

## WORSHIP AND USING INSTRUMENTS OF MUSIC

### Background Information for the Teacher

Notes

#### Objectives:

1. The student can define worship and list four factors that make worship effective.
2. The student can list and explain five reasons why the use of instruments of music in worship to God is not in the plan God gave us for Christian worship.

#### Preparation:

1. Have blank sheets and pencils as necessary for the students to take the quiz over the last lesson.
2. Have copies of the worksheet for today's lesson.
3. Be prepared to use the board, an overhead, or the PowerPoint slides.

#### Theme:

Worship is a very important part of our life with God. Since He is the one we want to please with our worship, we need to do it exactly as He has told us to.

### Lesson Plan for Conducting the Class

#### Introduction: (about 10 minutes)

1. Check the roll and welcome visitors.
2. Have someone lead a prayer. (Hold the song for a little later.)
3. Report on the results of the test last week.
4. Hand out blank sheets of paper and pencils for the quiz. Give the students about three minutes to complete it. Remind them to put names at the top and bottom of each circle, to have an arrow with letters into each, and to include one Bible name for the circle on the right. They can grade their papers as follows: 25 points for drawing two large circles with dots in them; 15 points for putting little circles in one of the larger ones; 15 points each for the two arrows with F and FRB, 5 points each for "saved" at the top of each circle, "5 point each for the "view" at the bottom of each, and 5 points for a Bible name for the saved circle.
5. Today's lesson is about worship. This is a very hot topic in all churches. **Q:** What are some of the questions people ask today



about worship? (Some of the answers may be--New style or old style? Traditional or contemporary? Make it more entertaining? Use instruments of music? Raising hands?)

6. If we are going to talk with our friends about religious questions, the matter of worship will surely arise and we need to be prepared. One of the first things they will notice about our services when they visit is that we do not use instruments. Today's lesson should help you be ready to discuss such subjects.

Learning Experiences: (about 30 minutes)

(Hand out the Review/Notes sheets and ask the students to fill in the blanks as you present this lesson. You may also write key words or statements on the board or use PowerPoint or make transparencies from the PowerPoint slides. Since the students are filling in their worksheets, you will need to follow the text below fairly closely. You may wish to add some comments here and there and maybe ask questions occasionally, but you will need to stay close to the script so students can easily find the specific words to put in the blanks. You should have a filled in worksheet as a reference as you move through this lesson.)

The Greek word most commonly used for worship is rooted in the concept of “kissing the ground before” or bowing low before the object being worshipped. So worship means to offer a message of respect and submission. If we are not sending to God such a message when we seek to worship Him, we are not really worshipping at all.

Jesus used this word in John 4:23-24 while speaking to the woman at the well: “God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth.” God is a spirit being and He has given us a spirit “in His likeness.” So, Jesus says, worship should be a time when I send messages from my spirit, my inner being, to God, the Great Spirit. Again, if there is no message, there is no worship.

Since it is God we are trying to please with our worship, we should listen to what He says pleases Him and worship in that way. Even from the very first attempt at worship recorded in the Bible, Cain and Abel, it is clear that not all attempts to worship please God.

The Bible teaches that our worship should have four goals.

Thinking about these four words when we are worshipping God will help us to be sending Him the right messages.

- a. Have someone read 1 Corinthians 11:26. As we take the Lord's Supper we “proclaim” to those who observe us that we believe Jesus died and was raised and will come again. So our worship is a proclamation of our faith to the world around us. *Visual: Proclamation.*



When we go to worship while others are watching a ballgame, when we sing and they hear our song, when we take the communion, we are proclaiming that we believe in God and in Jesus and want them to join us in that faith.

- b. Have someone read Hebrews 13:15. As we offer God the fruit of our lips, the passage says, we are praising God, expressing to him our adoration for Him. So our second goal for worship is adoration. *Visual:* Adoration. As we sing, pray, observe the communion, and even when we listen to God's word and an explanation of it, we should be sending God a message of praise and adoration.
- c. Have someone read Ephesians 5:19. "Sing and make melody in your heart to the Lord." Our songs, then, are to be a communication "to the Lord." Sometimes we send Him our requests, sometimes we express our regret for our sins, sometimes we state our commitment to Him. Sending such messages should be in our minds when we pray, sing, take the communion, give and listen to God's word. So our third goal for worship is communication. *Visual:* Communication.
- d. 1 Corinthians 14:26. Paul says that everything we do in worship should "edify" the church. God has planned our worship so that when we are offering our messages to Him, we are also encouraging one another. As I come to worship, then, and as I pray and sing, I want to build up my brothers. The fourth goal for worship, then, is edification. *Visual:* Edification.

