

Fundamentals Of The Church
Mechanical Instruments In Worship
(II Ch 29:25)

INTRODUCTION

1. Good Morning
 - a. Greetings...
2. Series of lessons on the "Fundamentals Of The Church"
 - a. We are now looking at the "acts of worship."
 - b. Last week we looked at "singing in worship."
 - c. This morning let us look at "mechanical instruments in worship"
3. Mechanical Instruments
 - a. Why not just call it "instruments in worship?"
 - i. We are instructed by God under the Law of Christ to use an instrument when we sing in worship...the heart.
 1. **Ep 5:19** "speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody **in your heart** to the Lord"
 - ii. We are not instructed to use a mechanical instrument as we will see.
 - b. I am distinguishing between instrument of the heart and
4. Thus let us look at "Mechanical Instruments In Worship"

I. The Historicity Of Mechanical Instruments In Worship

A. Secular history

1. It is quit amusing to read about how old some of the oldest mechanical instruments are according to secular history.
 - i. The Divje Babe flute discovered in 1995 is said to be between 43,400 to 67,000 years old. (Slovenian Academy of Sciences (April 11, 1997), "Early Music", Science 276 (5310): 203–205)
 - a. There is much disputed as to whether or not it is a flute or not.
 - ii. " The earliest known handcrafted musical instrument has recently (2009) been found in the Hohle Fels cave, located in southwestern Germany in an area known as Swabia. The nearly complete flute was hollowed from the bone of a girffon vulture and measured about eight and a half inches (21.8 centimeters) long with five finger holes located along its length. Carbon dating and other dating methods indicate that this flute is more than 35,000 years old."
(<http://www.serenitybambooflutes.com/flute-history.html>)
2. As you can see even history cannot deny the fact that instruments have been around for a long time.

B. Biblical history

1. As mentioned last week we can see that Jubal was founder of the lyre and pipe.
 - i. **Gn 4:21** "His brother's name was Jubal. He was the father of all those who play the harp and flute."

- ii. Think maybe the Divje Babe flute was one of his?
 - a. Probably not as it would have been more sophisticated most likely.
 - b. Remember his brother Tubal-cain was the "forger of all instruments of bronze and iron."
 - 1. **Gn 4:22**
- 2. We see Laban discussing the lyre and tambourine.
 - i. **Gn 31:27** "Why did you flee away secretly, and steal away from me, and not tell me; for I might have sent you away with joy and songs, with timbrel and harp?"
- 3. It was an interracial part of Mosaic Law and worship.
 - i. **I Ch 25**
- 4. Now considering man has only been around for about 6,000 years we can see that there was not a great gap between mans creation and the invention of the mechanical instrument.
 - i. Adam to Abraham equals 20 generations adding up to 2,000 years.
 - a. Can be added biblically.
 - ii. Abraham to Jesus equals 55 generations adding up to 2,000 years.
 - a. Can be added secularly
 - iii. Jesus to present adds up to 2,000 years.
 - a. Thus you have approximately 6,000 years.
(<http://www.apologeticspress.org/apcontent.aspx?category=9&article=885>)

II. Excuses Used To Try & Justify The Use Of Mechanical Instruments

- A. There are many arguments for mechanical instruments
 - 1. I will go over the three most commonly used arguments.
 - i. The Bible doesn't say I can't use mechanical instruments.
 - a. Tertullian 160-220AD, spoke of those who contended that "the thing which is not forbidden is freely permitted."
(<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0304.htm>)
 - 1. Tertullian was opposed to such a thought.
 - b. Martin Luther stated "What is not against Scripture is for Scripture, and Scripture for it" (<http://www.christiancourier.com/articles/128-the-silence-of-the-scriptures-permissive-or-prohibitive>)
 - c. One man writes on this issue of silence of scripture, "an inherent fallacy in the CoC syllogism: (1) The Bible is silent re: the proposition that musical instruments are wrong; therefore the proposition musical instruments are wrong" must be prohibited also. (2) The Bible is silent on the fact that silence is prohibitive; therefore this "silence hermeneutic" is self-refuting. For if it is true it is false, and if it is false then it is still false. (<http://www.tektonics.org/af/cocmusic.html>)

- ii. The word "psalo" means with a mechanical instrument.
 - a. Strong's definition " 1 to pluck off, pull out. 2 to cause to vibrate by touching, to twang. 2A to touch or strike the chord, to twang the strings of a musical instrument so that they gently vibrate. 2B to play on a stringed instrument, to play, the harp, etc. 2C to sing to the music of the harp. 2D **in the NT to sing a hymn, to celebrate the praises of God in song.** (Strong, J. (1996). The exhaustive concordance of the Bible : Showing every word of the text of the common English version of the canonical books, and every occurrence of each word in regular order. (electronic ed.). Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship.) (emp. mine)
 - b. " Put another way, no lexicon teaches what Exclusion [those who argue for exclusively a cappella singing] commonly asserts, that psallo had completely changed its meaning in the first century. The closest that selected lexicons come is to say that the meaning in the New Testament might not demand accompaniment." (<http://oneinjesus.info/2009/07/instrumental-music-missing-more-than-music-by-danny-corbitt-psallo-and-such-like/>)
 - iii. The Psalms were meant to be sung with mechanical instruments.
 - a. Strong's definition is used which states " a set piece of music, i.e. a sacred ode (accompanied with the voice, harp or other instrument; a "psalm"); collectively, the book of the Psalms:" (Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright © 1994, 2003, 2006 Biblesoft, Inc. and International Bible Translators, Inc.)
 - b. **Ps 150** "Praise the LORD! Praise God in His sanctuary; Praise Him in His mighty firmament! 2 Praise Him for His mighty acts; Praise Him according to His excellent greatness! 3 Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; Praise Him with the lute and harp! 4 Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes! 5 Praise Him with loud cymbals; Praise Him with clashing cymbals! 6 Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD!"
 - c. Example of this can be found at "Musical Instruments & The Church" (http://www.thewordsofeternallife.com/musical_instruments.html)
- B. Examining the excuses used to try and justify mechanical instruments in worship
- 1. The Bible doesn't say I can't use mechanical instruments.
 - i. However a good question to ask one's self is "how has God dealt with people in the past who have done the same things?"
 - a. How about Nadab & Abihu, God didn't say they couldn't use profane fire.
 - 1. **Lv 10:1-2** "Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. 2 So fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD."

