

*The Music of the
New Testament
Church*

**By
H. H. Gray, Jr.**

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Bradley Cobb, editor.

INTRODUCTION

It has long been a mysterious puzzle in the minds of some people why we in the churches of Christ do not use instrumental music in our worship. One of the most noticeable things to a visitor to our services is the absence of these instruments. Since they are so universally used in other church services there naturally arises a wonder as to why we exclude them from our worship. They who are the least bit interested in the study of this question have the right to know the “why” of this matter. Then, too, every Christian is duty-bound to furnish the answer. Peter said: “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.” (1 Peter 3:15.)

The reasons for the non-use of instruments of music in our worship are logically, practically and scripturally set forth in this book by H. H. Gray.

A word about the author is in order. He is a very humble and consecrated Christian, a diligent student of the Word, a faithful gospel preacher and a zealous worker in the church of our Lord. This work reflects the thoroughness of his preparation. I have observed with interest his growth in the ministry during the past six years.

The major arguments which are offered in defense of the use of instrumental music in worship are well answered in this book. Also the principal arguments against its use are well presented.

This matter of excluding instruments of music from the worship is not simply a little indiscreet hobby among my brethren, but it was a matter of conviction among the world's most eminent and scholarly denominational leaders. The author of this book gives some valuable and authoritative quotations from these leaders.

I predict for this book a widespread distribution not only among Brother Gray's brethren and friends of the colored race, but also among all of us in the great brotherhood of Christ.

Melvin J. Wise, Dallas, Texas

“I have read the manuscript of your book, *The Music of the New Testament Church*. It is wonderful. I highly commend it. It

should be in the hand of every Christian and circulated among all who are in error on the kind of music that should be in the Lord's church. May God continue to bless you in your great work."

Respectfully and Fraternally,

Luke Miller

Nationally famous evangelist, gospel singer, and associate editor of *The Christian Counselor*

I have just finished reading your manuscript on *The Music of the New Testament Church*. 'I think without a doubt it is the ablest and most comprehensive book on this subject that has yet been published."

J. S. Winston

Outstanding evangelist, noted gospel singer and associate editor of *The Christian Echo*.

FOREWORD

We believe there is a great need among religious people of a careful study of church music. Indeed it seems that some are converted to instrumental music rather than to the gospel of Christ.

We have tried to adequately treat both the negative and positive sides of this question. That is, we have not only tried to show that instrumental music is unscriptural; but that every effort should be made to make the song service the very best possible. We have striven to make this work scriptural, comprehensive and plain. We have tried to cover every argument used in defense of instrumental music. We have striven to make every point as clear as crystal, so the reader would not have to guess at what we mean.

In a work of this size, we shall not attempt special mention of the many books and papers consulted; but it should seem incredible should anyone attempt a work of this kind without constantly consulting what are probably the greatest works in this field – *Instrumental Music in the Worship* by M. C. Kurfees, and the Clubb-Boles debate, *Is Instrumental Music in Christian Worship Scriptural?* The Otey-Briney debate contains much good material.

We have given much study to this question and have tried to deal with it in a straightforward and forceful way. Nothing original is claimed except the arrangement. We sincerely hope this little book will be productive of much good.

H. H. Gray, Jr.
Dallas, Texas
June 9, 1947.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS

Subject Explained

The word “church” is from the Greek word, *ekklesia*, and is used in the New Testament in several senses. According to Thayer, *ekklesia* is often equivalent to the Hebrew word, *qahal*, denoting the “assembly of the Israelites.” (Deut. 31:30; Josh. 8:35; Acts 7:38.) But in the Christian sense, the sense in which we are using it, it denotes “an assembly of Christians gathered for worship.”—Thayer. (1 Cor. 11:18; 14:19, 34, 35.) So the question is: What music is “an assembly of Christians gathered for worship” to use?

Music is a succession or combination of pleasing sounds. Music may be made with either the voice or a mechanical instrument, or with a combination of the voice and instrument.

Music is used by various organizations including religious, secular and worldly groups. We wish, therefore, at the very outset, to indelibly impress upon the mind of every reader the subject of this work, *The Music of the New Testament Church*.

Please note carefully that the subject is *not* the music of the Old Testament Jewish Church. It is *not* the music that shall be used in heaven. It is *not* the music of the home. It is *not* the music of the school room nor the pep squad. It is *not* the music of some lodge, club, fraternity, sorority or ballroom. In fact, we are not concerned with the music of these organizations and institutions except as they relate to the subject under consideration. But it is our earnest desire to clearly set forth in this work the music of the New Testament Church.

QUESTIONS

1. In what sense is *ekklesia* used in this work?
2. What is music?
3. In what ways may music be made?
4. Name some groups that use music.
5. What is the purpose of this work?

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CHURCH MUSIC

Singing In Prophecy

We find singing mentioned at the foundation of the world, “When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” (Job 38:7.)

David, the sweet singer of Israel, declared: “Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.” (Ps. 100:1, 2.)

And the gospel prophet, Isaiah, visualized the joy of the new Zion, the Church of Christ. Said he: “The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing.” (Isa. 35:1, 2.)

Again: “Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head.” (Isa. 51:11.)

New Testament Scriptures on Singing

We have found that there are only two kinds of music, namely, vocal and instrumental. These may be combined. Nothing is more clearly taught than the use of vocal music only – singing if you please! – in the New Testament church. In support of this contention, we submit the following passages:

Matt. 26:30: “And when they had **sung** an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.”

Acts 16:25: “And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and **sang** praises unto God.”

Rom. 15:9: “For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and **sing** unto thy name.”

1 Cor. 14:15, “What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will **sing** with the spirit, and I will **sing** with the understanding also.”

Eph. 5:19: "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, **singing** and making melody in your heart to the Lord."

Col. 3:16: "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."

Heb. 2:12: "I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I **sing** praise unto thee."

Jas. 5:13: "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him **sing** psalms."

Heb. 13:15 (indirectly) "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the **fruit of our lips** giving thanks to his name."

Testimony of Standard Authorities

In line with the above-mentioned Scriptures, is the accurate and illuminating testimony of the following noted authorities:

William Dool Killen, listed in The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia, was President of Presbyterian College, Belfast, Ireland, 1869-1902. We quote from his work, *The Ancient Church*, page 423: "In the early church the whole congregation joined in the singing, but instrumental music did not accompany the praise."

McClintock and Strong: "The Greek word 'psallo' is applied among the Greeks of modern times exclusively to sacred music, which in the Eastern Church has never been any other than vocal, instrumental music being unknown in that church, as it was in the primitive church ... But students of ecclesiastical archaeology are generally agreed that instrumental music was not used in churches till a much later date." (Encyclopedia, Vol. VIII, page 739.)

Fessenden's Encyclopedia: "That instrumental music was not practiced by the primitive Christians, but was an aid to devotion of later times, is evident from church history." ("Art, Music," page 852.)

Thus the inspired Scriptures and authentic history testify with one voice to the use of vocal music *only* in the worship of the early church. The instrument did not come till hundreds of years later, as the following unquestioned authorities attest.

Chamber's Encyclopedia: "The organ is said to have been first introduced into church music by Pope Vitalian I in 666." (Vol. VII, page 112.)

The American Cyclopedic: "Pope Vitalian is related to have first introduced organs into some of the churches of western Europe, about 670; but the earliest trustworthy account is that of the one sent as a present by the Greek emperor Constantine Copronymus to Pepin, king of the Franks, in 755." (Vol. 12, page 688.)

Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia: "In the Greek Church the organ never came into use. But after the eighth century it became more and more common in the Latin Church; not, however, without opposition from the side of the monks. Its misuse, however, raised so great an opposition to it, that, but for the Emperor Ferdinand, it would probably have been abolished by the Council of Trent. The Reformed Church discarded it; and though the Church of Basel very early reintroduced it, it was in other places admitted only sparingly, and after long hesitation." (Vol. 2, page 1702.)

Various denominations followed the example of the Catholics until most of them had adopted the instrument. The following enlightening testimony was given by John Spencer Curwen, Congregationalist, who was a member of the Royal Academy of Music and president (1880) of the Tonic Sol-fa College, London:

"Men still living can remember the time when organs were very seldom found outside the Church of England. The Methodists, Independents, and Baptists rarely had them, and by the Presbyterians they were stoutly opposed. But since these bodies began to introduce organs, the adoption of them has been unchecked. Even the Presbyterians are giving away, and if we read the future by the past, we can hardly doubt that, in a few years, unaccompanied singing will very seldom be heard. Yet, even in the Church of England itself, organs did not obtain admission without much controversy." (*Studies in Worship Music*, page 179.)

Present-day conditions are undeniable proof of the fulfillment of Mr. Curwen's prophecy that, "In a few years, unaccompanied singing will seldom be heard."

Christians Divide Over Instrument

Just a word relative to the great Restoration Movement, which, being sparked by Barton W. Stone, the Campbells, Walter Scott and others, was sweeping everything before it. Thousands were denouncing denominationalism. The disciples were of one heart and one soul. Peace, harmony and love abounded. Then came the instrument - "the wedge that split the log." Strife and alienation followed. It is said that as early as 1859, a melodeon had been placed in the church at Midway, Kentucky, and that the real and complete division came in the year 1870. (*History Of The Church of Christ* by E. M. Borden, page 350, and *New Handbook Of All Denominations*, M. Phelan, page 104.) "The First Christian Church originated over the use of mechanical music in worship. This was about 1867, in St. Louis, Mo., when the Vine Street Church of Christ was divided over the instrument." (*Why Others Use Instrumental Music in Worship* by A. G. Hobbs, Jr., page 13.) Those who adopted the instrument were henceforth known as the Christian Church, and those who opposed the use of the instrument in worship were known as the church of Christ.

