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God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Heb. 13:15)

- "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms" (James 5:13)

Not only do we have the Bible record of how the early church worshipped God in song, but secular history gives us additional information.

"Pope Vitalian is related to have first introduced organs into some churches of western Europe, about 670; but the earliest trustworthy account is that of the one sent as a present by the Greek emperor Constantine Copronymus to Pepin, king of the Franks, in 775." (The American Cyclopaedia, Vol. 12).

"The organ is said to have been first employed in the church during the time of Pope Vitalian I." [c. 666 a.d.] (New International Encyclopedia, Vol. 13, p. 446).

Even men who were responsible for the establishment of modern denominations urged their followers to reject the use of mechanical instruments in service to God.

John Calvin is invariably named with Martin Luther as the chief builders of Protestant Denominationalism. Calvin, architect of the Presbyterian church, said, "Musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting up 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 apostle is far more pleasing to Him." (Calvin's Commentary on the 33rd Psalm). Martin Luther made the simple statement that "The organ in the worship is the ensign of Baal."

John Wesley, founder of the Methodist church, said, "I have no objection to instruments of music in our chapels provided they are neither heard nor seen." (Adam Clarke's Commentary, Vol. 4, p. 686).

Adam Clarke was born in Ireland about 1762. His commentaries on the Bible have been one of the best selling reference books for over a century. While discussing the use of mechanical instruments in worship, he said, "I am an old man, and an old minister; and I here declare that I never knew them productive of any good in the worship of God; and have had reason to believe that they were productive of much evil. Music as a science, I esteem and admire; but instruments of music in the house of God I abominate and abhor. This is the abuse of music; and I register my protest against all such corruptions in the worship of the Author of Christianity." (Adam Clarke's Commentary, Vol. 4).

The ways of God and man are not the same (Isa. 55:8-9). Those who "speak as the oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11) will be content to sing as God has directed.

Credit: www.padfield.com ♦

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear and Learn - Rom. 10:17 m. 10:9-10 ; 1 Pet. 3:21 ; John 6:45; 17:3

Believe - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24

Repent - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30

Confess the Lord - Matt. 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:21

Be Baptized - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27

Continue in the Apostles' Teaching - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17

About the Hillcrest church of Christ

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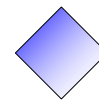


Schedule of Assembly

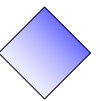
Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am
Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am
Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*

*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month

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The Voice of Truth



March 18, 2012

"The Law Was Lost"

By Jimmy Pettigrew

In 2 Kings 22 and 2 Chronicles 34, King Josiah discovered the book of the law. He gathered the people together and "Read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of Jehovah" (2 Chronicles 34:30). The King made a promise to keep all of God's commandments. The law of the Lord was lost but now found in the temple.

A much needed lesson today is for men to realize that the law of God can be REDISCOVERED but not REVISED! God's laws have long been settled (Psalm 119:89). "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass way" (Matthew 24:35). "...The scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35). Thus, man does not have the God-given liberty to tamper with them (Revelation 22:18-19).

The law of God is currently lost in many churches of Christ. How?

1) Mechanical instruments of music are allowed in the worship of the living God. IT IS NOT AUTHORIZED in worship taught in the New Testament (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). You will note that the action commanded is "SINGING". Not only is it specified as singing, but the things accomplished by the singing are named. The instrument can never "TEACH," "ADMONISH," or "SPEAK". In our worship we should strive to please God, not ourselves. And that means worshipping as He directs.

2) By accepting Denominational baptism. It is impossible for one to hear another gospel; the words of God mingled with the doctrines of men, and of it obtain the one faith (Ephesians 4:5). Baptism is for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), Paul was commanded to wash away his sins by submitting to baptism (Acts 22:16), that gets one into Christ (Galatians 3:27), that gets one into the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13), which is the church (Ephesians 1:22-23), the one church (Ephesians 4:4), where we are reconciled back to God (Ephesians 2:16), where Christ is the head and the Savior (Ephesians 5:23).

