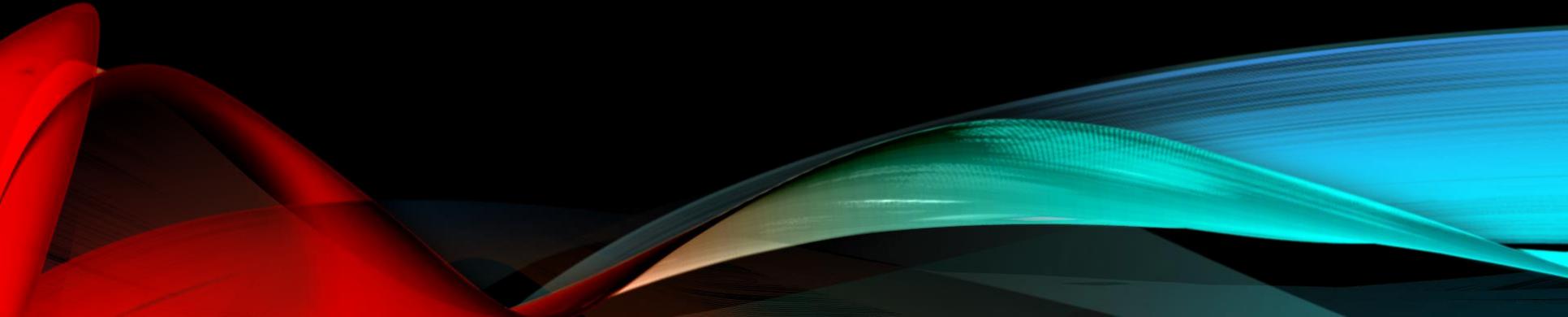




# SINGING IN NEW TESTAMENT WORSHIP

A Study of Music in the New Testament Church

WHY DO WE SING WITHOUT  
INSTRUMENTS?



# WHY DO WE SING?

- We desire “church restoration.”
  - We have a mindset to restore the church to its original purity and simplicity.
  - This is a biblical approach – 1 Cor. 4:6; Rev. 22:18-19; 2 Tim. 3:16-17
- The N.T. church did not use mechanical instruments!
- A Capella – “in the manner of the church.”

# WHY NO INSTRUMENTS? WHAT WE KNOW

- “The New Testament is silent about instruments in worship... In the early Church, the Apostle Paul refers to “psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs” that were to be sung in the gathering of Christians, with no mention of instruments. His admonition is to “sing and make melody in your hearts to the Lord” (Ephesians 5:19).”

(Eric Wyse, *The Power and Purpose of A Cappella Singing in Congregational Song*, Mar. 16, 2011, [www.treveccaworship.com](http://www.treveccaworship.com)).

# NO INSTRUMENTS? WHAT WE KNOW

- “...the early church leaders, including Ignatius of Antioch, and the martyr Origen, wrote about the Church singing both the Psalms and Odes of Solomon (early hymns of the Church) in detail, using words to describe the believer’s singing that are translated as *harmonious, in unison, singing with one voice, and in concord*; in all of those writings there is never indication of any instrumental accompaniment (Kavanaugh, p. 12)”

(Wyse)

# WHY NO INSTRUMENTS? WHAT WE KNOW

- Condemned by founders of denominations (i.e., Calvin, Wesley, etc.)
- “It is hundreds of years later (after the time of Christ, rp) until the earliest records indicate use of an organ in Western worship: a 10<sup>th</sup> century reference to an instrument that would have been of a very primitive design, bearing little resemblance to the organs in wide use by the Renaissance.” (Wyse)



## WHY NO INSTRUMENTS? WHAT WE ARE COMMANDED

- “Singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” – Eph. 5:19
- “Singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” – Col. 3:16
- All references to spiritual music used among Christians is *vocal* – Acts 16:25; 1 Cor. 14:15; Heb. 2:12; Jas. 5:13

# WHY NO INSTRUMENTS? IT IS PRESUMPTUOUS

- “Although the preponderance of music in the Church over the last two millennia has been sung unaccompanied, the Church has never taught that instruments are not allowed.” (Wyse)
- To act without God’s word as our authority is presumptuous – 1 Cor. 2:11-13

# 1 CORINTHIANS 2:11-13

- “For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”

HOW MUST WE SING TO GOD?



HOW MUST WE SING?  
“SPEAKING” TO ONE  
ANOTHER

- We “speak” from being...

**Worship to God is empty  
when the word is rejected**  
– Matt. 15:8-9

:16

- Verkl
- The word of God through the Spirit is God’s power for salvation – Heb. 4:12; Jas. 1:21
- Our singing is to be a reflection of the word of God living within and filling our lives!