This sketch would not be complete without the following graphic and pulsating description by G. C. Brewer, one of the greatest living scholars of the Bible and related subjects:

"While the early innovators professed to be indifferent to the music question...they, nevertheless, divided churches, stole church houses, and drove out the original owners, and, in some cases, went to court in order to get church property in which to use their instruments. At first they wanted only a single instrument to accompany the singing and improve it! It was a melodeon first, perhaps. Then just an organ - a fiddle would have been too much even for a church divider! Then came the piano - just one instrument. That called for a choir - just selected members to lead the

singing. Then came the flute, the trombone, the fiddle, the cello – ah, the orchestra! Then their own worshipers could not do adequate singing. They had to have a hired choir – that is, trained singers, who, though not Christians, are paid to do what God commands his children to do! They worship (?) and make melody in their hearts (?) for the saints! But, at first, they would not allow their choir to wear gowns – O, no, they would not tolerate a vested choir even though it was composed of unbelievers!

“But now what about it? They have a band, an orchestra, a hired choir (vested choir), women preachers, and anything else that any denomination has, regardless of its scripturalness or unscripturalness. They light candles, have the Lord’s Supper on Thursday night, celebrate Easter, practice open membership, and in some cases, their preachers administer sprinkling for baptism!

“Why should they look for scriptural authority for instrumental music when they care nothing for what the Scriptures teach on anything else?” (*Gospel Advocate*, 9-5-46, page 834.)

What a description of the full and tragic apostasy of the Christian Church! And what a major part the instrument played in the bringing about of this apostasy!

QUESTIONS

1. Give a prophecy that mentions singing.
2. Name two kinds of music.
3. According to the New Testament, what kind should be used in the church?
4. Give some scriptural quotations relative to singing in the church.
5. Give a brief summary of the corroborating testimony of recognized scholars and historians.
6. When was instrumental music first introduced into church worship?
7. What church first used the instrument?

8. Name some denominations that followed the example of the Catholics.
9. Describe the trouble the denominations had over the instrument.
10. When was the instrument introduced among Christians? And when did complete division come?
11. By what name were those who adopted the instrument known?
12. By what name were those who opposed the instrument known?
13. Briefly describe the apostasy of the Christian Church.
14. What part did the instrument play in this apostasy?

ARGUMENTS FOR INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC REFUTED (No. 1)

Smoke Screens Removed

First, let us say that we do not oppose musical instruments in the worship because we dislike them. On the contrary, most of us like to have them around home. But we realize that in Christian worship the Lord, not we, is to be pleased.

Neither do we oppose the instruments because of the high cost, for we could pay some down and some when the collector catches us just as some do who use the instruments.

Nor are we short of musicians; we have some of the best. We also have good farmers, barbers and beauticians. But neither they nor the musicians bring their occupations into the Lord's worship and thereby encroach on His divine authority.

Ignorance does not cause us to oppose instrumental music. We admit there is lots of ignorance among us, and thus feel quite at home with our religious neighbors. But it is next to impossible to find a more intelligent or better informed group of Bible students than those who oppose instruments of music in the worship.

Neither do we reject the instruments because we are plain contrary. It is true that among us, as among all other groups of human beings, are some who seem to have been born in the "objective case, kickative gender, and fussative mood." But most of them have great respect for the Lord's worship; and since He didn't place musical instruments in His worship, they are more than willing to leave them out.

Following David.

Usually, about the first argument instrumental music advocates make is:

- David worshiped with the instrument;
- Therefore, we may use the instrument in church worship.

But isn't that a rather hasty conclusion? Surely those who so reason have not reflected what the consequences of their logic

might be. To show just how misleading such reasoning is, we present the following parallel arguments:

- David offered lamb and goat sacrifices; (Ps. 66:13, 15.)
- Therefore, we may offer lambs and goats in the church.

Did you ever hear of anything so absurd? Again:

- David kept the seventh-day sabbath;
- Therefore, we may keep the seventh-day sabbath today.
- David offered incense;
- Therefore, we may burn incense in the worship.

Preposterous! Isn't it. But more:

- David had a bunch of concubines and wives; (2 Sam. 5:13.)
- Therefore, one may have a bunch of concubines and wives today.
- David's son, Solomon, had 700 wives and 300 concubines; (1 Kings 11:3.)
- Therefore, one may have 700 wives and 300 concubines today.

Truly! Truly! This is the height of absurdity! It is logic gone to seed.

Our music friends crave David's instruments, but will have none of his animal sacrifices, Sabbaths, incense, nor polygamy. Surely, this is most inconsistent.

Instrumental music advocates ignore the basic fact that we are to follow King Jesus, not King David. God says: Hear my Son – not David. (Matt. 17:5.) Christ said: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." (Matt. 28:18.) Since Christ has all

authority, David is left completely out. Peter says we are to walk in the steps of Christ, not in the steps of David. (1 Pet. 2:21.) This line of reasoning may seem a bit simple; but we beg the indulgence of our readers, for we wish to make every point as plain as possible.

Christ – not David – is the head of the church. Christ – not David – is to have the preeminence. Christ is to have the preeminence in all things – not some things – to the church. (Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18.)

Finally: “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” (Col. 3:17.) Whatsoever we do (certainly this includes church music), we are to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus – not in the name of King David.

But the truth is, the law that commanded the Sabbath to be kept, that required animal sacrifices, that authorized the burning of incense, that permitted polygamy, and tolerated the use of instrumental music, has been abolished, having been nailed to the cross. (Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:14-16.) For this reason, Paul plainly says: “Whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.” (Gal. 5:4.)

God ordained singing under the law. (Deut. 31:19-22, 30.) David introduced the instruments. (Ezra 3:10.) Though God tolerated David's action, he was highly displeased. Hear Him: "Woe to them that ... invent to themselves instruments of musick, like David." (Amos 6:1, 5.) So God pronounces woe, misery, upon everyone who imitates David in using “instruments of musick."

A Beaten Path to the Law

The Catholics go to the Old Testament for infant membership and the burning of incense. The Methodists go to the Law for their sprinkling. The Sabbatarians go to the Law for their seventh-day sabbath observance. The Mormons go to the Law for their polygamy. And the instrumental music advocates go to the Law for their instruments.

So it is obvious, that no one group of these can condemn another without automatically condemning itself. Ye that teach others not to go back to the Law for infant membership, incense, sprinkling, the sabbath, and polygamy; do ye go back under the Law for instrumental music? Remember: One living in a glass

house can't afford to throw stones. The skillet can't call the pot black.

No Instrumental Music in Holy Place

God gave Moses the pattern of the tabernacle, admonishing him to build according to the pattern. (Heb. 8:5.) In the Holy Place, which was a type of the church, were: (1) The Shewbread, a type of the Lord's Supper; (2) the Altar of Incense, a type of the prayers of the saints; and (3) the Golden Candlestick, a type of the light of the gospel. *But no provision whatsoever was made for instrumental music in either type or antitype.* But even if instrumental music had been authorized for the Holy Place it would have typified something else—a type does not reproduce itself.

The “Music-in-Heaven” Argument

Being unable to find one jot of scriptural proof for instrumental music in the church, instrumental music exponents transcend the earthly realm in an effort to justify their position. Say they: “There is instrumental music in heaven; therefore, we may use it in the church.”

They may as well go back to the Old Testament for proof as to go ahead to heaven for it, for the principle involved is the same. For we are not now living under the Old Testament, neither are we now living in heaven. Such false logic will not only permit the copying by the church of everything in heaven; but it will also permit the copying of all the things practiced under the Mosaic Law. We will now consider the passages used as proof of instrumental music in heaven.

Rev. 5:8: “And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.” “Obviously, this is figurative language; surely no one would contend that the elders were carrying prayers about in literal bowls, or vials! Then the harps are likewise figurative! Redeemed Saints will have no use for material harps in heaven!” (*Instrumental Music In Worship* by Guy N. Woods, page 16.) And even if these are literal harps, they are restricted to the twenty-four elders.

Rev. 14:2: “And 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.” Revised Version: “And the voice which I heard was as the voice of harpers harping with their harps.”

Question: Did John hear the voice of many waters?
No; he heard a voice “**AS** of many waters.”

Did he hear a great thunder? No; he heard a voice from heaven “**AS** the voice of a great thunder.”

Did he hear harpers harping on their harps? No; the voice which he heard was “**AS** the voice of harpers harping on their harps!”

What were they doing? The next verse says, “and they sing as it were a new song before the throne!” There is not a passage in the Scriptures that remotely hints at the idea that there will be literal instruments of music in heaven! (*Instrumental Music in Worship* by Guy N. Woods, page 15.)¹

What actually happened was: John heard something *as* water – in unison; and *as* thunder – in volume; and *as* harpers harping – in melody. But what did he really hear? “They sung as it were a new song.” (Rev. 14:3.) “They sung a new song.” (Rev. 5:9.) “And they sing the song of Moses... and the song of the Lamb.” (Rev. 15:3.)

