

Both Can't Be Right

I would venture to say that most people would say, if asked, that instrumental music in worship has always been used in churches. The fact of the matter is, that is just the opposite. There is such abundant evidence to the contrary that, for one to continue to believe that, in the face of such evidence, is to be willingly ignorant.

Faithful Christians have always correctly argued that there is no authority for the use of instruments of music in the New Testament. Although the modern-day denominations proudly play their mechanical instruments in worship, that has not always been the case. In the past, they were opposed to their use, on the same basis for which we in the Lord's church here still oppose them – NO AUTHORITY IN THE SCRIPTURES!

The Roman Catholic church once opposed them but now use them (although today, the Greek Orthodox Catholic church still does not use them). Their own documents bear witness to this. From the Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 10, pg. 648-652 we read: "Although Josephus tells of the wonderful effects produced in the Temple by the use of instruments, the first Christians were of too spiritual a fibre to substitute lifeless instruments for or to use them to accompany the human voice."

From this same writing on pg. 657-688 we read: "For almost a thousand years Gregorian chant, without any instrumental or harmonic addition was the only music used in connection with the liturgy. The organ, in its primitive and rude form, was the first, and for a long time the sole, instrument used to accompany the chant. The church has never encouraged and at most only tolerated the use of instruments. She holds up as her ideal the unaccompanied chant, and polyphonic, a-capella style."

From Chambers Encyclopedia, Vol 7, p. 112 we read: "The organ is said to have been first introduced into church music by Pope Vitalian in 666. In 757, a great organ was sent as a present to Pepin by the Byzantine Emperor, Constantine, and placed in the church St. Corneille as Compiègne."

From John Calvin, in his Commentary on Psalms 33 we read: "Musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting of lamps, and 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 apostles is far more pleasing to him."

Martin Luther, founder of the Lutheran church said of them: “The organ in the worship is the insignia of Baal. The Roman Catholics borrowed it from the Jews.” (McClintock & Strong's Encyclopedia Volume VI, page 762)

Consider the following quotes from the book entitled “50 Years Among the Baptists” by David Benedict: “Staunch old Baptists in former times would as soon have tolerated the Pope of Rome in their pulpits as an organ in their galleries” (p. 283)

Charles Spurgeon, Baptist: “What a degradation to supplant the intelligent song of the whole congregation by the theatrical prettiness of a quartet, bellows, and pipes! We might as well pray by machinery as praise by it.” He then declared: “I would as soon pray to God with machinery as to sing to God with machinery.” In his commentary on Psalms 42, he wrote of instruments: “We do not need them. That would hinder rather than help our praise. Sing unto him. This is the sweetest and best music. No instrument is like the human voice.”

Adam Clark, Methodist: “I am an old man, and I here declare that I never knew them to be productive of any good in the worship of God, and have reason to believe that they are productive of much evil. Music as a science I esteem and admire, but instrumental music in the house of God I abominate and abhor. This is the abuse of music, and I here register my protest against all such corruption of the worship of the author of Christianity.

John Wesley, when asked his opinion of instruments of music being introduced into the chapels of the Methodists, said in his terse and powerful manner, 'I have no objections to instruments of music in our chapels, provided they are neither heard nor seen.'

Notice that THEY ONCE OPPOSED MECHANICAL INSTRUMENTS IN WORSHIP.

WERE THEY WRONG IN DOING SO?

Would any present-day member of a denominational church say that they were in error for such opposition?

IF NOT, DOES IT NOT MEAN THAT THEIR USE TODAY IS WRONG? Both can't be right!