

“Where’s the Piano?”

I. Introduction

A. Questions often arise related to commonalities in the religious world that are not authorized by Christ. Among these are questions about mechanical instruments of music in worship.

II. God Doesn’t Authorize It

- A. God commands Christians to worship Him and teach one another through singing. **Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16**
- B. God authorizes *congregational* singing. **1 Corinthians 14:15**
- C. Scripture also shows that we can worship God through singing as *individual* Christians. **Acts 16:25; James 5:13**
- D. Jesus and His disciples sang a hymn. **Matthew 26:30**
- E. Two New Testament passages reference singing in connection with OT prophecies. **Romans 15:9; Hebrews 2:12**
- F. While singing is clearly authorized, none of these passages authorize playing mechanical instruments of music in worship.

III. “Where Does It Say We Can’t?”

A. While nothing in the New Testament says we *can* use mechanical instruments in worship to God, a question often asked is, “where does it say we *can’t*?” This gets at a key element of Bible authority. When God *specifies* how He wants something done, this eliminates any other method of doing it. **Genesis 6:14; Matthew 26:26-29**

IV. “What About Songbooks, Overheads, Etc.?”

A. A follow up to this might be a question about things not *specifically* authorized by God, such as songbooks, overhead projectors, and pitch pipes. This gets at the distinction between specific and general authority, and the distinction between an *aid* (or expediency) in worshipping God, and *adding* to God’s pattern for worship. **Genesis 6:14; Ephesians 5:19**

V. “What About Old Testament Examples?”

A. Under the Law of Moses, God was worshipped with mechanical instruments of music. This does not authorize *Christians* to do this. **2 Chronicles 29:28; Ephesians 2:15**

VI. “What About Passages in Revelation?”

A. A few New Testament passages reference mechanical instruments. However, these do not refer to saints on earth using them in worship to God. *Context* must be considered. **Revelation 5:8; 14:2; 15:2; 1 Corinthians 13:1, 14:7-9**

VII. “Would God Oppose ‘Improving’ Our Worship?”

A. Some might also wonder how adding mechanical instruments of music could be a bad thing if it “improves” our worship. This is measuring improvement by man’s standard, rather than God’s. His pattern for worship *cannot* be improved upon. He is the One worship is aimed toward, and following His design is what pleases Him and truly edifies. **John 4:24; Colossians 2:23**

VIII. “Isn’t Sincerity What Matters?”

A. Even after noting these things, some might still treat the use of mechanical instruments of music as something that is not significant, given the need that we have to sing sincerely from the heart. It is true that we must worship God sincerely from the heart (i.e., “in spirit”), but it is also true that we must worship God according to the pattern He has given us (i.e., “in truth”). We must not neglect either side of this. **Colossians 3:16-17**