**Melody Of The Heart (Part 1)**

Prepared by Nathan L. Morrison for Sunday June 10th, 2018

Text: Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16

Intro

1. One of the many things that separates the church of Christ from Catholics, denominations, and the Christian Church is the practice of NOT using mechanical instruments in worship.
   1. The Catholics have used instrumental music for centuries, but denominations began in the 1800’s and the Christian Church split from the church of Christ in the late 1800’s over the issue.
2. A popular trend in recent years is churches of Christ adding instrumental music (for whatever their reasoning) and when they do it often makes headlines!
   1. 2006: Richland Hills church of Christ in Texas. “Nation’s Largest Church of Christ Adding Instrumental Service,” *The Christian Chronicle,* Dec. 12, 2006
   2. 2013: Heritage church of Christ in Texas. The elders at the Heritage church of Christ (Ft. Worth, TX) made an announcement (Banner on their website for brief time) that after careful study they were allowing instrumental music!
   3. Both cases stated their decision was to bring in more people for Christ!
3. Do we as the Lord’s church sing a cappella just to be different or is there a pattern to singing in worship and praise found in the new Testament?
4. Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16: Saints are commanded to sing, making melody from the heart *(G5567 psallo: to sing a hymn)* and singing with “thanksgiving” (NKJ: “Grace”).
   1. Saints are commanded to sing, making melody from the heart with grace (gratitude)!
5. Let us make an appeal for the case of a cappella praise from the Scriptures and from history itself! *(In Part 2 we will refute popular defenses made for mechanical instruments)*
6. An Appeal to the Scriptures for A Cappella Praise
   1. “Music” is a general term, but “Sing” (Vocal Music) & “Play” (Instrumental Music) are specific.
      1. If the New Testament says, "Make *music*," this general term authorizes both singing & playing.
      2. The general term “*music”* is not used in reference to worship in the New Testament.
      3. A cappella means: “without instrumental accompaniment” (Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary)
   2. Christ (John 14:26; 16:13; II Tim. 3:16-17) authorizes singing (Vocal Music):
      1. Mt. 26:30; Mk. 14:26: Christ and His disciples “sang a hymn.”
      2. Acts 16:25: Paul & Silas “sang praises” in prison.
      3. Rom. 15:6, 9: In giving thanks for salvation, men will “sing to Your name” (Ps. 18:49: Note: Many Psalms reference instruments, but he quotes from this one!)
      4. I Cor. 14:15: “I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.”
      5. Eph. 5:19: Christ ordained mutual, reciprocal, simultaneous action in song: “speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.” (In assembly, if it should say “play” then all would need to play an instrument!)
      6. Col. 3:16: We teach and admonish each other in songs, “singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” (In assembly, if it should say “play” then all would need to play an instrument!)
      7. Heb. 2:12: Christ is pictured with His people as together they “sing praise” (Quoted Ps. 22:22, why not a psalm that mentions instrumental music?)
      8. Heb. 13:15: We offer “a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.”
      9. Js. 5:13*: “*Is any merry? Let him sing praises” (NKJ: “sing psalms”). Note: In the KJV/NKJ: Not *play* psalms!
   3. Christ gave No Authority for instruments of music in worship.
      1. Jesus *(John 14:26; 16:13; II Tim. 3:16-17)* authorized singing by direct command (Col. 3:16), approved example (Paul in I Cor. 14:15), & necessary implication (Heb. 13:15)!
      2. No passage of N.T. Scripture authorizes the practice:
         1. Jesus, by the Holy Spirit *(Jn. 16:13)* did not use *general* or *specific* terms authorizing it.
         2. No *direct command*, no *approved example*, and no *necessary implication* can be found.
         3. Divine silence excludes, prohibits, and forbids the practice (Acts 15:24: “to whom we gave no instruction”).
   4. Some defend the practice with the Old Testament (more on that in Part 2), but the N.T. teaches if we keep part or break part of the Old Law we are guilty of all (Gal. 5:3-4; Js. 2:10)!
      1. OT: Burn Incense (Ex. 30:7-9) – NT: Silent
      2. OT: Light Lampstand (Ex. 40:4) – NT: Silent
      3. OT: Keep Sabbath Day (Deut. 5:12-15) – NT: Silent
      4. OT: Play Instruments (II Chron. 29:25) – NT: Silent
      5. OT: Sing (Ps. 30:4, 12) – NT: Sing! (Col. 3:16)
   5. Saints are commanded to sing, making the melody from the heart!
7. An Appeal to History for A Cappella Praise
   1. A Capella = Without instrumental accompaniment (Webster’s)
   2. A Capella = Latin for “in chapel style,” or “in the style of the church,” or “as is done in the church.” – History attests to the fact the early church did not use instruments!
