

A Case For A Cappella Singing

(The Assemblies of The Church Series - #3)
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Review

On each first day of the week, Christians should assemble to worship God in spirit and in truth.

When the NT church met to worship, they observed the Lord's Supper, prayed, gave, sang, read scripture, and studied the Word. They did all of that in a fitting and proper manner.

Music In Worship...

No one doubts that unaccompanied singing from the heart is acceptable as worship to God. Some, however, add or substitute instrumental music and teach that it is also acceptable worship.

Why We Sing Without Instruments (*a cappella*)

1. Singing is AUTHORIZED

Acts 16:25 Rom 15:9 1 Cor 14:15 Col 3:16 Eph 5:19 James 5:13

Q: Where does it say not to use instruments?

2 Extreme views of scriptural authority:

Anything not specifically forbidden is permitted. (would allow anything)

Anything not specifically authorized is forbidden. (would allow nothing)

A reasonable view of scriptural authority:

Any command authorizes only what it authorizes and has some exclusionary force.

Practical examples:

- A dinner invitation
- A pharmacist

Bible examples:

- Nadab and Abihu - Lev 10:1-2
- Moses - Num 20:6-12
- Saul - 1 Sam 10:8, 13:8-14

2. Singing is the historical Christian PRACTICE

a cappella is Latin, meaning "in the style of the chapel/church."

Instruments were first used in Christian worship about the 10th century, and were not commonly used in the Catholic Church until the 13th century. They still are not used in the Eastern (Orthodox) Church, and are a relatively recent addition to almost all Protestant churches.

Catholic Encyclopedia: "For almost a thousand years, Gregorian chant, without any instrumental or harmonic addition, was the only music used in connection with (worship)."

Clement of Alexandria, 200 AD: "We need one instrument: the peaceful word of adoration, not harps or drums or pipes or trumpets."

Thomas Aquinas, 1250 AD: "Our church does not use musical instruments, as harps and psalteries, to praise God."

Martin Luther, 1500's: "The organ in the worship of God is an ensign of Baal."

John Calvin, 1500's: "It (instrumental music) is no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting of tapers, or revival of other shadows of the Law."

John Wesley, 1700's: "I have no objection to the organ in our chapels provided it is neither seen nor heard."

Q: Weren't instruments used in the Old Testament?

3. Singing is PREFERABLE

- a cappella music binds music to language, which is essential for teaching and admonishing.
- a cappella music can not be overwhelmed by instruments.
- a cappella music is less likely to lead to entertainment and paid performers.
- a cappella music encourages each member's responsibility to raise his own voice in praise to God. Worship cannot be done by proxy.

4. Singing is CONSISTENT with our restoration plea

Q: Is this a "salvation" issue?

5. Singing UNIFIES Christians - adding instruments divides

1 Cor 1:10 Rom 14