

to the Lord” (Colossians 3:16).

✿ “I will declare Your name to My brethren; in the midst of the congregation I will **sing** praise to you ” (Hebrews 2:12).

✿ “Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, **the fruit of our lips**, giving thanks to His name” (Hebrews 13:15).

✿ “Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him **sing** hymns.” (James 5:13).

These are the Scriptures which identify the kind of music God wants in worship in the assembly of the church. To add a mechanical instrument would be an addition to God’s word, which we are strictly forbidden to do, according to Revelation 22:18,19.

There are logical reasons why God did not include a mechanical instrument in His worship:

•✦ He wanted the praise of **His creation** — **our vocal chords** — not instruments we have created.

•✦ We can sing **anywhere, any time, under any circumstances**. If a mechanical instrument was required in order for our worship to be acceptable, there would be many

instances and situations in which worship would not be possible.

•✦ Each Christian must do each thing required for worship. Not all would **own** an instrument; not all would **know how to play**.

•✦ If each Christian was singing **and playing** an instrument, the noise would drown out the teaching of the words (Ephesians 5:19).

•✦ Another kind of “percussion instrument” being used frequently in worship these days is the clapping of the hands. This, too, is an impediment for being able to understand the words of the hymns.

Let us seek to please God in our worship by neither adding to nor taking from what He has asked.

“The churches of Christ salute you”
(Romans 16:16).

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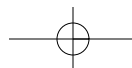
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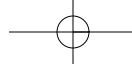
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What Kind of Music Does God Want in Worship?

J.C. Choate





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We humans are a strange lot. We like to do what *we* want to do, and *in the way we want to do it*. Even in spiritual matters, humans seem to be not much concerned about *what God wants!*

Through the years I have asked many believers in Christ why they use mechanical music in worship, since it is nowhere authorized in the New Testament. They always answer that it is because *they like it!* I have asked them if they can worship God acceptably without using a mechanical musical instrument, and they always admit that they can. This would mean that they believe God will accept their worship *with* mechanical music or *without* it.

But, consider this question. Do you know of any other part of worship that is optional? Is it equally acceptable to God if we pray, or if we don't? if we study His word, or if we read the newspaper? if we partake of the Lord's Supper, or if we omit that? if we

give of our salary for the work of the church, or if we keep all that we earn for ourselves?

Surely, if we know what the Bible teaches on these matters, we know that God has not left any part of His worship to our own choosing. He has clearly stated in His word what He wants us to do as we come into His presence. Jesus Himself specified in John 4:24 that those who worship God must worship Him in *spirit* — with the right attitude and heart — and in *truth* — according to the specifications in God's word. Nothing is left to our own choosing about such an important matter.

You would think that any believer in Christ, and especially those who really want to please Him, would think only in terms of doing what God has specified that He wants His people to do. *Why should we prefer, instead, to please and entertain ourselves?* How can we possibly think that God is happy with us if we put our own desires before His?

Many varied musical instruments were in use in pagan systems of worship, as well as in a limited way in Jewish worship (only outside the Temple itself), at the time Christ

began His church. To have continued the practice with which the entire population was already familiar would have seemed the natural thing to do. Is that what we find when we turn to the New Testament for instructions about how we are to worship God, as His family?

- ✿ “*And when they had **sung** a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives*” (Matthew 26:30; Mark 14:26).
- ✿ “*But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and **singing** hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them*” (Acts 16:26).
- ✿ “*For this reason I will confess to You among the Gentiles, and **sing** to Your name*” (Romans 15:9).
- ✿ “*... I will **sing** with the spirit and I will also sing with the understanding*” (1 Corinthians 14:15).
- ✿ “*Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, **singing** and making melody in your heart to the Lord*” (Ephesians 5:19).
- ✿ “*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, **singing** with grace in your hearts*”