Notice that the first letters in the four words spell "PACE." *Visual:* PACE. Remember these four words and think about them when you are worshipping. This will help you to keep your mind on track and your thoughts directed properly to God. Notice, too, that entertaining ourselves is not one of the purposes for worship. Seeking to please ourselves is the very opposite of proper worship which requires us to please the one being worshipped.

Now sing a song like "We Praise Thee O God" or "Jesus Is Lord." Ask the class to think of the words carefully. Before singing the song, point out the meaning of some of the expressions in the song to help make them more meaningful as you sing. Make singing this song a real time of communication with God.

One of the questions we need to be ready to answer about our worship services is why we do not use instruments of music. Is it just our tradition? Is it to save money? Is it because of our



understanding of the teaching of the Bible? This lesson gives five reasons why we do not use instruments of music in our worship and these are all thoughts you could share with your friends when this subject comes up.

First, Christians must worship only as God has commanded. Q:

Can you think of a time in the Bible when someone's worship did not please God? (Cain, Golden Calf, the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 11.) Look at these other cases.

- a. Leviticus 10:1-2. Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, were priests who went into the tabernacle to offer incense. But, because they got the fire to burn the incense in a way different than God had told them, God struck them dead. The Bible calls their fire "strange fire" because they did brought into the worship something God had not told them to bring.
- b. Look also at King Saul. God said only priests could offer sacrifices, but because the priest, Samuel, was late, Saul took it on himself to offer the sacrifice. Again, because he went beyond what God commanded for worship, God was displeased and took the kingdom from Saul's family (1 Samuel 13:13).
- c. In the New Testament, the church in Corinth had started something different in celebrating the Lord's Supper. Paul told them they were "eating and drinking damnation" to themselves and that they should take the communion just as he had taught them (1 Corinthians 11:23-28).
- d. So, both from the Old and New Testaments we learn that we are to worship God only as God has commanded and we must refrain from adding to our ways to worship what He has not commanded.

Second, instrumental music in Christian worship is not commanded. Singing is commanded. Have someone read Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16. Some Old Testament verses speak of using instruments in the praise of God, but these are speaking of the type of worship when the people offered animals as sacrifices and burned incense, and rubbed blood on the horns of the altar. God wants Christians to worship only as He has commanded in the New Testament. He has commanded us to sing but has not commanded us to use instruments. We can sing in worship and know it is pleasing to God but we cannot use instruments with the same assurance.

Third, the church, when under apostolic direction, did not use instruments in worship. There is no mention in the scriptures of the use of instruments when the apostles and other inspired men were directing the worship. Church history is also clear



that no instruments were used in worship in the early church. The Jews and the pagans all around the early Christians used instruments in worship, but the early church did not. The very word “a cappella” means “as in the chapel” or “as in the church.” It was nearly a thousand years after the church began before instruments began to be used at all. If we are seeking to follow the New Testament plan for the church, then we will not use instruments.

Fourth, The command to sing excludes other types of music. When one in authority commands a specific action, other types of the same action are excluded. So when the command is given for one type of music, vocal, such a command excludes music of other types. Jesus, for example, says we are to use unleavened bread and grape juice to remember His body in the Lord’s Supper, he does not have to give a list of all the foods not to use. Telling us what to use excludes other foods. When the Jews were told to celebrate the Sabbath, God did not have to tell them the days not to hold special. So when God tells us to sing for music in Christian worship, we would be going beyond His instruction to add a different kind of music, even if we were trying to use it only to aid the singing.