If we are going to take this passage literally, then only 144,000 persons are included; and they are virgins or single persons. “These are they which were not defiled with women: for they are virgins.” (Rev. 14:4.) Just how far will one go in an effort to justify an unscriptural position.

Rev. 15:2: “And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.” Those who

¹ Questions divided into separate paragraphs by the editor of this work.

claim this passage for justification in using instruments in church worship should be consistent and stand on “a sea of glass mingled with fire” while performing on their instruments.

Heaven is a spiritual realm. Heb. 12:23. How can a spiritual being play a mechanical instrument? Physical harps in heaven would necessitate factories to make them – to forge the steel, to prepare the lumber, and assemble the material. If they are instruments as known and used on earth, they will wear out – strings break and also get out of tune. If they are different, then what authority do you have for using the kind you use? (A. G. Hobbs, Jr., *Instrumental Music In Worship*, pages 8, 9.)

We should realize that God's will concerning those in heaven is not always the same as His will concerning those on earth. It is the will of God that men and women on earth marry and rear children; but this is not the will of God for those who reach heaven. (Luke 20:34, 35.) Whatever God wants in His heaven He can put there; what God wanted in His church He did put there! But God did not put instrumental music in His church; therefore He didn't want it there.

The “Instrumental-Music-in-Heaven Argument” is Absurd

This argument runs:

- There are instruments of music in heaven;
- We may, therefore, use instruments in church worship.

Let us suppose, for argument's sake, that this reasoning is correct. Now permit us to present a series of parallel statements which shall show that this argument is at once inconsistent and misleading.

- There is a throne in heaven; (Rev. 4:2.)

- We may, therefore, use a throne as a part of church worship.
- They burn incense in heaven on an altar containing fire! (Rev. 8:1-5.)
- So we may burn incense on an altar as a part of the church worship.
- There are animals in heaven; (Rev. 5:6-8.)
- Therefore, we may use animals in the church worship.
- There is a temple in heaven; (Rev. 15:5, 6.)
- So we may use a small temple as a part of the church worship.
- There are horses—white, red, black, pale—in heaven. (Rev. 6:2, 4, 5, 8.)
- Therefore we may use horses in the church worship.

Did you ever hear anything so absurd? It is simply inconceivable.

- There are angels in heaven; (Rev. 5:11.)
- We may, therefore, have angels in the church.

“Would there be anything wrong should a good Christian man try to be an angel in the church by wearing a beautiful white robe with some sort of wings attached to his back? Does it sound ridiculous? Maybe it does, but cannot one man imitate the angels about as nearly as another can take his tools and imitate the music in heaven with some kind of instruments he manufactured? Men should learn to live in one world at a time. If God puts a harp in our hand when we get to heaven, we should accept it and use it as He commands us. But until He does, it is better to leave it alone.” (J. Roy Vaughan, *Gospel Advocate*, 3-23-44, page 207.)

The argument—that because there are instruments in heaven we may use them in church worship—is both absurd and impossible.

The “Home” Argument

Because we have instruments of music at home, some contend that we may use instruments in the church worship. If that be true, since we have pie and sweet-milk or corn bread and buttermilk on our supper table at home; we may also use them in the Lord’s Supper. But we eat our regular meals at home, and rightly so, for Paul positively condemns such in connection with the worship. (1 Cor. 11:20, 21, 34.) Likewise, since the New Testament does not authorize their use in the church, we should be content to use our musical instruments at home.

The truth is, many things are right in the home but wrong in the church. For instance, there are babies in the home; but that does not justify infant baptism and infant church membership.

Then, too, some things are morally right but religiously wrong. To wash the hands or feet as an act of cleanliness is right and proper; but to wash the hands or feet as an act of worship is wrong. (Mark 7:1-8; 1 Tim. 5:19.)

“Instrumental music is not wrong in itself. If that were true it would be wrong anywhere, but it is wrong to add it to Christian worship when God has not told us to use it.” (Roy E. Cogdill, *The New Testament Church*, page 84.)

Instrument is Expedient

A thing is expedient if it acts as a means to an end. Song books, lights, eyeglasses, and even the tuning fork are expedients, for they act as means to the end of singing. And after each has played its respective part, only singing has been had. But when the instrument is used, an entirely new kind of music is added. Furthermore, the teaching and admonishing that we are to get by means of singing, are obscured or entirely drowned out by the instruments.

But however expedient or advantageous the instrument may seem to be, it must also be lawful. (1 Cor. 6:12.) But instrumental

music in the worship cannot possibly be lawful, for it is not one time mentioned in the law of Christ. (Rom. 8:2.)

The use of the instrument must also edify—that is, build up, strengthen. (1 Cor. 10:23; Rom. 14:19.) But the introduction of the instrument has always torn down—has always produced discord, strife and division.

Though expedient, the instrument must not offend the conscience of others, must not cause others to stumble. (1 Cor. 8:9-13; 10:28.) But the use of the instrument has offended the consciences of many, causing countless thousands to stumble.

Hence, from a scriptural standpoint, the instrument is inexpedient from every angle.

Instrument an Aid

To say that instrumental music aids the singing is to reflect on the divine wisdom of God, Christ and the Holy Spirit, and is contrary to known facts, for a cappella choruses, such as that of North Texas State College, Denton, Texas, are among the foremost singing groups in the country.

Instrumental music exponents reason thus:

- Because instruments aid the singing,
- We are, thereby, justified in using them in the worship.

This is indeed strange logic! We reply:

- Because the burning of incense aids the worship,
- The Catholics are thereby justified in burning it in the worship.

Again:

- Because the use of images or idols is an aid to worship,
- The Catholics and others are thereby justified in using them in their worship.

The claim of the advocates of instrumental music that they use it as an aid is a mere subterfuge. They attempt to find authority for it in the Old Testament. Surely, then, they must use it just as it was then used. It was not used then as an aid: “Praise him

with the stringed instrument and pipe. Praise him with the loud cymbals: praise him with high sounding cymbals." (Ps. 150:5, 6.) To praise God is to worship him, and they were to praise God with these instruments. (C. R. Nichol and R. L. Whiteside, *Sound Doctrine*, Vol. 3, page 168.)

Furthermore, many churches use musical instruments during the collection, the Lord's Supper, and at various other times when no singing is going on.

Incidentally, instrumental music exponents are not the only ones who have tried to "aid" God without receiving an invitation. Abraham and Sarah made the same mistake. God specified Sarah as the prospective mother of Isaac; but Abraham and Sarah decided to substitute Hagar for Sarah. God refused their "aid" and rejected Hagar's son, Ishmael.

Those who are trying to "aid" God by adding musical instruments to the worship, should learn the lesson here taught, for this incident is for our learning and for our example and admonition. (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11.)

QUESTIONS

1. What smoke screens are sometimes used by instrumental music advocates?
2. Can you explain why they are untrue?
3. Whose type of music do people usually prefer?
4. Show by parallel arguments the consequences of such logic.
5. Do they prefer to follow David in offering animals, keeping the Sabbath, burning incense, and being a polygamist?
6. What does this prove?
7. Whom are we to hear and follow in all religious matters?
8. Who has all authority in the church?
9. Who is the head of the church?
10. What happened to the law under which David lived?
11. What condition is one in who seeks to be justified by the law?
12. What kind of music did God ordain under the law?
13. Who introduced the mechanical instruments?
14. What did God say regarding those who invent instruments of music like David?
15. Why do the Catholics go to the Old Testament? the Methodists? the Sabbatarians? the Mormons? instrumental music advocates?
16. Can one consistently condemn another?
17. How did Moses build the tabernacle?
18. Of what was the Holy Place a type?
19. What were in the Holy Place?
20. What did these typify?
21. Was any provision made for instrumental music in either type or antitype?
22. Are instrumental music exponents more justified in trying to sustain their position by contending there are musical instruments in heaven than they are in going back to the law for proof?
23. What passages do they use as proof that there is instrumental music in heaven?
24. Do these passages prove their contention?
25. Is God's will concerning those in heaven and on earth always the same?
26. Since those who espouse the cause of instrumental music contend that they may use it in the church because it is in heaven, give some parallel arguments to show how misleading and absurd this contention is.

27. Do you think that the argument, that “because we have musical instruments in the home we may also have them in the church worship,” is sound?
28. If this argument is true, isn’t it just as right to have pie and sweet milk in the Lord’s Supper, infant baptism and church membership, and to practice acts of cleanliness as acts of worship?
29. Is instrumental music wrong in itself?
30. If so, what would be the case?
31. Where does the wrong lie?
32. When is a thing expedient?
33. Name some things that are means to the end of singing.
34. Is instrumental music an expedient? Why?
35. In addition to a thing’s expedient in religious matters, name three conditions that must be met.
36. Does musical instruments in the church meet these conditions?
37. To say that instrumental music aids the singing is a reflection on what?
38. What singing groups are among the foremost of the country?
39. Give illustrations to show the unsoundness of this position.
40. Are the instruments always used to “aid” the singing?
41. Who else tried to “aid” God without having received an invitation?
42. What lesson does this teach those who try to “aid” God by adding musical instruments to his worship?

ARGUMENTS FOR INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC REFUTED (No. 2)

Bible Does Not Say Not To Have It

This position may be stated thus:

- The bible does not say thou shalt not play musical instruments in church;
- therefore we may use them.

We counter by saying:

- The Bible does not say thou shalt not gamble;
- therefore, it is lawful to gamble.
- The Bible does not say not to kiss the Pope's big toe;
- so we may kiss his toe as an act of worship.

