



Answering the Arguments

Instrumental Music in Worship (Part 4)

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“The New Testament does not specifically do away with the use of musical instruments in church worship.”

- Musical instruments in OT worship were specifically tied to the Levitical system of worship (1 Chron 23:2–5).
- Christ changed OT worship (John 4:21–24; cf. Eph 2:14–16).
- The NT does not need to specify every aspect of OT ceremony that has been altered (e.g., incense, washing).



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“The apostle Paul commands Christians to sing psalms, some of which necessarily include musical instruments.”

- Even if the Psalms authorized the use of musical instruments, we would need to use those specified (Ps 150:3–5).
- We cannot pick and choose elements (Ps 81:3; 118:27).
- The NT fulfillment of the OT necessarily limits certain elements of the Psalms (e.g., sacrifices, festivals, priesthood).



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“Heavenly worship includes the use of musical instruments; they must, then, be acceptable in congregational worship.”

- The musical instruments in Revelation should not be interpreted literally (5:8–10; 15:2–4; cf. 14:1–3; 1:1–2).
- A consistent literal interpretation of figurative language leads to absurd applications (e.g., incense, celibacy, robes).
- Heaven is not earth (e.g., marriage; Matt 22:30; cf. 1 Tim 4:3).



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“Musical instruments aid congregational singing and are therefore circumstantial and permissible.”

- Circumstantial elements of worship must facilitate a positive command/example (e.g., building, pews, pulpit, hymnal).
- Aids do not alter specified elements of worship (e.g., PB&J).
- Since God has specified singing, playing an instrument(s) adds to the command/example (1 Cor 14:15; Eph 5:19).



Answering the Arguments

“Even if the early church did not use musical instruments, worship is cultural and can change with the times.”

- While the means (i.e., expedients) sometimes change, we cannot alter the pattern of NT worship (John 4:23–24).
- God has specified singing (1 Cor 14:15; Eph 5:19).
- We deny the universal and timeless nature of divine authority when we add to what God has specified (Rev 22:18; cf. v. 19).





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