

# **CHURCHES IN THE SHAPE OF SCRIPTURE**



**Special Sermon Series at Crosstown**



I lift up holy hands and sing  
Let the praises ring

**Let The Praises Ring**

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# A CAPPELLA MUSIC

- The Latin term “a cappella” (“without accompaniment”) means “in the style of the church”





# The “Why” Question

- We believe God is in charge of every element of worship, including the use of instruments in worship
  - In the Old Testament God was specific in His instructions concerning the type of music used in worship in both the Tabernacle and Temple

# The “Why” Question

- The NT does not authorize instrumental music in the worship assembly



# 1 Corinthians 14:15

“I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the mind also.”



## Colossians 3:15-16

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. <sup>16</sup> Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God



## **Ephesians 5:18-19**

**And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord.**



## Hebrews 13:15

Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name



## James 5:13

Is anyone among you suffering?  
*Then* he must pray. Is anyone  
cheerful? He is to sing praises.



# Everett Ferguson

**“The whole self (including the emotions) is involved in Christian worship, but the mind (reason) is to be in control.**

**Instrumental music can express feelings and emotions. Vocal music can express the will and intellect. The latter is better suited for the communion of spirit with Spirit.”**



# Everett Ferguson

**“In vocal music there is an immediate contact. In instrumental music there is an intermediary. The voice is much more a matter of one's self than any other gift of praise can be. Vocal music thus best corresponds to the nature of man's relationship to God.”**

***(A Cappella Music in the Public Worship of the Church)***

# The “Why” Question

- The NT does not authorize instrumental music in the worship
- The early church did not use instruments in worship

# The Record of History

- Pliny, Roman governor of Bithynia, reported around 110 A.D. that the Christians met on a stated day and “sang in alternate verses a hymn to Christ as to a God.”



# The History Record

- Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, writes, “Now all of you together become a choir so that being harmoniously in concord and receiving the key note from God in unison you may sing with one voice through Jesus Christ to the Father.”

# The History Record

- Justin Martyr in the middle of the second century refers to Jesus singing hymns in the midst of the apostles, and calls on Christians to “send up to him honors and hymns...by reason of faith in him.”

# The History Record

- At the end of the second century Clement of Alexandria summarizes the acts of worship: “Always giving thanks in all things to God through righteous hearing and divine reading, true inquiry, holy oblation, blessed prayer, praising, hymning, blessing, singing, such a soul is never separated from God at any time.”



# The History Record

- At the beginning of the third century Tertullian lists the acts of worship as “when the scriptures are read, or the psalms are chanted, or sermons are preached, or prayers are sent up.”

# The History Record

- A fragment of a third century Christian hymn has been found among the Oxyrhynchus Papyri. It contains notations for vocal rendition but none for instrumental accompaniment.

# The History Record

- Ambrose of Milan a preacher who converted Augustine, mused on the power of singing to stir souls: “Who could retain a grievance against the man with whom he had joined in singing before God? The singing of praise is the very bond of unity, when the whole people join in song.”



# Everett Ferguson

**“Instrumental music was abundantly available in the religious practices of the pagan cults and it was brought to the consciousness by reading the Old Testament and by remembering the temple rituals of the Jews. Where something was available and every assumption would seem to favor Christian adoption of the practice and yet there is complete evidence of the rejection of the practice in the post-apostolic period, there is every reason to look to a deliberate choice made in the apostolic age.**

## Everett Ferguson cont.

**“A person must have a good explanation in order to think that instruments were authorized in the New Testament, but were not used by Christians for many centuries after the New Testament.”**

***(A Cappella Music in the Public Worship of the Church)***

# The “Why” Question

- The Glory of Singing
  - Jesus own example (Matt. 26:30)
  - Teaching ministry (Col. 3:16)
  - Foretaste of heaven (Rev. 7:9-10; 14:3; 15:3)

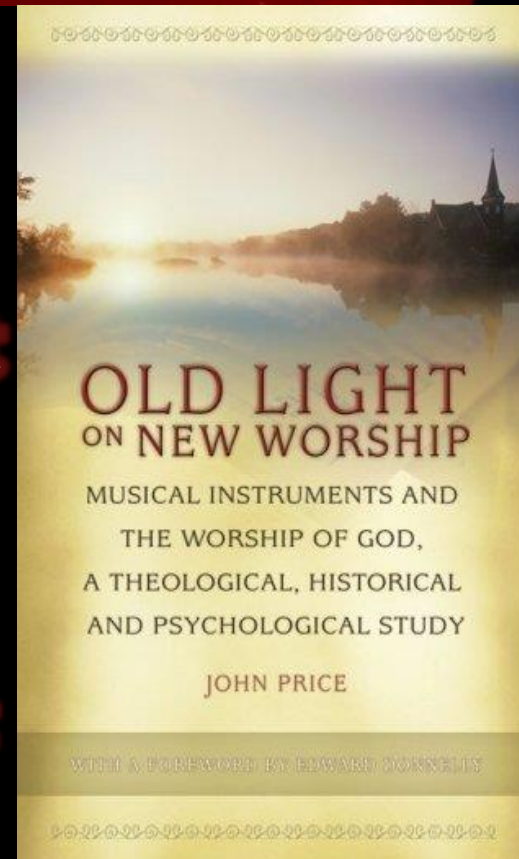


# Conclusion

**This is the position of Churches of Christ. We do not condemn those who differ with us on this point; we simply strive to follow the teaching of the N.T. and the practice of the early church and Christians for two thousand years in singing praise to the Lord with only the heart in the worship assembly of the church.**

# A Modern Day Restoration

- Restoring the beliefs and practices of the NT church
- John Price, a Reformed Baptist minister from New York
  - “As a result of this study...  
We have become convinced that we should no longer use any musical instrument in accompanying our congregational singing.”





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