Truly "man is so inconsistent a creature that it is impossible to reason from his belief to his conduct, or from one part of his belief to another."

We will now present some inspired examples to show that, though God didn't say verbatim not to use instruments of music in the church, He did say in substance not to use them.

Let us, first, consider the ark. God told Noah to build an ark. (Gen. 6:14.) Had God merely told Noah to build the ark of wood, a generic term, he could have lawfully used any kind of wood. But when the Lord said use gopher wood, a specific term, He automatically excluded every other kind of wood. God didn't name every other kind of wood and say not to use this or that kind. God didn't say, "Thou shalt not use pine Thou shalt not use ash Thou shalt not use oak Thou shalt not use cedar." Neither did He say, "Thou shalt not use pine and gopher ... Thou shalt not use ash and gopher," and so on. But He did say to use gopher wood, thus entirely eliminating pine, ash, oak and cedar.

Even so, God commands Christians to sing. (Eph. 5:19.) Had He merely told them to make music, a generic term, then they could have lawfully made any kind of music. But when He said to sing, He automatically excluded any other kind of music. God did not say, "Thou shalt not play the organ ... Thou shalt not play the

piano ... Thou shalt not play the violin ... Thou shalt not play the drum.” Neither did He say, “Thou shalt not play the organ and sing ... Thou shalt not play the piano and sing,” and so on.

But just as the specification of gopher wood eliminated pine, ash, oak and cedar, the specification to sing eliminates playing the organ, the piano, the violin and the drum. And as gopher wood excluded using a combination of pine and gopher, so singing excludes a combination of playing the organ, piano, etc., and singing.

So when God says to sing, He thereby automatically excludes playing the organ, piano, violin and drum. He, likewise, excludes a combination of playing the organ, etc., and singing.

In case some just can't see the point that we're trying to make, we give the following simple illustration. Almost everyone is accustomed to trading at Kress or some similar store. At these stores, the price of every article for sale is plainly marked. But they don't use such signs as: Thou shalt not steal the candy ... Thou shalt not steal the soap. Suppose some mechanical instrument exponent would muse: "Since they don't have any thou-shalt-not-steal signs on the counters, I'll just load up." Now suppose, that while he was in the process of loading up, a policeman should walk up. How long do you think it would take him to learn that the price tags on those articles necessarily implied the command: "Thou shalt not steal"?

God told the Israelites to offer a lamb. Had He said offer an animal, a generic term, they could have offered a cat, dog, bear, lion, or any other kind of an animal. But when He told them to offer a lamb, a specific term, He automatically excluded the cat, dog, bear and lion. Nor could they lawfully offer a combination of cat and lamb, etc.

So in the church of God, the article, singing, is plainly marked. And those who load up with instruments of music will find out at the judgment, that the requirement to sing, necessarily implied the command: "Thou shalt not play the instruments."

Or suppose an instrumental music brother were strolling by a farm-yard and there saw a sign reading, "Chickens for sale." And he would muse: "Since there is no sign saying thou shalt not steal the chickens, on my way back tonight, I will bring a sack and load it up with chickens." And at the duly appointed time, he arrives

back; and while he is in the process of loading his sack up with chickens, the old farmer loads him up with buckshot. He, then, would thoroughly understand – and that, by sad experience – that the sign: “Chickens for sale,” necessarily implied, “Thou shalt not steal chickens.”

Many who are now loading the church with instruments of music, shall find out at the judgment that the sign to “sing,” which is recorded in the New Testament, necessarily implies: “Thou shalt not play instruments of music.”

We Like Instrumental Music and We’re Going to Have It

Some frankly admit this to be their sentiment. How bold and brazen! It might help such people to know that many bank robbers and chicken thieves are in prison, some are in graveyards, because they saw something they liked and had to have, regardless of the law, and without the consent of the owner.

This reminds us of the time when we received the news of the tragic and untimely death of a boyhood friend. He had spotted a peach orchard a few miles out of town. He liked peaches and decided he was going to have some, regardless of the law, and without any authority from the owner. But unfortunately, while he was gathering peaches without any authority, the owner filled him with buckshot.

So with our instrumental music friends. They like the instruments and are going to have them, regardless of the law of Christ, and without one iota of authority from Christ, the head and owner of the church. And because they are playing their instruments in the church without any authority, Christ shall send them into everlasting punishment where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The “Psalms” Argument

Some say the book of Psalms was not a part of the law of Moses, that it was never abolished, and that it is binding today. And inasmuch as the book of Psalms teaches the use of musical instruments, we may use them in church worship today. But this argument is unsound, for the conclusion is based on a false premise.

It is not true that the book of Psalms was not a part of the Law. On one occasion the fault-finding Jews said unto Jesus, "For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and that thou, being a man, makest thyself God." (John 10:33.) Jesus promptly answered them, "Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?" (John 10:34.) This is written in the "law" – it is recorded in Psalms 82:6. So Jesus called the "Psalms" the "law." Again, John 15:25: "But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause." But this quotation is written in Psalms 35:19 and 69:4. So Jesus again called the "Psalms" the "law."

David's Psalms Contrary to Christ's Teaching

Though Paul said to sing "Psalms," he did not specify the Psalms of David, as some would have us believe. In the first place David was not the only person that could, and did, write psalms. Furthermore, some of David's Psalms are contrary to the teaching of Christ.

For instance, in Psalms 139:22, David says he hates his enemies "with perfect hatred"; and in Psalms 143:12, David prays for God to "cut off" and "destroy" his enemies.

But Jesus implored his Father to "forgive" his enemies, taught his disciples to "Love ..., bless" and "do good" to their enemies (Luke 23:34; Matt. 5:44.) Christ, also, through the Holy Spirit, teaches Christians: "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." (Rom. 12:19-21.)

David said: "Blessed be the Lord my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight." (Ps. 144:1.)

But Jesus said: "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight." (John 18:36)

David said: "Praise ye the Lord Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp. Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals." (Ps. 150:1-5.)

But Christ, through his inspired apostles, says: “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name” (Heb. 13:15.) Again: “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Eph. 5:19.) Once more: “God that made the world and all things therein ... dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men’s hands.” (Acts 17:24, 25.)

So, many of David’s Psalms, including the 150th Psalm, are directly adverse to Christ’s teaching as set forth in the New Testament.

The “Apostolic-Example” Argument

Some who champion the using of musical instruments in the church claim they are following the example of the apostles; who, they say, used the instruments in the temple worship. They rely heavily on the following Scriptures: “And they, continued daily with one accord in the temple” (Acts 2:46.) “Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer.” (Acts 3:1.) They draw two general assumptions from these passages: (1) Mechanical instruments of music were used in all acts of worship in the temple. (2) And when the apostles went into the temple they used these instruments. This argument may be boiled down thus:

- They used mechanical instruments of music in the temple worship.
- The apostles had part in this worship, thus setting an example;
- Therefore, we may use mechanical instruments of music in the church.

May we kindly state that these are all bare assumptions, having no scriptural foundation whatsoever. But, for the time being, we shall grant their being true that we might show to what ridiculous conclusions they lead. Listen:

- They burnt incense in the temple worship.
- The apostles had part in this worship, thus setting an example;
- Therefore, we may burn incense in the worship today.

Again:

- They offered bloody animal sacrifices in the temple worship.
- The apostles had part in this worship, thus setting an example;
- Therefore, we may offer bloody animal sacrifices in the church.

Even a little child can see that this reasoning is shallow and its consequences the height of absurdity.

From experience, we here submit a practical illustration. We sometimes shop in a drug store where they sell drugs, books, whiskey, dice, cards and so on. Sometimes we don't buy a single article. Again, we buy drugs; occasionally we buy a book or some other article. But we never buy whiskey, dice or cards. Would it not be silly, then, to conclude that because we go into this drug store, that we not only buy drugs and books, but that we also buy whiskey, dice and cards?

But this conclusion is no sillier than that of instrumental music exponents who contend that, because the apostles attended temple worship, in which instrumental music was only a part, this was positive proof that they used these instruments and also participated in other acts of the worship.

Now this last conclusion is just as logical as the first one. Yet both are but two of thousands of cases which proved too much, and hence, proved exactly nothing!

Well, what did the apostles go into the temple for? Let God's angel tell. "Go, stand and speak in the temple" – not, "go and play instrumental music in the temple" – "all the words of this life." (Acts 5:20.) "And daily in the temple ... they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." (Acts 5:42.) Please note, it did not say: "And daily in the temple they played musical instruments." But it did say they preached Jesus Christ.

Many gospel preachers have had similar experiences. Though they occasionally visit denominational services, they refuse to participate therein. They usually go, either to see first hand how they carry on, or for the purpose of preaching the gospel of Christ.

The "Tuning-Fork" Argument

Instrumental music advocates maintain they have as much right to use instruments as their opposers have to use the tuning fork, song books and so on. But we will show that we not only have scripture for song books (2 Tim. 4:13), meeting houses, lights (Acts 20:8), and seats (Jas. 2:1-3), but for everything else that we use in carrying out the worship of God.

First let us say that, contrary to the belief of some, the tuning fork is not a musical instrument. Music is a succession or combination of harmonious tones. But since the tuning fork can produce only one tone, it cannot possibly be a musical instrument.

A little reflection will reveal that the tuning fork is not a musical instrument. Did you ever hear a band or orchestra play? If so, you heard the piano, saxophone, drum and so forth. But did you hear the tuning fork? Who played it?