"If one is taught error on a dozen matters, and yet that religious group baptizes for the remission of sins, is the person, 'added to the Lord's church' at the same time he takes up membership in the particular denomination he's joining?" Related to this is the fact that in the preaching of the gospel, things of the kingdom are to be proclaimed (Acts 8:12). But, if one is taught a dozen errors regarding the kingdom, is his baptism somehow still proper in the sight of God? I THINK NOT! You cannot be taught incorrectly and baptized correctly. Nor can you do something for the wrong reason and get the right results.

3) Saying denominations have New Testament Christians within their ranks and should be fellowshiped. First division has always been condemned by God. The very word DENOMINATION means a named or designated division. But this is in direct conflict with Jesus' prayer (John 17:22). Unity was God's aim and His desire. Likewise, denominationalism is in direct conflict with Paul's statement to the church of Christ in Corinth (1 Corinthians 1:10). Here is a passage that says denominations are not even to exist. The Bible clearly reveals that division is condemned by the Judge of this universe.

False doctrine is also condemned by God (Romans 16:17-18). John also spoke the words of God when he warned us that, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 9-11). Division is condemned, false doctrine is condemned, those that teach these false doctrines are to be rejected (Titus 3:10-11) and not fellowshiped (Ephesians 5:11). So where does this leave the "Denominations"? I think the answer is plain to all.

The churches which practice and believe these things and many other far off ideas have lost the "LAW"! ♦

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“God Did Not Get Distracted!”

By Jarrod Jacobs

This may seem like a strange title for an article, but I believe it is a good reminder to those of us who are interested in Bible study and learning the truth (**Jn. 17:17; II Tim. 2:15**). When we read the words of Christ, or the prophets, or the apostles in the Bible, please understand that they did not begin speaking on one subject, and then simply change their thoughts in “midstream” as it were, and start talking about something else! The books, paragraphs, and verses of the Bible have a context. There is a consistency in flow and context to the Bible! When respected, it opens up our understanding of God’s mind (**I Cor. 2:7-11; Eph. 3:4**).

Perhaps part of our problem in thinking God got “distracted” and switched subjects at times in mid-sentence comes from the chapter and verse divisions in the Bible. If we are not careful, we might find ourselves more reliant upon chapter and verse divisions than we ought to be. Let us remember that chapter divisions were made by men. In recent centuries, we know that Stephen Langton began in 1227 A.D. to devise our modern chapter divisions. The Wycliffe Bible (1382) was the first to have chapter divisions in it. Our verse divisions were also the invention of men. The current verse divisions were the work of a man named Robert Estienne (or Robert Stephanus) in the mid-1500’s. Beginning with the Geneva Bible, every Bible version has used these verse divisions.

Chapter and verse divisions literally divide the Bible into single sentences or phrases. While this certainly aids us in finding a certain thought, phrase, or teaching of God; the disadvantage is that it promotes the idea of thinking of the Bible as individual sentences or phrases, and lifting things from their context to teach “pet theories” rather than people recognizing complete paragraphs and complete thoughts in the Bible.

To lift a verse from its context results in being dishonest with the Bible itself. In studying the Bible, it demands that we respect all the Lord has said concerning a subject (**Ps. 119:160**), even though it is divided into chapters and verses. This is a warning that I need to heed as much as anyone! All of us need to listen to the Lord’s word and respect what has been revealed in the entire paragraphs, chapters, and books!

I am writing these things because I have observed folks who used individual verses to “prove” a certain point. Sadly, they essentially had no regard for the context of the

Scripture, and therefore used a passage in the wrong way. If they read a certain sentence or thought that they felt promoted their “pet theory” or false doctrine, then they used it in their own context rather than respecting the context in which the passage was found.

Some examples of this include using **John 3:16** as a “proof-text” that baptism is not necessary for salvation. When we fail to read the context of **John 3**, and see that Christ had talked about baptism back in **verses 3** and **5**, and instead simply read one verse alone, then folks fall for this false doctrine of salvation by “faith-only”! **Acts 16:31** (“*And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house*”) is used in a similar way. Without any respect for the verses before and after that enlighten us on what **verse 31** truly means, people have been duped by a false doctrine.

Another passage often taken out of context is **Matthew 7:1** (“*Judge not, that ye be not judged*”). To hear some talk, we might think Jesus said no one can judge anyone ever on anything. Yet, what happened to the context? When we respect the context, and supplement our study with parallel passages like **Luke 6:37-42** and **John 7:24**, we see a very different message being taught by Christ than the “popular” thinking!