      1. “As far as church history is concerned, the most telling confirmation of textual silence, ironically, is found in the very words, a cappella. Cappella is Latin for chapel or church. Taken in its literal meaning, the Italian a cappella means “in chapel style,” or “in the style of the church.” From the first century onward, vocal music was so distinctive from the instrumental music used in both pagan worship and private entertainment that it was uniquely known as music of the church – that is a cappella! So when we say that we sing a cappella, we are affirming what millions of believers over the centuries have affirmed – that the music of the church is distinctively vocal.” *(F. Lagard Smith, The Cultural Church. p. 201)*
   3. “Music,” *Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia,* p.1163
      1. “There is no record in the NT of the use of instruments in the musical worship of the church. In this regard, early believers followed the practice of the Hebrew synagogue music.”
   4. “The Music of Post-Biblical Judaism,” *The New Oxford History of Music, Vol. I,* p.135
      1. “The primitive Christian community held the same view, as we know from the apostolic and post-apostolic literature: instrumental music was thought unfit for religious services; the Christian sources are outspoken in their condemnation of instrumental performances. Originally, only song was considered worthy of direct approach to Divinity.”
   5. Eusebius (265-339) – *Eusebius, Commentary on Psalms 65:10-15*
      1. **Eusebius (265-339)** wrote, “Throughout the world – in cities, in villages and in the country – in all the churches of God the people of Christ, who have been chosen out of all the nations, send up, not to the native gods nor to demons but to the one God spoken of by the prophets, hymns and psalmody with a loud voice so that the sound of those singing can be heard by those standing outside.” *(Eusebius, Commentary on Psalms 65:10-15).*
   6. Niceta of Remesiana (335-414) – Niceta, bishop of Remesiania, On the Utility of Hymn Singing
      1. **Niceta of Remesiana (335-414)** wrote, “It is time that we must also present something from the New Testament in confirmation of the Old, lest one think that the office of psalmody is to be curtailed, inasmuch as many of the Old Law usages are now abolished. For what is carnal has been rejected, for example, circumcision, the Sabbath, sacrifices, discrimination in foods, trumpets, citharas, cymbals and tympana, all of which are understood to reside now in the bodily members of man and there better to sound…The other things which are spiritual – faith, piety, prayer, fasting, patience, chastity, praise – have been increased, not diminished.” *(Niceta, bishop of Remesiania, On the Utility of Hymn Singing)*
   7. Augustine (354-430) – *Epistle LV* (55)
      1. **Augustine (354-430)**, wrote, “The practice ought without hesitation to be maintained, especially when it can be defended from the Scriptures, as can the singing of hymns and psalms, since we have the example and precepts of the Lord himself and of the Apostles… When, then, is it not the proper time for the brethren gathered in church to sing what is holy…what could be done by Christian congregations that is better, what more beneficial, what more holy?” *(Epistle LV)*
   8. Pope Vitalian (approx. 670) – *American Encyclopedia*, Vol. 12, p. 688
      1. **Pope Vitalian (approx. 670).** “Pope Vitalian is related to have first introduced organs into some of the churches of Western Europe, about 670; but the earliest trustworthy account is that one sent as a present by the Greek emperor Constantine Copronymus to Pepin, king of the Franks, in 755” *(American Encyclopedia, Vol. 12, p. 688)*
      2. **Early Church Organs.** “All ecclesiastical references to organs before the 10th century are to be treated with caution, and even skepticism. All these organs were secular. One of the great unsolved puzzles of music history is how and why the organ came to be almost exclusively a church instrument in western Europe from about 900 to about 1200…The organ was never officially approved or even acknowledged in any known papal or pontifical document despite the traditional legend that Pope Vitalian (657-72) introduced it. Nor, for one reason or another, are any of the references to organs placed or used in church before the 9th century at all reliable.” *(Barbara Owen, et al. “Organ.” Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press. Web. 22 May, 2013.)*
   9. Greek Orthodox Church (1054) – Constantine Cavarnos, *Byzantine Sacred Music,* p.18
      1. **Greek Orthodox Church (1054):** “The execution of Byzantine church music by instruments, or even the accompaniment of sacred chanting by instruments was ruled out by the Eastern Fathers as being incompatible with the pure, solemn, spiritual character of the religion of Christ” *(Constantine Cavarnos, Byzantine Sacred Music, p.18)*
      2. **Greek Orthodox Church (1054):** “The Fathers of the Church in accordance with the example of the psalmodizing of our Savior and the holy Apostles, established that only vocal music be used in the churches and severely forbade instrumental music as being secular and hedonic, and in general as evoking pleasure without spiritual value.” *(G.I. Papadopoulos, A Historical Survey of Byzantine Ecclesiastical Music (in Greek), Athens, 1904. pp. 10-11)*