We will now prove that it is scriptural to use the tuning fork. It is true that when God commands anything to be done, He includes everything necessary to carry out that command in the command itself. To illustrate:

Jesus commanded His disciples to go into all the world. (Mark 16:15.) He didn't specify that they go by ship, plane, train, or in wagons or cars. But every one of these means is included in the command to go.

Jesus also commanded his disciples to baptize. (Matt. 28:19.) He didn't say whether to use still or running water. He didn't say whether to baptize in a creek, lake, river, or baptistry. He didn't say one word about baptismal garments. But every one of these is included in the command to baptize.

Even so Jesus, through his apostles, commands us to sing. (Col. 3:16; Jas. 5:13). He didn't specify the tuning fork; but it, and everything else necessary to singing, is included in the command to sing.

To illustrate further: Suppose a doctor should put his patient on a buttermilk diet. Then suppose he were to address the patient on this wise: "There must be a cow ... There must be some feed ... Someone must feed the cow ... Somebody will have to milk the cow ... You must have a container to hold the milk ... The milk will have to be churned ...etc." How long would it take the patient to drop this doctor? But even a doctor knows that every last one of

these items – the cow, feed, feeder, container and churning – is included in the command to drink buttermilk.

Even so, Jesus, the divine physician, prescribes singing as the musical diet for his church. Jesus didn't say: "You need a tuning fork to get the pitch ... You need meeting houses, lights, seats, songbooks, eyeglasses and ear trumpets ... You need radios and public-address systems to reach more people ... etc." Even Solomon would not have been so naive; and behold Jesus is wiser than Solomon.

Surely every one of these—the tuning fork, meeting houses, lights, seats, songbooks, eyeglasses, earphones, radios, public-address systems, etc.—is included in the command to sing. And when any or all of these things are used, we still have *singing, only*. None of these things adds one thing to the singing; but musical instruments do; they add, or substitute, playing, another kind of music, for which there is not one iota of authority in the entire New Testament.

If a man orders his wife to cook some biscuits, he includes soap, water, a towel, the washing and drying of her hands, flour, baking powder, salt, lard, milk, the rolling pin, the biscuit cutter, the pan, stove, fire and so on; but after all is said and done, they have only biscuits.

Likewise, the tuning fork and other expedients are included in God's order to sing. But after all is said and done, we have only singing. Can it be that anyone could fail to see this?

Place of Tuning Fork

The tuning fork is used to *get ready* to carry out God's command to sing; the part it plays is over before the singing begins. Like the announcement of the number of the song, it is merely an incidental that *precedes the singing*; and *is hushed up before the singing starts*. Not so with the organ, piano or other instruments. They are used, either as a substitute for, or an accompaniment to, singing; thus producing a kind of music completely unknown to the New Testament church worship. Brother Hardeman ascribed the following quotation to a gentleman of his home town:

“The difference between a tuning fork and the organ is this: that the tuning fork has enough respect for God to quit before the worship begins, while an organ continues all the way through.” (*Hardeman’s Tabernacle Sermons*, Vol. II, p. 278)

But if the tuning fork, the meat fork, the salad fork, or any other fork, should cause a fraction of the trouble that the organ, piano and other instruments have caused in the church; we would be highly in favor of tying a millstone to every one of them and casting them into the bottom of the sea.

Miscellaneous Arguments Refuted

Instrumental music exponents, in a vain effort to sustain their position, cite 2 Cor. 3:17: “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” But they fail to realize that there is a vast difference in Christian liberty on the one hand, and being a libertine on the other. Paul was not teaching Christians to ignore divine authority, but that they were free from the law of Moses – one of the very places instrumental music advocates run in an attempt to uphold their contention.

“We use instruments,” say some, “because they are pleasing to the ear.” We reply: “Ice cream and cake is pleasing to the taste; therefore we may use it in the Lord’s Supper.”

“We use instruments because they draw a crowd.” Why not go all out to attract even larger crowds by having nude bathing beauty contests and prize fights in the worship? One is just as logical and right as the other.

Say some: “Most churches use instrumental music, therefore it is right.” Reply: “Most people refused to obey Noah’s preaching, therefore they were right.” Again: “Most people are headed for hell fire, therefore they are right.” (Matt. 24:37; 7:13).

Instrument in *Psallo*

After instrumental music exponents have exhausted every other means of upholding their false position, and have failed; they run for dear life to the Greek and hide behind the little Greek verb, – *psallo*. It is from this word, *psallo*, that the word “sing” is

translated. The champions of instrumental music say *psallo* means to accompany the singing with mechanical instruments.

“If this be true, then instrumental music is commanded and is not a matter of choice with those who would obey God. It would be imperative for each one who sings to have his own instrument and do his own playing since the command is individual and personal in its meaning. Someone else could no more do the playing for a person than they could acceptably sing for him. This becomes ridiculously absurd.” (Roy E. Cogdill, *The New Testament Church*, page 84).

The instrument is no more in *psallo* than “meat” is in the word “eat.” Just as “eat” means “to take food” regardless of the kind of food taken, for it may be bread, milk, pie, meat or some other food; so *psallo* means “to touch” without specifying the object or instrument to be touched. It may be the hair, or a bowstring, or a carpenter's line, or a musical instrument, or, as used in the New Testament, the human heart.

The Meaning of *Psallo*

Psallo has had various meanings. Just as customs change, so do the meaning of words change. Words often become obsolete. The original English is so different from the English of today that we have to study it as we study Greek and Latin.

The meaning of a word at one time may not be its meaning at another time. Take the word “prevent” for instance. Originally it meant “to anticipate.” It also meant “to precede,” and is so used in the King James Version. (Psalms 119:147; Matt. 17:25; 1 Thess. 4:15.) But today it means “to stop or hinder.”

We also find that *psallo* has had different meanings in the different periods of its history. The primitive meaning of *psallo* is “to touch,” regardless of the object touched.

“*Psallo* ... once meant to pluck the hair, twang the bowstring, twitch a carpenter's line, and to touch the chords of a musical instrument, but had entirely lost all of these meanings before the beginning of the

New Testament period, and that, therefore, the word is never used in the New Testament nor in contemporaneous literature in any of these senses. At this time, it not only meant to sing, but that is the only sense in which it was used, all the other meanings having entirely disappeared.” (M. C. Kurfrees, *Instrumental Music In The Worship*, pages 44, 45)

Places *Psallo* Is Used

Psallo occurs five times in various forms in the New Testament. Each time it is translated “to sing.” For the convenience of the reader we will list these passages, placing *psallo* in brackets following the English word that translates it.

Rom. 15:9: “I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and will *sing* [*psallo*] unto thy name.”

1 Cor. 14:15: “What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will *sing* [*psallo*] with the spirit, and I will *sing* [*psallo*] with the understanding also.”

Eph. 5:19: “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and *making melody* [*psallontes*] in your heart to the Lord.”

In this passage we note a difference in the use of *psallo* which is in the participial form. It is used in a figurative sense and is rendered “making melody” in your heart – not on the instrument – to the Lord.

“The melody, the music, the meaning, the emotion that it to accompany this teaching and singing is to be made in or to come from the heart.” (G. C. Brewer, *Gospel Advocate*, Sept. 5, 1946, p. 835.)

A CONTRAST

- Psalms *not* Blues
- Hymns *not* Jazz,
- Spiritual Songs *not* Swing Music
- Singing *not* Playing, Plucking, Beating, Blowing
- Making Melody in Heart *not* On Organ, Piano, Violin, Drum
- To the Lord *not* To the Devil

Jas. 5:13: “Is any among you afflicted? let him pray.
Is any merry? let him *sing psalms [psalmetto]*.”

English Bible Sufficient

But why is it necessary to go to the Greek? The English Bible fully reveals God’s will to man. We have the King James Version – the work of forty-seven scholars; the American Revised Version – the work of 101 scholars; the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament completed in 1946 – the work of nine scholars; a total of 157 of the ripest scholars the world has ever known. These translations have made it possible for people who don’t know one jot of Hebrew nor one letter of Greek to read God’s word in their own language. And in every instance, these translators rendered *psallo*—to *sing*.

The trouble is, some who have a false position to uphold run over the recognized scholarship of the world, and tell us that these scholars didn’t correctly translate certain words. Truly did Brother H. Leo Boles say: **“Any proposition in the realm of religion that cannot be proved by our English Bible is not true—it cannot be proved.”** (*Clubb-Boles Debate*, pages 17, 18.)

And, believe it or not, all of these translators and revisers, without a single exception, were, or are, members of religious bodies that use instrumental music in the worship. And, in view of this, and the fact that popular sentiment was in favor of instrumental music, we make bold to say, that if it had been at all possible to have consistently gotten instrumental music out of *psallo*, they would have gladly done so.

