give you some idea of how many “Church of Christ” sects there are claiming no earthly head, each claiming to be the only true New Testament church, and each claiming to bind the New Testament only—”nothing else”! No brother is received by all of them! Every brother is disfellowshipped by one or more (usually many) of them. Paul says “For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?” 1 Cor. 3:3). Each is persuaded that this passage is true of all others involved in these newly bound doctrines of men but not of himself. Is it any wonder that I would be faced with a greater problem than the instrument if I should let Mr. Bunting bind his creed “sing only” on me? I would still have to go down a list of over 10, possibly 20 more creeds to find out which sect Mr. Bunting is a part of.

None of these “creeds” can be proven by the Scripture any more than the first one has been: “Thou shalt have no mechanical instrument of music in the worship service.” Mr. Bunting says that “God has specified the acts of worship under the New Testament,” but he *has not*. Mr. Bunting was not even able to give me the specification of singing in the worship service. That the Scriptures

command us to sing, I do not deny, but it does not say that we are to sing *in the worship service*. Mr. Bunting says that 1 Cor. 14:15 gives us that command, but it does not! And if it does, the same chapter gives the command to play! (v. 7)

I do not feel that Mr. Bunting's arguments stand to prove the non-use of instrument in worship any more than he feels that mine prove that it does. (May the reader decide for himself, for he must give his own account). By the use of the three words already discussed, God gives us the liberty *when we sing* (he did not command the time and place, neither did he command that it be done in the worship service) to sing with an instrument, or without an instrument.

Now if you my brethren, wish not to use the instrument, that is all right with me. You probably do many things in worship that I do not particularly agree with. (See listing of ten) This makes you no less my brother in Christ! THE SAME TERMS THAT MAKE A PERSON A CHRISTIAN, MAKE CHRISTIANS BROTHERS IN CHRIST! If I feel that an instrument is beneficial in worship, let no brother say that it is a sin when he cannot prove it. To become a Christian one must believe, repent, confess and be baptized ... not believe, repent, confess, be baptized and *reject the instrument in public worship services*. Neither can a brother bind any one of the other nine or more "Thou shalt nots" mentioned. A Christian does not have this right. If he takes this right upon himself, he sets himself apart, takes to himself a man-made creed and begins a new denomination of his own. This is not the church of Christ mentioned in the Scriptures!

If you in your worship service wish to leave out the instrument in singing, (We do not even have a command to sing in a worship service) that is well and good. You are my brother none the less. But if you say, "No, you cannot be my brother if you use the instrument", then you are no longer in the body of Christ that you were in when you believed, confessed, repented and was baptized, but you are now in the *denomination* that says, "You must believe, confess, repent, be baptized and reject the instrument (or one or more of the others mentioned)"

If the church is to be united, it must be on this basis:

In essentials, Unity.
In opinions, Liberty.
In all things, Love.

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing. Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, ... Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away ... And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.” 1 Cor. 13:1-4, 8, 13.

May God be merciful to us as sinners!