

## What Must I Do To Be Saved?

- BELIEVE – ACTS 16:31
- REPENT – ACTS 17:30; LUKE 13:3
- CONFESS – ROMANS 10:10; I TIMOTHY 6:12
- BE BAPTIZED – ACTS 2:38; MARK 16:16
- BE FAITHFUL – REVELATION 2:10

### PRAYER LIST:

North Ridgeville church of Christ  
36364 Chestnut Ridge Road  
North Ridgeville, OH 44039

[www.nrcoc.net](http://www.nrcoc.net)

### *Times for Meeting*

Lord's Day

9:30 AM Bible Study (all ages)  
10:30 AM Worship

Wednesday

7:00 PM Bible Study (all ages)

#### *Elders*

Bruce Dean  
Mark Ullman

#### *Evangelist*

Steven Wallace

## *THE NORTH RIDGEVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST*

“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only,  
deceiving your own selves.” James 1:22

November 06, 2022

## **“Why We Oppose Adding Mechanical Instruments to Our Worship”**

Steven J. Wallace

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him” (Col. 3:16, 17).<sup>1</sup>

Why will a church that is “of Christ” oppose adding instruments to worship? Our opposition doesn’t spring from some arbitrary rule or tradition that emerged from a church leader. It is not because we cannot afford mechanical instruments. It is not because no one knows how to play instruments. Many talented musicians are members of the Lord’s church. Neither is our opposition based on some idea that we simply want to be different. So, what is the reason?

The root of the issue is found in what is referred to above by the apostle Paul. First, we can note from the text that our music stems from a rich indwelling of the word of Christ. All that we do must be based on His word. Second, our music doesn’t have the purpose of entertaining but rather of *teaching* and *admonishing*. Third, the nature of our music is spiritual rather than carnal. Fourth, our music is *singing*, not *humming* or *drumming*. God has clearly expressed the

kind of music we are to have. Fifth, our music is an expression of the grace lodged in our hearts that is directed to the Lord. It is, therefore "God-centered" rather than "man-focused." Sixth, it is to be authorized by the Lord, viz., *in the name of the Lord*.

To do something "in the name" of someone is to do it with the expressed permission of that person. In 1 Samuel 25 David sent ten young men to greet a man named Nabal "in my name" (1 Sam. 25:5). David instructed these young men what he wanted them to say (1 Sam. 25:6-8). Then we read, "So when David's young men came, they spoke to Nabal according to all these words in the name of David, and waited" (1 Sam. 25:9). To act in David's name was to perform what David commanded and authorized. The same is true with "the name of the Lord."

The word of Christ cannot dwell in an instrument such as a *harp*, but it can dwell in the *heart* of man. A mechanical instrument cannot teach or admonish. A mechanical instrument cannot express what is spiritual. A mechanical instrument cannot "sing." A mechanical instrument cannot express grace to the Lord. A mechanical instrument is not authorized anywhere in the New Testament as a part of worship.

There are ten passages in the New Testament that reveal the kind of music authorized in worship to God. Let's observe:

1. "And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives" (Matt. 26:30; see also Mk. 14:26). There was no playing or humming a hymn. Jesus and His disciples had only sung the hymn. The rest of these verses show us the kind of music Jesus participated in.
2. Acts 16:25, "But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them." As with prayer, God-approved a kind of music that can be taken with us wherever we go or whatever circumstance we find ourselves in. Paul and Silas were beaten unjustly and thrown in prison, but the Lord gave them *songs in the night*, and they prayed and sang songs to Him! What beautiful simplicity there is in keeping the commandments of the Lord!

3. Romans 15:9, "and that the Gentiles might glorify God for *His* mercy, as it is written: 'For this reason I will confess to You among the Gentiles, And sing to Your name.'" *One doesn't sing to God on an instrument any more than one confesses Him on one.*
4. 1 Corinthians 14:15, "What is *the conclusion* then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding." The keywords are "I will pray" and "I will sing." This is something we all can do, yet, "I will play" is not something everyone can do.
5. Ephesians 5:18-21, "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God."  
After Paul instructed the Ephesians to know the will of the Lord in Ephesians 5:17, he instructed them to be filled with Spirit rather than wine and to "speak" in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs "singing." A mechanical instrument cannot "speak" or "sing." Our music is defined here to be vocal, not mechanical. The only authorized instrument in our worship today is the heart, not the harp. This is a *one another* commandment. If it means to *play an instrument*, then every person is commanded to play to one another! Since it is a "one another" commandment, it also rules out a selected choir. One cannot let another sing for him any more than he can let another be baptized for him.
6. Colossians 3:16, 17 is quoted above and parallels Ephesians 5:19. Being "filled with the Spirit" is equivalent to "let the word of Christ dwell in you richly."
7. Hebrews 2:12 shows singing during the assembly.
8. Hebrews 13:15, "Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, giving thanks to His name." What is the sacrifice of praise? In praise, it comes not from our fingertips, but our lips.
9. James 5:13, "Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms." There is as much authority to pray with an instrument as there is to sing with one.