QUESTIONS

1. Are we justified in using instrumental music in the church because the Bible doesn't say not to use it?
2. State some illustrations to show the inconsistency of this position.
3. Give some inspired examples to prove that, though God didn't say verbatim not to use the instruments, he did in effect say so.
4. Can you think of other illustrations?
5. What do you think of the statement: "We like instrumental music and we're going to have it."
6. Is this attitude sound? Why?
7. Illustrate the fatal consequences of this attitude.
8. What do some say relative to the book of Psalms?
9. Then what is their conclusion?
10. Was the book of Psalms a part of the law? Give proof.
11. Are David's Psalms contrary to Christ's teaching? Give proof.
12. Is the 150th Psalm contrary to Christ's teaching? Why?
13. What Scriptures do the instrumental advocates rely on to prove they are following the apostles?
14. What do they assume?
15. Since these advocates maintain that when the apostles went into the temple they used the instruments, show how preposterous their assumption is by stating some parallel arguments.
16. Why did the apostles go into the temple? Give proof.
17. Define "music."
18. Is the tuning fork a musical instrument? Why?
19. When God gives a command what does He include in it? Illustrate.
20. Name some things that may be included in the command to sing.
21. Do they add anything to the command to sing?
22. Does the use of instruments add anything to the command to sing?
23. What is the part and place of the tuning fork?
24. What is the difference between the tuning fork and the organ?
25. If the tuning fork should cause as much trouble as the instrument has caused, what should be done with it?

26. Show that the following arguments are unsound: (1) "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." (2) "We use musical instruments because they are pleasing to the ear." (3) "We use the instruments because they draw a crowd." (4) "It is right to use musical instruments because most churches use them."
27. Where do instrumental music exponents go as a last resort?
28. From what Greek word is "sing" translated?
29. What do champions of instrumental music say *psallo* means?
30. If they are right, what undeniable conclusion follows?
31. Does the instrument inhere in *psallo*? Illustrate.
32. Show that the meaning of words change. Example: "Prevent."
33. Give the various meanings of *psallo*.
34. What does *psallo* mean in the New Testament?
35. Name the passages where *psallo* is used.
36. How is *psallo* used in Eph. 5:19?
37. What is it rendered?
38. Where is the "melody" to be made?
39. Contrast Eph. 5:19.
40. Is it necessary to go to the Greek to settle this question? Why?
41. Name some reliable English Versions.
42. About how many scholars translated these Versions?
43. How did these recognized scholars translate *psallo*?
44. Why do some disregard the recognized scholarship of the world?
45. What did Brother Boles say about a proposition in the realm of religion that cannot be proved by our English Bible? Do you agree with him?

TEN INDICTMENTS AGAINST INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Instrumental Music Indicted

We here submit ten charges, in syllogistic form, against instrumental music in the church.

1. The apostles were to teach all things that Christ commanded them. (Matt. 28:20.)

But the apostles didn't teach instrumental music in the church;

Therefore, Christ did not command instrumental music in the church.

2. The Holy Spirit was to guide apostles into all truth. (John 16:13.)

But the Holy Spirit did not guide them to use instrumental music in the church;

Therefore, instrumental music in the church is not a part of all truth.

3. Paul kept back nothing that was profitable. (Acts 20:20.)

But Paul kept back musical instruments in the church:

Therefore, musical instruments in the church are not profitable.

4. Paul declared all the counsel of God. (Acts 20:27.)

But Paul didn't declare instrumental music in the church:

Therefore, instrumental music in the church is not a part of the counsel of God.

5. Whatsoever is not of faith (not according to God's word) is sin. (Rom. 14:23; 10:17.)

But musical instruments in the church are not of faith (not according to God's word);

Therefore, musical instruments in the church are a sin.

6. We are to do all in the name (by the authority) of Christ. (Col. 3:17.)

But Christ does not authorize instrumental music in the church;

Therefore, we cannot use instrumental music in the church by Christ's authority.

7. The Scripture furnishes unto all good works. (2 Tim. 3:16, 17.)

But the Scripture does not furnish instrumental music in the church;

Therefore, instrumental music in the church is not a good work.

8. God has given all things that pertain to life and godliness. (2 Pet. 1:2, 3.)

But God has not given instrumental music in the church;

Therefore, instrumental music in the church does not pertain to life and godliness.

9. Those who transgress (go beyond) the doctrine of Christ have not God. (2 John 9.)

But those who use instrumental music in the church go beyond the doctrine of Christ;

Therefore, those who use instrumental music in the church have not God.

10. Those who add to God's word shall be tormented. (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:6; Ecc. 3:14; Rev. 22:18.)

But those who use instrumental music in the church add to God's word;

Therefore, those who use instrumental music in the church shall be tormented.

TWENTY ONE MORE INDICTMENTS

SEVEN OBJECTIONS TO INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

1. It is unauthorized by scriptural precedent—no example for it.
2. It is unauthorized by scriptural precept—no command for it.
3. It is unsupported by historical record—no mention of it.

4. It is unethical among Christians—it disregards the rights of others.
5. It is unholy—for it disregards the gospel.
6. It is unworthy—for it disregards the simplicity of New Testament worship.
7. It is unfair to the classes by exalting talent, and unfair to the masses by ignoring it.

SEVEN THINGS INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN THE WORSHIP WILL DO

1. It will divide the church.
2. It will delight the worldly.
3. It will disappoint the spiritual.
4. It will drown the singing.
5. It will defeat the gospel.
6. It will develop choirs.
7. It will discredit the Christ.

SEVEN THINGS INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN THE WORSHIP WILL NOT DO

1. It will not speak. (Eph. 5:19.)
2. It will not teach. (Col. 3:16.)
3. It will not admonish. (Col. 3:16.)
4. It will not sing. (1 Cor. 14:15.)
5. It will not pray. (1 Cor. 14:15.)
6. It will not praise. (John 4:24; Heb. 13:15.)
7. It will not do anything God says do.

(*Ready Answers to Religious Errors* by Williams and Dykes, pages 44, 45.)

STAR WITNESSES AGAINST INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

We now give the testimony of noted scholars and preachers of various religious bodies who have testified against using mechanical instruments in the worship.

Thomas Aquinas, a learned Roman Catholic scholar of the thirteenth century:

“Our Church does not use musical instruments, as harps and psalteries, to praise God withal, that she may not seem to Judaize.” (*Bingham’s Antiquities, Vol. II.*, page 483, London Edition.)

John Wesley, illustrious founder of the Methodist church:

“I have no objection to instruments of music in our chapels, provided they are neither *heard* nor *seen*.” (*Clarke’s Commentary, Vol. IV*, page 684.)

Adam Clarke, probably the greatest scholar the Methodists have produced:

“I believe that David was not authorized by the Lord to introduce that multitude of musical instruments into the Divine worship of which we read; and I am satisfied that his conduct in this respect is most solemnly reprehended by this prophet; and I farther believe that the use of such instruments of music, in the Christian Church, is *without the sanction and against the will* of God; they are subversive of the spirit of true devotion, and that they are *sinful*. If there was a *woe* to *them* who *invented* instruments of music, as did David under the law, is there *no woe, no curse* to them who invent them, and introduce them into the worship of God in the Christian Church? I am an old man, and an old minister; and I here declare that I never knew them productive of any good in the worship of God; and have had reason to believe that

they were productive of much evil. Music as a *science*, I esteem and admire: but instruments of music *in the house of God* I abominate and abhor. This is the abuse of music; and here I register my protest against all such corruptions in the worship of the Author of Christianity.” (*Clarke’s Commentary*, Vol. IV, page 684.)

Martin Luther, great leader of the Reformation movement and founder of the Lutheran church:

“The organ in the worship is an ensign of Baal.”
(*Instrumental Music In Worship* by Guy N. Woods, page 19.)

John Calvin, great Reformer and founder of the Presbyterian church:

“Musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting up of lamps, and the restoration of the other shadows of the law. The papists, therefore, have foolishly borrowed this, as well as many other things, from the Jews. Men who are fond of outward pomp may delight in that noise; but the simplicity which God recommends to us by the apostle is far more pleasing to Him.” (*Calvin’s Commentary on the Thirty-third Psalm*.)

Robert Milligan (Christian), probably the equal in scholarship of any man of his time, said regarding instrumental music in the worship:

“Such a practice is wholly unwarranted by anything that is either said or taught in the New Testament.”
(*Scheme of Redemption*, page 386.)

Alexander Campbell (Christian), a great scholar and leader of the Restoration movement:

“To those who have no real devotion or spirituality in them, and whose animal nature flags under the oppression of church service, I think that instrumental music would be not only a desideratum, but an essential prerequisite to fire up their souls to even animal devotion. But I presume to all spiritually-minded Christians, such aids would be as a cow bell in a concert.” (*Memoirs of A. Campbell*, page 366.)

Charles Haddon Spurgeon, said to have been the greatest Baptist preacher that ever lived, preached to thousands of people every Sunday in the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London. Singing was their only music. Relative to musical instruments in the worship he said:

“I would just as soon attempt to pray to God with machinery as to sing to Him with machinery!” (*Instrumental Music In Worship*, by Guy N. Woods, page 19.)

Regarding Mr. Spurgeon, Professor John Girardeau, who was a noted Presbyterian scholar, and one-time Professor in Columbia Theological Seminary of South Carolina, said:

“Some few yet stand firm against what is now called, in a painfully significant phrase, the 'downgrade' tendencies of this age. Prominent among them is that eminent servant of Christ—a star in His right hand—the Rev. Charles H. Spurgeon, who not only proclaims with power the pure doctrines of God's word, but retains and upholds an apostolic simplicity of worship. The great congregation which is blessed with the privilege of listening to his instructions has no organ 'to assist' them in singing their praises to their God and Savior. They find their vocal organs sufficient. Their tongues and voices express the

gratitude of their hearts." (*Instrumental Music in the Church*, page 176.)