## HOW MUST WE SING? TO TEACH AND ADMONISH

- Teach – instruct in the things of God
- Admonish – putting into mind the things of God
- Our songs must be scriptural in content!
- Must be coupled with thanksgiving – Eph. 5:20; Col. 3:17



# HOW MUST WE SING? PSALMS, HYMNS, SPIRITUAL SONGS

- Psalm – and O.T. psalm or composition having that character – Matt. 27:46; Psa. 22:1 ff.
- Hymn – a song of praise to God
- Spiritual song – a song or ode sung that is spiritual in nature



# HOW MUST WE SING? THROUGH THE USE OF OUR VOICES

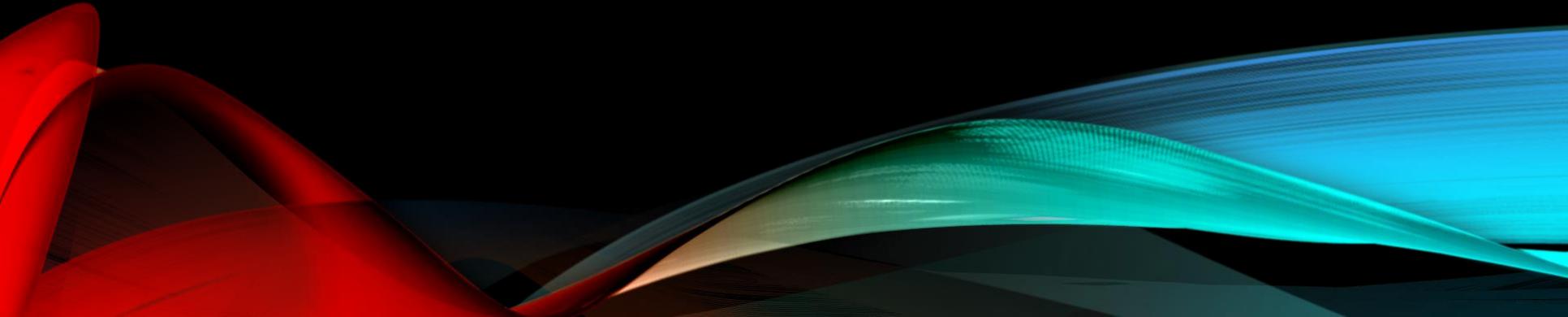
- “Speaking” by melodious vocalization of the inner heart.
- Our bodies and voices are our only *divinely made* means of praising God.
- Everyone is commanded to sing.
- Nothing should be done to hinder the use of our God-given voices!



# HOW MUST WE SING? MAKING MELODY IN OUR HEARTS

- Stresses total involvement of the individual.
- Colossians: “singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”
- Songs sung with attitudes of praise and love from the heart cannot help but edify!

WHICH OF THESE CAN THE  
INSTRUMENT FULFILL?



# DOES THE INSTRUMENT...

- Teach and admonish?
- Help focus our attention solely on God?
- Express the “word of God dwelling in our hearts.”
- Praise God in thankfulness?

**The Instrument can do  
none of these things!**

# THE INSTRUMENT IS A HINDRANCE

- “Quite an extraordinary thing takes place for the singers when the instrumentation to congregational song is removed. Rather than hearing only their own voice above the din of the accompaniment, the singers can hear the voices of the parishioners around them, and gain a profound sense of community by the joining of individual voices together in consort...”

# THE INSTRUMENT IS A HINDRANCE

- “...During the singing, what is heard is a splendid musical tapestry woven together by the melodious voice of the congregation; the quaver of an elderly voice, the bright and brash exuberance of a young child; the cry of grief in the grief-stricken adult; the boundless energy of the optimistic youth. When voices mingle together in song, singers cannot help but know and feel that they are not alone on this journey of life...

# THE INSTRUMENT IS A HINDRANCE

- “...Unfortunately, all of these textures and nuance of the human voice that can lead to a deep sense of assurance and hope can be drowned out by the cacophony of instrumentation in many of today’s contemporary services.” (Wyse).

# THE WORDS TAKE CENTER STAGE!

- “When voices alone resound with song, the words of the hymn take center stage...No longer is the mind and heart distracted by the power of the organ, the beat of the drum, the elegance of the piano glissando, or the fanfare of the trumpet. Rather, the singer can focus on the words transported on the line of the melody. Words sung dozens of times before to busy instrumentation suddenly come alive in the simplicity of the human call.” (Wyse)