Fifth, instruments have been the cause of division and departure when they have been used. Instruments were not used in Christian worship for over a thousand years and when they began to be introduced, they were opposed. Thomas Aquinas, the Catholic theologian opposed them in 1250 AD. The leaders of the Protestant Reformation, such as John Calvin and Martin Luther spoke against them. John Wesley, founder of the Methodist Church and Charles Spurgeon, famous Baptist preacher in London, opposed them. The question of instruments was a major factor in the division between the churches of Christ and the Christian church in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Those who seek to justify the instrument on the basis of its not being specifically forbidden in Christian worship, thus begin to use the approach of “whatever is not forbidden is acceptable,” and that brings in other unwarranted changes as well.

**Conclusion.** Those who seek to follow the plan for worship outlined in the New Testament, then, will have no trouble with this decision. Instruments were not commanded for Christian worship and were not used for over a thousand years. Adding them is divisive and often leads to other departures. One can sing unaccompanied and know for certain that such worship is pleasing to God for it has apostolic approval. One cannot use an instrument in worship with the same assurance.



### Application

1. The next time you take the Lord's Supper, use the four goals of worship to stimulate your thinking. Think PACE--proclaim, adore, communicate, and edify. Proclaim that you are one of those who has accepted Jesus' sacrifice and want everyone to know. Adore the God and His son who made your salvation reality. Communicate to God your sorrow for your sins and your commitment to do better in the coming week, and remember that as you partake of the Lord's Supper, you are edifying those around you by sharing with them in this remembrance of Jesus.
2. Make all of your worship experiences more meaningful by thinking more deeply and feeling more strongly.

### WORKSHEET

1. The Greek word most commonly used for worship is rooted in the concept of \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ or bowing low before the object being worshipped. So worship means to offer a \_\_\_\_\_ of respect and submission. If we are not sending such a message to God when we seek to \_\_\_\_\_ Him, we are not really worshipping Him at all.
3. John 4:24: God is \_\_\_\_\_ and those who worship Him must worship in \_\_\_\_\_ and in \_\_\_\_\_.
4. We are trying to please \_\_\_\_\_ with our worship and so should listen to what He says pleases Him in worship.
5. We should have four goals for our worship.
  6. 1 Corinthians 11:26-- \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Hebrews 13:15-- \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Ephesians 5:19-- \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. I Corinthians 14:26-- \_\_\_\_\_.
7. The first letters in each of the above words spells \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Five reasons not to use instruments in our worship to God are:
  - a. First, Christians must worship only as God has \_\_\_\_\_ . Here are three Bible cases that prove this: Nadab and Abihu offered \_\_\_\_\_ fire (Leviticus 10:1-2); King Saul offered the sacrifice when only priests



were commanded to do so (1 Samuel 13:13); and Paul condemned the church in \_\_\_\_\_ because they were not taking the Lord's Supper as he had commanded them.

- b. Second, instrumental music in Christian worship is not \_\_\_\_\_. We have commands to \_\_\_\_\_. We can sing in worship and know it \_\_\_\_\_ God but we cannot use instruments with the same \_\_\_\_\_.
- c. Third, the church, when under \_\_\_\_\_ direction, did not use instruments in worship. There is no mention in the scriptures of the use of \_\_\_\_\_ when the apostles and other inspired men were directing the worship. It was more than a \_\_\_\_\_ years after the church began before instruments began to be used at all.
- d. Fourth, the command to sing \_\_\_\_\_ other types of music. When, for example, Jesus says to use unleavened bread and grape juice in the Lord's supper, he does not have to give a list of all the \_\_\_\_\_ not to use. Telling us what to use, \_\_\_\_\_ other foods.
- e. Fifth, instruments have been the cause of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ when they have been used. Some of those who spoke against the use of instruments were Thomas Aquinas, John \_\_\_\_\_, Martin \_\_\_\_\_, John \_\_\_\_\_, and Charles Spurgeon. Those who seek to justify the use of the instrument on the basis of its not being specifically \_\_\_\_\_, begin to use the approach of "whatever is not forbidden is \_\_\_\_\_."



### QUIZ FOR THE FOLLOWING CLASS MEETING

1. The Greek work most commonly used for worship is rooted in the concept of \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ before the object of worship.
  
1. The four goals for our worship should be to
  - a. P \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. A \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. C \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. E \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. Four reasons not to use instruments in our worship to God are
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
  - d.