Isaac Errett (Christian), noted Editor and founder of the Christian Standard, said relative to instrumental music:

"The Standard regards it as an expedient, proposed to aid the church to perform, in an edifying way, the duty of singing; and advises against it as not necessary to that end, and as tending to create strife in many of our churches." (*Life and Times of John F. Rowe*, page 107.)

Benjamin Franklin (Christian), one of the greatest preachers of the nineteenth century:

"There would have been no conflict in the establishment of the kingdom of God, with Jews or Pagans, in bringing instrumental music in and *utilizing* it. The way was open, and it would have been one *popular element*. But did our Lord *utilize* it? No; He established His religion in a country where all worshipers, of all kinds, used instruments in worship, but *left the instruments all out!*

"He did not leave them out because there were not plenty of them, nor because he could not get them, nor because they were not popular; but because *he did not want them*. This is a *divine prohibition*. Neither he, nor any one of his apostles, ever used any instruments to enable them to sing; nor any one even professing to follow him, till the man of sin was fully developed, and there was a full-grown pope. He is the gentleman to whom we are indebted for the use of the organ in worship. His fruitful mind caught the idea of *utilizing* the organ, and he took it from its more congenial place, in the theater, and consecrated it to *divine service*." (*The Gospel Preacher, Vol. II*, pages 419, 420.)

J. W. McGarvey (Christian), was President of the College of the Bible. He was a great preacher and educator, one of the ripest scholars of his time. Concerning instrumental music in the worship he said:

“I hold that the use of the instrument is sinful, and I must not be requested to keep my mouth shut in the presence of sin, whether committed by a church or an individual ... To sum up these arguments, you can now see that this practice is one of recent origin among Protestant churches, adopted by them from the Roman apostasy; that it was one of the latest corruptions adopted by the corrupt body; that a large part of the religious world has never accepted it; that, though employed in the Jewish ritual, it was deliberately laid aside by the inspired men who organized the church of Christ; and that several precepts of the New Testament implicitly condemn it.” (In *Apostolic Times*, 1881, and “What Shall We Do About the Organ?” pages 6, 7.)

Moses E. Lard (Christian), a brilliant preacher, writer and commentator:

“The question of instrumental music in the churches of Christ involves a great and sacred principle. But for this the subject is not worthy of one thought at the hands of the child of God. That principle is the right of men to introduce innovations into the prescribed worship of God. This right we utterly deny. The advocates of instrumental music affirm it. This makes the issue. As sure as the Bible is a divine book, we are right and they are wrong.” (*Lard's Quarterly*, October, 1867, page 368.)

David Lipscomb (Christian), Editor of the *Gospel Advocate* for almost fifty years, and one of the greatest Bible teachers of his day:

“The Old Testament was taken out of the way, because it was contrary to us, and the New Testament adopted. Jesus and the apostles dropped out instrumental music ... If they saw fit to drop it out, who has the right to place it in, and why should any Christian want to put in what they dropped out? ... There is as good, if not better, authority for infant church membership and for polygamy as there is for the use of instruments of music in the worship. There is none for either.” (*Questions Answered*, pages 340, 341.)

H. Leo Boles (Christian) was president of David Lipscomb College, and Editor of the Gospel Advocate, a noted author, commentator and preacher. In his debate with Mr. Clubb, he wrote:

“I challenge Brother Clubb to quote a single Scripture from the New Testament that even mentions instrumental music ‘in Christian worship.’ It is *excluded* by the Scriptures which describe and authorize Christian worship.” (*Is Instrumental Music In Christian Worship Scriptural?* page 85.)

N. B. Hardeman (Christian), President of Freed-Hardeman College and one of the greatest – some say the greatest – scholars and preachers in the church of Christ. He enjoys wide fame because of the five great Tabernacle meetings he preached in in Nashville, Tennessee, in which hundreds were converted. Many of these sermons appear in five volumes titled *Hardeman’s Tabernacle Sermons*. In Volume II, page 267, he says relative to the subject of “Instrumental Music”:

Now, in the discussion tonight of that proposition, allow me to say at the very outset that it isn’t a New Testament theme to discuss the question of instrumental music, for I presume that everybody who knows anything about it at all knows that there is not a word said in the entire New Testament about it. If that statement be true, it ought to forever

settle the matter to all those who have subscribed to the New Testament as their rule of faith and practice. Now, of course, if a man has not done that, then the statement, true or false, would have but little to do with him.

G. P. Bowser (Christian), editor of the *Christian Echo*, evangelist, and probably the best informed Bible scholar in the colored brotherhood:

We believe that we are authorized to sing in the worship. (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16.) Hence to play an instrument is to add to God's expressed command. (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30: 5, 6; Rev. 22:18.) We are commanded to do things by the authority of Christ, and Christ never authorized the use of instrumental music. (*What We Believe And Why We Believe It*, page 12.)

QUESTIONS

1. Recite as many of the ten indictments as possible.
2. Name some objections to instrumental music in the worship.
3. Name some things instrumental music in the worship will do.
4. Can you name seven things instrumental music in the worship will not do?
5. How many scholars and preachers are listed as witnesses against instrumental music?
6. From how many different churches are they?
7. Can you name one from each church?
8. Can you give the gist of what each one said?

THE SONG SERVICE

Purpose of Song Service

The song service serves a two-fold purpose: First, by it we teach and admonish. Second, it gives every child of God an opportunity to audibly express praise unto God. When Christians assemble for worship, many of them come loaded with the cares and distractions of life. A reviving and inspiring song service will take their minds from these things and prepare them for the further acts of worship.

Preparation for Song Service

Almost everybody talks about the song service, but a very few actually do anything about it. First, every congregation should have an adequate supply of songbooks which are in good shape – books with the backs on them and all the leaves in them.

The singers should come together at least once a week to practice new songs and perfect old songs. This would enable the singers to become more efficient in sight singing and in harmonizing their voices. Every member of the church should be interested in the singing and should regularly attend the song practice. And though some do not know music, and some probably will never learn it, they can learn new songs by ear – by hearing and practicing them. It should not be necessary to point out that the regular service is not the time for song practice.

When possible, congregations should devote a week or more to the study of music. Singing schools, conducted by able teachers, would fill a great need in the various congregations. And money thus spent would be a good investment just as money spent for a protracted meeting. Good books, song practice, and singing schools, will greatly improve the singing in the average congregation.

The Song Leader

Since the song leader has such a conspicuous part in the public worship, and so much depends upon him for the success of the worship, it will not be amiss to discuss some of the essential qualifications which he should possess.

"The first and most essential qualification of a song leader is, that he must be a loyal and faithful Christian. If he is not a Christian, of course he is disqualified for any public service in the church. Although he may be a good man, morally speaking, and have a good name as an upright citizen in the community, still he is not eligible for public leadership in the church of the Lord. He may have a good voice, a pleasing personality, and the ability to direct the singing in a very pleasing and dignified manner, yet, if his life is out of harmony with the teaching of the New Testament, he is still disqualified to direct worship in the house of God." (Tillit S. Teddlie, noted gospel song writer, song director and gospel preacher, *Gospel Broadcast*, 2-26-42, page 10.)

Being a public servant, the song leader should have a good report within and without the church. (Acts 6:3.)

"Much of the success of any church work depends greatly on the song leader and his ability to select appropriate songs. This necessitates a knowledge of the different songs, the keys in which they are written, the sentiment of the words, and the ability to effectively translate these songs into living beauty and power. If the song leader would confer with the preacher and learn the general theme of his sermon, it would enable him to select songs in harmony with the sermon and would make the entire service much more effective." (Tillit S. Teddlie, *Gospel Broadcast*, 2-5-42, page 13.)

Appropriate Songs

Song leaders should be very discriminating in their selections. They should not select songs merely for the rhythm they possess, but should carefully consider their wording and timeliness. He should select only songs that are spiritual and scriptural. A song may be sweet in sentiment and yet not be spiritual and scriptural.

Among such songs are “My Country ’Tis of Thee,” “Home, Sweet Home,” and “Swanee River.” But there are occasions when these sweet songs are appropriate. Then, too, a song may be spiritual and scriptural and yet not be appropriate. Who has not heard the song director, on a bright Sunday morning, sing the invitation song, “O Why Not Tonight?” “What a Friend We Have In Jesus” is a scriptural song, but is wholly inappropriate for an invitation song.

Opening Songs

Since many of the members are loaded with the troubles, trials and temptations of the past week, such opening songs as “Worthy Art Thou,” and “I’ll Go, Gladly Go,” will help to lift them up. Every member should sing; but if some cannot sing, let them follow the words and get into the spirit of the service. None of the members – this includes the brethren – should hang out during the song service. If the people are slow in getting into the service, it might be well to have them stand and sing a selection. This will help to stop conversations and playing.

Songs Before Prayer

Prayer songs should be sung before, not after, prayer. Such songs as “Closer To Thee,” “Sweet Hour of Prayer,” and “What a Friend We Have In Jesus” will prepare the mind of the worshiper for the coming prayer.

Songs Before the Sermon

Songs used here should direct the mind to the sermon, not back to the prayer. Such songs as “I Love To Tell The Story,” and “Wonderful Words of Life” should be sung. In protracted meetings, however, a preparatory invitation song just before the sermon is of great value, especially the type that raises a question in the sinner’s mind; such as: “Are You Washed In the Blood of the Lamb?,” “Are You Ready For the Judgment Day?” and “What Will Your Answer Be?”

