

The Oologah Informer

January 1st, 2017

Worship
The Avenue of Song
Part 1 of 2
by Robin W. Haley

What an honor and privilege to be invited by our Lord to worship! **WORSHIP!** Even the word brings thoughts and attitudes of reverence and awe to mind as we engage in offering spiritual sacrifices to God through Christ. This present study will help us to understand the question of worship in song and the place the use of mechanical instruments occupies in that avenue of worship.

Worship in song is not merely a matter of "music." A commonly held error is that music is desired by God in His worship. To so contend is to teach too much. **TWO BASIC PRINCIPLES** which must be employed in every aspect of spiritual living are these: we dare not go beyond what God has authorized in His Word (1 Corinthians 4:6); and we are to practice only that which our Lord has authorized by His Word (Colossians 3:17). If we understand these two things, it will be an easy matter to conclude what God desires/commands for worship, especially with regard to our singing.

We next must look to **AUTHORITY** for singing in worship. Perhaps the two most explicit statements regarding our worship in song are Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16. As you read these you will see that God clearly said that for those who would worship Him in Spirit and Truth are to sing. Your Bible may read in the Ephesian passage "sing and make music" (New International Version). This is not what the Greek grammar here says nor teaches. This is an attempt by the "translators" to insert their doctrine into God's teaching. You ought to get a reliable translation of God's word (King James Version or American Standard Version, 1901). Paul did say "make melody" in this passage. Some have attempted to use the Greek language (and the ignorance of their audience) to justify the addition of mechanical instruments in these verses. We shall investigate some of their "arguments" presently.

First, let us consider some **GRAMMAR**. The pronouns employed in these verses indicate the reciprocal and reflexive nature of the actions of singing. This means: those present will all be singing and doing so together, to one another. No solos nor quartets are found in these passages! Search as men may, they will never find instructions in the New Testament for us to "play" in worship. The Greek language is a very precise language, and if "play" were indicated, it would have plainly stated so. What then may accompany the singing? Both of these passages tell us: the heart.

Address
13800 S. 4080 Rd on Hwy
169 South of Oologah
P.O. Box 527 Oologah, OK
74053 (918) 443-2025

www.oologahcofc.org
oologahcofc@oologahcofc.org

facebook.com/oologahchurchofchrist
facebook.com/biblewaymedia.org
Instagram.com/biblewaymedia

Service Times

Sunday

Bible Class: 9:30 A.M.
Worship: 10:30 A.M. & 5 P.M.

Wednesday

Bible Study: 7 P.M.

Preacher:

Russ Earl

AM Sermon:

Fundamentals of the Faith; part 12
Singing in Worship (**Hebrews 13:15**)

PM Sermon

Grace is available but, to who?

Sunday AM Bible Class:

Daniel – D. Jackson

Wednesday Bible Class:

John – R. Earl

In SEARCH of the Lord's Way

On Channel 6-2 Sundays @ 7:30 am

The Truth in Love on Channel 47

Sundays @ 8am

Oologah Podcast Network

Visit www.biblewaymedia.org for more info.

Some have attempted to force the use of a mechanical instrument by demanding the participle psallontes be translated "play" because the word can technically include "plucking the strings of a harp." There are some problems with this kind of "reasoning." If we may technically use this argument, we may use every technical argument. Consider: this word also can mean to snap the carpenter's chalk line; to twang the bowstring; to pluck hair from the head or beard. Shall we then worship God by shooting bows and arrows in the church building? Or shall we sing while snapping chalk lines to the glory of God? Why not stand in single-file and pull each other's hair while we crank out "Blessed Be The Tie That Binds"? Friends, it is the context which must decide what word will best fit in translation of the Greek terms employed. Do any of the previous suggestions sound reasonable? Shall we pluck the strings of an instrument with our hearts? Shall we snap strings, pull hair or shoot arrow with our hearts? Or, shall we make melody with (in) our hearts?

Another major difficulty that arises in this kind of thinking is this: since the grammar demands the unison of all those present, every worshipper would be obligated to play an instrument...and only a stringed one at that! What proves too much, proves to be too little to justify adding to God's word and worship!

What are some attempts to justify adding to God's Word? One common stab at justifying an unauthorized actions is the weak claim that "INSTRUMENTS ARE NOT SPECIFICALLY FORBIDDEN." This would allow any and every whim of the worshippers to enter into what God has prescribed! Think about it: neither candles, incense, animal sacrifices, instruments, dancing, or a whole host of immoral practices has not been specifically forbidden! Remember our first two principles? Let us be satisfied in doing what God has said to do.

Some claim that mechanical INSTRUMENTS ARE COMMANDED. Yet, from the giving of the Old Law to Moses (Exodus through Deuteronomy) there is not one single reference which authorizes its use under the Old Testament. Nor do we find it used nor referred to during the time of the Judges. Whence cometh it? It is first found as an addition made by King David (1 Chronicles 16:15). In every reference thereafter where mechanical instruments are mentioned, it is connected with what a King commanded, David always receiving the credit. What may have been allowed by God to take place under the Old Law does not authorize any practice for us today.

Part 2 next week.