Romans 10:13 (“*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*”) is also a popular verse that is taken out of context by men. To listen to some folks talk, we might think **Romans 10** ends at **verse 13**! This is not the case though. When we read **Romans 10:14-17**, and then supplement our study with **Acts 2:21-38** and **22:12-16**, we will have the true understanding for what it means to “*call upon the name of the Lord.*” It is quite different from the modern-day understanding of “calling,” that is for sure!

We could add many other passages to our list of passages misused, abused, and taken out of context by men. Our point is that God did not get “distracted” while inspiring the men to write (**II Pet. 1:20-21**). He did not inspire men to write on a certain subject, and in the middle of the context, throw “random” thoughts in for people to find like one would in a scavenger hunt!

A similar manner of misuse of the Scriptures occurs when folks read a verse, find a “key” word or thought they

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want to emphasize, and then use this verse as a “jumping off point” for their doctrine. This happens more often than perhaps we care to admit. As an example, go back to **John 3:16**, and imagine someone reading this and focusing on the word “gave” in the passage, and from this, developing an oral or written lesson on the need for people to give of their means for a certain work in the church. Such teaching based on **John 3:16** is being dishonest with the text! Christ was not distracted! He didn’t started talking to Nicodemus about God’s love and sacrifice, and the need for being born again, and then say, “Wait, that reminds me, let’s talk about giving money and time to me.”

Another example of this misuse of Scripture can be seen when folks read **Matthew 5:34** (“*But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God’s throne*”) and then apply this to the “swearing” or “affirming” which takes place in a court of law when one is asked to the witness stand! Please read the context of **Matthew 5** and supplement our study with **23:16-22**! Jesus is correcting the practices of folks who were following the hypocritical actions and traditions of the Pharisees rather than God’s word (**v. 17-20; 6:2, 4, 18**). Let us respect this context! Jesus was not talking about the practices of the

Instrumental Music In Worship

By David Padfield

It would be impossible to preach a sermon on “*The Use Of Instrumental Music In The New Testament Church.*” There is not one word in all the New Testament about Christians using mechanical instruments in worship to God.

Instrumental music was introduced into religious service by King David, nearly 450 years after the Israelites left Egypt (**1 Chron. 16**). The use of instrumental music in worship is mentioned about 36 times in the Old Testament, but not one single time in the New.

Some attempt to justify the use of instruments by saying, “David used it in the Old Testament.” While this is true, we are under the authority of King Jesus not King David! The New Covenant demands not only a change of the priesthood, but also a change of the law (**Heb. 7:12**). The First Covenant has been taken out of the way and nailed to the cross (**Col. 2:14**).

Nine out of nine times when we find what the early Christians did as far as music was concerned, the Bible says they sang. Thus, we do have a Bible pattern for

Pharisees, and then stopping in mid-thought to say, “By the way, I also don’t want you to swear when called to testify in U.S. Courtrooms.” Christ was not distracted when He spoke!

Many other examples could be given. Unfortunately, folks teach like this at times, and it does a disservice to the Scriptures. It is not right that we take a word or phrase from a context and essentially “run with it” to teach what we please! Where is the respect for the context? God was not distracted when he had the Bible written, neither should we get distracted when reading the Bible!

Please understand, this is not to say we cannot teach the truth from a single verse or paragraph in Scripture. We can. Our point is that the context of that verse must be respected when teaching others about it! God did not inspire men to write about one subject, and then in mid-sentence inspire them to start talking about something else! We cannot “cherry-pick” verses and place them within a context we want. We must respect the context in which these words and phrases are found! Friend, God did not get distracted; let us not get distracted!

Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com ♦

singing.

- “*And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives*” (**Matt. 26:30**)
- “*And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God*” (**Acts 16:25**)
- “*I will confess thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name*” (**Rom. 15:9**)
- “*I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also*” (**1 Cor. 14:15**)
- “*Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord*” (**Eph. 5:19**)
- “*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...*” (**Col. 3:16**)
- “*In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee*” (**Heb. 2:12**)
- “*By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to*

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