Invitation Songs

“Lord, I’m Coming Home,” “Softly and Tenderly,” “Come to the Feast,” “God Is Calling the Prodigal,” “Why Do You Wait,

Dear Brother,” “O Why Not Tonight,” and “Free Waters” are among the many songs which are appropriate for invitation songs.

There are times when the invitation should be lengthened; then such songs as “Almost Persuaded” and “Just As I Am” may be sung.

The invitation song should be a sort of climax and complement of the sermon, and, of all songs, should be sung with power and persuasion. It should not be necessary to state that new and unknown songs should not be selected for the invitation or any other part of the service.

Songs During Offering

Most colored congregations sing during the offering. It seems that such songs as “Leaning On the Everlasting Arms,” “Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus,” and “Jesus Paid It All” may be used for this occasion.

Songs Before Communion

Here long talks or “second sermons” should be avoided, on the one hand, and a big “rush” to get through, on the other. Neither is this a time for long prayers. Some timely songs for this occasion are: “Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross,” “Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed?,” “Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me,” “Bread of Heaven,” “The Old Rugged Cross,” “He Loves Me,” “When We Meet in Sweet Communion,” “Savior More Than Life to Me,” “Dark Was the Night and Cold the Ground.”

Closing Songs

These should not be doleful or draggy. They should give the impression that it was good for us to have been here. They should send us away full of hope and joy, strengthened for the coming week. Some appropriate songs are: “Blest Be the Tie,” “God Be With You,” “When We All Get to Heaven” and “We Shall See the King Some Day.”

Songs At Baptism

The singing here should be unhurried and varied. This is an important and solemn occasion – a marriage and a birth, a burial and a resurrection. “Happy Day,” “There Is a Fountain Filled With

Blood,” and “Are You Washed in the Blood of the Lamb?” are some of the timely songs that may be used during this service. The members should not run away without speaking words of encouragement to the newborn child of God.

Songs for Children

Songs in the young people’s classes should be selected with their interest in mind. Songs like "Where We'll Never Grow Old" are more appealing to adults than they are to children. Their minds are on the years of life ahead. "In the Service of My King," who is their "Lily of the Valley," they want to "Brighten the Corner Where You (They) Are" and walk in the "Heavenly Sunlight."

Special Songs—Solos, Duets, Quartets, Choruses

Sometimes the question is raised as to whether solos, duets, quartets or choruses are scriptural in the worship or in gospel meetings. All are agreed that congregational singing is scriptural; but we do not believe this to be the only scriptural way of singing. Special songs—solos and so forth—are all right if they are rendered for the right purpose. If they are rendered to teach, admonish or edify, then we see nothing wrong with them. Almost anything, of course, can be abused. If such singing were rendered merely for show, or if congregational singing were ruled out, then it would most surely be wrong. Even congregational singing, rendered for show, is wrong.

In 1 Cor. 14:26, Paul says: "How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying."

We are justified ... in inferring from the scripture quoted above that one is authorized to sing a solo, or a limited number, a quartet, etc., if such is done unto edification. No thoughtful person would object to a brother's reading a psalm, if done to edify those who listen, and if it is all right to read it, there is, then, nothing wrong in singing it for the same purpose.

Some of the songs that are commonly sung in the churches of Christ, are so written that only a part of the congregation is expected to sing parts of them. Witness, 'Yield Not to Temptation.' Bass and tenor voices are expected to sing only the chorus. (Leslie G. Thomas, *Firm Foundation*, 11-11-41.)

Relative to this same question, Brother G. P. Bowser wrote:

The Scriptures do not give us a method of singing. In 1 Cor. 14:15, Paul says, 'I will sing with the spirit.' This might have been a solo. We can speak to ourselves in singing. Eph. 5:19. We teach and admonish one another in singing, whether it be a solo, duet, trio, quartet or the whole congregation. It is not the choir that is unscriptural, but the mechanical instrument of music. No worship should be had that would deprive each member from singing if he so desire. (*Christian Echo*, 3-20-44.)

Sir John Hawkins, noted specialist in the department of the history of music, wrote concerning this question:

With respect to the music of the Primitive church, though it consisted in the singing of psalms and hymns, yet was it performed in sundry different manners; that is to say, sometimes the psalms were sung by one person alone, the rest hearing with attention; sometimes they were sung by the whole assembly; sometimes alternately, the congregation being for that purpose divided into separate choirs; and, lastly, by one person, who repeated the first part of the verse, the rest joining in the close thereof. (*History of Music, Vol. I*, page 108.)

We shall close the discussion of this question with the following illuminating statement from Brother G. C. Brewer:

It is no violation of anything in the New Testament – rather, it is sanctioned by it – for one man to sing to the audience if he can thereby edify and admonish the audience. Nor is it wrong for two persons, four persons, or six persons together to stand before the assembly and admonish them with a song or speak to them through a hymn – provided always, of course, that the singers are themselves worshipers and that they are singing for the scriptural purpose, and provided, also, that they do not do all the singing and thereby take away the right and privilege that belongs to every Christian – to praise God in song.” (*The Model Church*, page 150.)

“The Song Critic”

This is the title of an article by Brother George W. Dehoff, brilliant writer and evangelist, that appeared in the *Gospel Advocate*, January 29, 1942, page 109. Since the number of song critics seems to be on the increase, and since some are not qualified for good song critics, either because of prejudice or for a lack of sufficient information, Brother Dehoff’s article is probably more needed today than when first published. The following lengthy quotation is from this timely article.

Since we teach by singing, we need to be increasingly careful to see that the correct sentiment is put across, the correct teaching done by the singing. It is possible, however, for one to get so straight he leans backward. I think there is now growing up among us a tendency that is not good. I hear preachers who know as little about singing as I do (and, brother, that is precious little) criticizing this song and that until one begins to wonder just what songs of the ones our fathers sang are going to be left. The usual excuse is: ‘It does not teach the truth; it leaves the wrong impression.’ Sometimes the song mentioned is in the exact words of the Scripture, and it would seem that instead of

changing the song the audience should be taught. A little study of figures of speech would help us all to understand songs – not to mention what a little more study of the Bible would do for us. I freely grant that an unscriptural or anti-scriptural song should be changed or left out of a book, but one should ponder well his words before suggesting that such be done. He should be certain that he is well acquainted with the various figures of speech and with the language of the Bible itself, lest he be found to fight against common sense and against the Bible.

Here are some examples of criticism I have heard: “Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior” has been criticized on the ground that it teaches sinners to pray for salvation. A blind man during the personal ministry of Christ used substantially these very words as he cried to the Lord. I never sing that song but that I think of that blind man and his helplessness and of how much we need the Lord’s help today. Those who are afraid it will drag them across a mourners’ bench can leave it off, but not I.

The very beautiful song, “Master, the Tempest is Raging,” was recently criticized on the ground that “Christ is not now asleep – He will not awaken and cry, ‘Peace, be still.’” Indeed! Shall we now stop reading the story to the audience lest the Holy Writ leave the wrong impression? I will both read and sing it. If a weak brother stumbles over that, he will have to get better informed.

The song, “Revive Us Again,” has been criticized on the ground that the fourth line (in some books) says, “May each soul be rekindled with fire from above.” This is thought to teach the direct operation of the Holy Spirit. If we grant that this refers to the Holy Spirit, it does not say whether it is direct or

indirect. (We do still believe in the operation of the Holy Spirit, do we not?) I believe Jeremiah called God's word a 'fire,' and it is a 'fire from above.' If one is afraid the audience will miss the point, it would come with better grace to explain it to them than to jump up and create a scene about 'singing denominational error.' (Of course, some might object to the song, 'Revive us *again*,' on the ground that they have never been revived the first time.)

Lately I have heard the song, "Beulah Land," criticized by both a writer and a speaker. One called it 'the brewer's delight'; and another said, 'I have no idea what the writer meant, and I do not think the audience has.' Well, what of it? I did have an idea, and I have seen an audience that did ... I distinctly remember hearing it when I was five years old. I thought then it meant that just ahead of us was a wonderful land God has prepared, and when we die we go there. Later I learned that it is a figurative description (not too figurative, either) of God's people reaching heaven, based on the Old Testament story of Israel entering Canaan. There was corn and wine and milk and honey in Palestine, was there not? It is a type of heaven, is it not?

Personally, I doubt that I am well enough informed to be a very good song critic, and I am beginning to doubt the qualifications of some others. Brethren, let us be careful lest we get off on a tangent and waste valuable time—time that could be put to a better purpose.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the purpose of the song service?
2. Name some things that are essential in the preparation for song service.
3. What are some qualifications of a song leader?
4. What kind of songs should a song leader select?
5. Relate instances of songs being inappropriate.
6. Can you name some good opening songs?

7. Name a song that could be appropriately used before prayer.
8. Can you think of some songs that could be fittingly used before the sermon?
9. Name some appropriate invitation songs.
10. How should the invitation song be sung?
11. Should new or unknown songs be selected for the invitation?
12. Give a song that may be sung during the offering.
13. What are some timely songs that may be used before the communion?
14. What kind of songs should not be used for closing songs?
15. Name some songs that could properly be used for closing songs.
16. Can you think of some fitting songs for baptismal services?
17. Name some songs that may be more appealing to children.
18. What do you think of special songs in the song service of the worship or in gospel meetings?
19. Discuss Brother Dehoff's advice regarding "The Song Critic."