

God's Plan of Salvation:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16:16
3. Repent - Acts 2:38
4. Confess - Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized - Acts 22:16
6. Live faithfully - Revelation 2:10

Announcements:

Sick: Mr. Brown, Mr. Dowling, Mr. Garner, Mr. Hadley, Ms. Donna Law, Ms. Kim (Ashley Law's mother), Lamar Mathis, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Newsome, Mrs. Owens, Ms. Ward, Mr. Winns.

If you would be interested in any of the following ways to study the Bible, feel free to let us know:

- Home Bible Study - We will come into your home or other place you feel comfortable and study the Bible with you. Bible questions are welcome in these studies and we will seek to give a Bible answer.
- Correspondence courses - We will be glad to mail you a correspondence lesson that you can fill out and mail back to us and we will send you the next lesson.
- Call us with your Bible question - #503-707-6014.
- Visit our website: www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com
- Come and visit - We always strive to have good, practical Bible instruction at each of our assemblies.

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Acts of Worship - Part 3

By Derek Long

God teaches one way He desires us to worship Him today is through singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). Singing psalms to God is something the Bible authorizes us to do at times outside of an assembly of the local congregation (James 5:13). Singing is also something which is supposed to be a part of our collective worship when we come together (1 Corinthians 14:15). Unlike the acts of partaking of the Lord's Supper and giving of our means which are limited to a particular day of the week (the first day of the week - see Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2), singing is something Christians can do any day of the week. What sort of instruction does God's word give us when it comes to music in the worship of God today?

One of the things we need to notice about this act of worship is the type of music authorized is singing and not instrumental music in the New Testament. The New Testament passages which mention music in worship all mention singing and say nothing about playing an instrument (Matthew 26:30; Mark 14:26; Acts 16:25; Romans 15:9; 1 Corinthians 14:15; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 13:15; James 5:13). In order to attempt to justify the use of instrumental music in our worship to God, some cite Old Testament passages which speak of using instruments in worship to God (e.g., Psalm 150:3-5). Such an argument fails to recognize the fact the Old Testament law is no longer the law we live under today. Christ nailed the Old Law to the cross (Colossians 2:14-17). If one is going to go back and keep part of the Old Testament law, then one must go back and keep all of it (Galatians 5:3). If one goes back to the Old Testa-

ment law for instructions about the type of music to use in the worship of God today, then they also need to worship God with the animal sacrifices, etc. of the Old Testament. Since people recognize this is not right, then they should be able to understand why appealing to the Old Testament to authorize instrumental music in worship to God is not a valid argument. In the Old Testament, they used mechanical instruments of music in worship to God because God had commanded them to worship Him in that way (2 Chronicles 29:25). If we are going to worship God with mechanical instruments of music today, then we need to find a passage in the New Testament which teaches us to do so by command, approved apostolic example, or necessary inference. Other arguments which are sometimes used relate to the word “psalms” mentioned in Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 or the Greek word translated “making melody” in Ephesians 5:19. The argument made says, “Psalms had mechanical instruments accompanying them in the Old Testament and so we should use mechanical instruments to accompany them today,” or, “The word translated ‘making melody’ refers to using a mechanical instrument of music.” Let’s look briefly at these two arguments: 1. Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 both mention Psalms and it is true in the Old Testament psalms were sung with the accompaniment of mechanical instruments at times. However, Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 tells us what we are to do with the psalms. We are to be, “speaking to one another in psalms ... singing” (Ephesians 5:19, NKJV). Neither passage teaches us to play the psalms but they teach us to speak or sing the psalms. 2. If the Greek word translated “making melody” always included a mechanical instrument of music, the passage would teach every Christian must play a mechanical instrument of music and not just some of them. Second, the idea of the word is to pluck or twang. Yet the instrument to be plucked or twanged must be supplied by the passage. The passage tells us what is to be plucked or twanged. It is not a mechanical instrument but we are, “making melody in your heart” (Ephesians 5:19, NKJV). The “instrument,” if we want to use that term, used in our singing is the heart. A final argument we want to consider which people make to attempt to justify the use of mechanical instruments in worship is to say the verse does not say “do not use instrumental music.” This argument fails to recognize a fundamental rule about how to establish Bible authority. When God has told us what He wants in a certain area, He excludes

everything else in that category. For example, when God told Noah to, “Make yourself an ark of gopherwood” (Genesis 6:14, NKJV). God was specifying the type of wood Noah was to use. God did not have to tell Noah every type of tree Noah was not supposed to use. The same principle applies to Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16. When God says sing, He has told us the type of music He wants in worship (singing) and by doing so has forbidden every other form of music in our worship to Him.

Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 point out another point about our singing we want to notice. These passages teach our singing is reciprocal. It is something each and every person is to do. We understand that from the use of the phrase, “speaking to one another.” Something done to “one another” is something everyone is engaging in reciprocally. Hence, the use of choirs, quartets, special singing groups, solos, etc. is forbidden when it come to singing in our worship to God.

Our singing is directed both to God (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16) as well as toward one another (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). Singing allows us to express our praise to God, thank Him for the things He has done, etc. Singing also provides us a medium for, “teaching and admonishing one another” (Colossians 3:16, NKJV). Since our singing is not just about making a pretty sound but about instructing one another, it is important for us to focus upon the words we are saying. We need to make sure we understand what we are singing (1 Corinthians 14:15) and make sure what we are singing is in harmony with what the word of God teaches. Song leaders especially need to take notice of this and think about the songs they pick to lead the congregation in and make sure such songs teach truths instead of teaching error. We need to check the content of the songs we sing against the standard of God’s word just like we would a sermon we are listening to (Acts 17:11).

Hopefully these thoughts will help us to worship God in song acceptably!