

EAST CAMBRIDGE CHURCH OF CHRIST

"A first century church in the 21st century"

Bible Reading Plan

Week 25

- Proverbs 29-31; *1 Thes 4*
- Son 1-3; Ps 72; *1 Thes 5*
- Son 4-6; *2 Thes 1*
- Son 7-8; Ps 127; *2 Thes 2*
- 1 Kg 5; 2 Chr 8; *2 Thes 3*

Leading Services

Announcements: Larry L.

Morning:

Song Leader: Tony Y.

Opening Prayer: Richard L.

Lord's Table: Brock G.

Asst By:

Closing Prayer: Mike V.

Evening:

Song Leader: Zack V.

Opening Prayer: Richard L.

Closing Prayer: Bill G.

Scripture Reading: Brok G.
(Zechariah 6.1-8)

Sermons

AM: Walk By Faith

PM: Why Obedience Pleases God



Singing Praises II

Continuance of last weeks article on singing praises to God...

Advocates for mechanical instruments in worship offer many arguments for their use. There are three major arguments for instrumental music:

First, God has not forbidden them. The premise that a thing is not forbidden unless God has said, "Thou shalt not" opens a flood gate of additions to God's truth. God has not forbidden serving cake and coke in the Lord's Supper. Shall we use these instead of the bread and the fruit of the vine, or in addition to them? God has not forbidden us to sprinkle either infants or adults in baptism. He has specified that it is a believer who may be baptized (Acts 8:36-37). He identified baptism as a "burial" (Romans 6:3-4). There are volumes and volumes of things God has not forbidden in His worship but that is no argument they thereby may be used. a liar" (Pro. 30:6).

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Singing praises in the Kingdom of God, part 2

There is recorded in Leviticus 10:1-2 an incident of two sons of Aaron which demonstrate the folly of doing something God has not forbidden. The passage reads, “And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took each of them his censer and put fire therein and laid incense thereon and offered strange fire before Jehovah which he had not commended them and there came forth fire from before Jehovah and devoured them and they died before the Lord.” God had not forbidden “strange fire,” He just had specified that the fire to be used in incense was to come from the altar of burnt offerings (Lev. 16:12). When Jeroboam changed the place of worship and the objects of worship for Israel, he made priests of whoever wished to serve.

This was a sin although God had not expressly forbidden such. He had simply designated that those who were of the tribe of Levi and of the sons of Aaron should serve. Although God said to Jesus, “Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek” (Psalms 110:4), Jesus could not serve as a priest on earth. The Hebrew writer said, “The priesthood being changed there is made of necessity a change also of law. For he of whom these things are said belongeth to another tribe, from which no man hath given attendance at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord hath sprung out of Judah, as to which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priests” (Heb. 7:12-14). God did not specifically say that none from Judah should serve as priests; He just said nothing about any from Judah serving and therefore those from Judah were eliminated. This included Jesus and shows why Jesus can never reign on the earth. Christ is a priest like Melchizedek. Melchizedek was both king and priest. Christ is both king and priest. He cannot serve as a priest on earth. Therefore He cannot reign as king on the earth for He serves as priest the same time He reigns as king.

Second, David used them. This argument assumes that because David was a man after God’s own heart, we accept anything that David did. But, just as the previous argument was built upon a false premise, so is this argument. If we can do anything David did, think of the consequences. David had multiple wives. Shall men today marry several women and offer justification for doing so by saying that David had them? God teaches us today that just as in the beginning there was one man and one woman for life, so we must honor that same arrangement today. Paul wrote, “Let each man have his own wife and let each woman have her own husband” (1 Cor. 7:2).

Notice that “each man” (which is singular) should have his “own wife” (which is singular). Elders who are overseers of the church and examples to the flock are to be “husbands of one wife” (1 Tim. 3:2). If elders are to be “examples to the flock” (1 Pet. 5:1-3), and they have one wife, how many should every other man who is married have? David kept the Sabbath (Exo. 20:8) but Christians are to allow no man to judge us in “respect ... of the Sabbath” (Col. 2:16). Since David was under the Law, he was under the same restriction every other Israelite was under. He had to abstain from eating pork, ham, or catfish. If one does something because David did it, then he is bound to do all the other things David was bound to do.

Third, instruments are not additions to worship — they are aids to worship. The argument goes that God hasn’t forbidden songbooks, lights, or four-part melody. We do not deny that aids are not necessarily forbidden to our worship, and we acknowledge that lights and songbooks do aid us. But do “instruments of music” fit the category of “just an aid” rather than an addition to worship? Instruments of music are not an aid to worship — they are additions.

When God commanded Noah to build an ark to preserve him, his family, and the creatures of the earth, He specified the kind of wood to be used in building that ark. He did not forbid the ark to be built of oak, ash, pine, or cypress. He just didn’t include them. God said He wanted gopher wood. And when God specified gopher wood, that excluded pine and oak. There are different kinds of music: instrumental and vocal. God specified what He wanted, He commanded, “Singing and making melody with your hearts to the Lord” (Eph. 5:19). Lights and song books are an aid to either vocal music or instrumental. Instruments constitute another kind of music. They are additions.

Christians in the first century understood the Holy Spirit’s instructions about praising God in song. It is the “fruit of our lips” which is offered as a sacrifice of praise to our God. So they sang — and so should Christians today.

- Jim McDonald