   10. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) – *Summa Theologica*, Part 2, Question 91, Article 2
       1. **Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)** wrote, “But the Church does not make use of musical instruments, such as harps and psaltries, in the divine praises, for fear of seeming to imitate the Jews.” *(Summa Theologica, Part 2, Question 91, Article 2)*
   11. Erasmus (1469-1536) – *Annotations on I Corinthians 14*
       1. **Erasmus (1469-1536)** wrote, “We have brought into our churches some kind of laborsome and theatrical music, an uproarious chattering of varied voices, which I doubt was ever heard in the theaters of the Greeks and Romans. The whole thing is a noisy racket of trumpets, crumhorns, shawms and sackbuts, and the human voices are vying with them. Obscene love songs are heard, such as harlots and minstrels dance to. One flocks together in church as if it were a theater, for the gratification of the ears.” *(Annotations on I Corinthians 14)*
   12. John Calvin (1509-1564) - (Commentary on Psalm 33:2)
       1. **John Calvin (1509-1564)** wrote, “Musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting up of lamps, the restoration of the other shadows of the law. The Papists, therefore, have foolishly borrowed this, as well as many other things, from the Jews. Men who are fond of outward pomp may delight in that noise; but the simplicity which God recommends to us by the apostle is far more pleasing to Him.” *(Commentary on Psalm 33:2)*
   13. John Wesley (1703-1792) – Adam Clarke, *Commentary, vol. IV.* Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1977. p. 684
       1. **John Wesley (1703-1791)** wrote, “I have no objection to instruments of music, in our chapels, provided they are neither heard nor seen.” *(Adam Clarke, Commentary, vol. IV. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1977. p. 684)*
   14. Adam Clarke (1762-1834) – Adam Clarke, *Commentary, vol. IV.* Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1977. p. 686
       1. **Adam Clarke (1762-1834)** wrote, “I say the same, though I think the expense of purchase had better be spared... I am an old man and an old minister, and I here declare that I never knew them [musical instruments] productive of any good in the worship of God, and have had reason to believe that they were productive of much evil. Music, as a science, I esteem and admire; but instruments of music in the house of God I abominate and abhor. This is the abuse of music, and here I register my protest against all such corruptions in the worship of the Author of Christianity” *(Adam Clarke, Commentary, vol. IV. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1977. p. 686)*
   15. Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-1892) – *The Treasury of David, Vol. 1.* Psalm 42:4
       1. **Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-1892)** wrote, “What a degradation to supplant the intelligent song of the whole congregation by the theatrical prettiness of a quartet, the refined niceties of a choir, or the blowing off of wind from inanimate bellows and pipes! We might as well pray by machinery as praise by it.” *(The Treasury of David, Vol. 1. Psalm 42:4)*
   16. J.W. McGarvey (1829-1911) – Glenn McCoy. *Return to the Old Paths.* Yorba Linda, CA: McCoy Publications, 2004. p. 231
       1. **J.W. McGarvey (1829-1911)** wrote, “I again repeat, that every man who bows to the authority of God’s word, must oppose the use of instrumental music in the church” *(Glenn McCoy. Return to the Old Paths. Yorba Linda, CA: McCoy Publications, 2004. p. 231)*
   17. Both the Scriptures and history are witness that the early church did NOT use instrumental music because they recognized it is NOT divinely authorized!

Conclusion:

1. All that we say and do must be according to the standard left for us under the authority of Christ!
   1. I Pet. 4:11: We must “Speak as the oracles of God” (NKJ). An oracle is a divine revelation.
      1. *G3051 logion [log-ee-on]:* a brief utterance (of God), a divine oracle (Thayer).
      2. We must speak where the Bible speaks, be silent where the Bible is silent.
      3. To act under Christ's authority, we must have instruction from Christ to authorize what we preach or practice.
   2. John 4:23-24: We worship God, not according to the flesh or our own desires, but in spirit and Truth!
      1. Not outward (physical), ritualistic worship, but sincere worship from the heart according to Truth! *(John 17:17: God’s word is truth!)*
   3. Col. 3:17: Whatever we do, we must do it under Christ’s authority, in the name of the Lord, in His authority!
      1. We must find *general* or *specific* terms in the Scriptures.
      2. We must find a passage providing *direct statement*, *approved example*, or *necessary implication.*
2. Saints today (as in 1st century) are commanded to sing, making melody from the heart, with thanksgiving!
3. If you are not a Christian, you need to be. Repent and be baptized!
4. If a Christian, do you live under His authority? Repent & be renewed.
5. Whatever your requests, let them be made known NOW while we stand & sing!