- b. Uzza & the ark of the covenant, God didn't say they couldn't use a new cart to bring the ark. Uzza died because they were bring it in a way that was not authorized, he should never have been there.
 - 1. **I Ch 13:7-10** "So they carried the ark of God on a **new cart** from the house of Abinadab, and Uzza and Ahio drove the cart. 8 Then David and all Israel played music before God with all their might, with singing, on harps, on stringed instruments, on tambourines, on cymbals, and with trumpets. 9 And when they came to Chidon's threshing floor, Uzza put out his hand to hold the ark, for the oxen stumbled. 10 Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against Uzza, and He struck him because he put his hand to the ark; and he died there before God."
 - 2. **Nu 4:15** "And when Aaron and his sons have finished covering the sanctuary and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, when the camp is set to go, then the sons of Kohath shall come to carry them; but **they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die**. "These are the things in the tabernacle of meeting which the sons of Kohath are to carry."
 - 3. **I Ch 15:12-13** "He said to them, "You are the heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites; sanctify yourselves, you and your brethren, that you may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel to the place I have prepared for it. 13 For because you did not do it the first time, the LORD our God broke out against us, because we did not consult Him about the proper order.""
- ii. We need common sense on this issue.
 - a. We don't apply this rule to any aspect of our lives except with God's Word.
 - 1. If I ask to borrow my neighbor's lawnmower and take his car too do you think the judge will accept my defense of he didn't say I couldn't?
 - b. Common sense my friends, common sense.
- 2. The word "psallo" means with a mechanical instrument.
 - i. There is no doubt that it had with the ability to mean accompanied by mechanical instrument.
 - a. However there has never been one credible lexicon that I have found that doesn't point out the fact that it clearly did not mean this in the N.T.
 - ii. "to sing songs of praise, with the **possible** implication of instrumental accompaniment (Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). Vol. 1: Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament : Based on semantic domains (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition.) (401). New York: United Bible societies.) [emphasis mine]

- iii. "primarily "to twitch, twang," then, "to play a stringed instrument with the fingers," and hence, in the Sept., "to sing with a harp, sing psalms," denotes, **in the NT**, "to sing a hymn, sing praise"" (Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W. (1996). Vol. 2: Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words (402). Nashville, TN: T. Nelson.) [emphasis mine]
 - iv. "1 to pluck off, pull out. 2 to cause to vibrate by touching, to twang. 2A to touch or strike the chord, to twang the strings of a musical instrument so that they gently vibrate. 2B to play on a stringed instrument, to play, the harp, etc. 2C to sing to the music of the harp. 2D **in the NT to sing** a hymn, to celebrate the praises of God in song." (Strong, J. (1996). The exhaustive concordance of the Bible : Showing every word of the text of the common English version of the canonical books, and every occurrence of each word in regular order. (electronic ed.). Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship.) [emphasis mine]
3. The Psalms were meant to be sung with mechanical instruments.
- i. This too is true (**Ps 150**) however it was not even being followed closely by the Jews during the time of Christ.
 - a. "music had sunk to the lowest regions of lascivious amusement." (<http://www.tektonics.org/af/cocmusic.html>)
 - ii. Even the word psalm had change in definition.
 - a. "Emphasis is given in v. 19 by the verbs "singing and making melody" (cf. Ps. 27:6). psállontes **does not now denote literally playing on a stringed instrument**, and the psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs hardly refer to different kinds of texts. In 1 Cor. 14:26 psalmós is a Christian song which the individual sings at worship." (Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1995). Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (1226). Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans.) [emphasis mine]
 - b. " sing praises, **make music with voice** (Ro 15:9; 1Co 14:15; Eph 5:19; Jas 5:13+)" (Swanson, J. (1997). Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains : Greek (New Testament) (electronic ed.). Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc.)
 - c. "a striking, twanging, [(Eur., al.)]; spec. a striking the chords of a musical instrument [(Pind., Aeschyl., a.)]; hence a pious song, a psalm, (Sept. chiefly for מְזַמֵּר), Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; the phrase ἔχειν ψαλμόν is used of one who **has it in his heart to sing** or recite a song of the sort" (Thayer, J. H. (1889). A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: Being Grimm's Wilke's Clavis Novi Testamenti (675). New York: Harper & Brothers.) [emphasis mine]
 - iii. It is evident that the word psalm did not "have" to mean sung with an instrument especially by the time of the N.T.

III. God's Thoughts On Mechanical Instruments In Worship

- A. God is a God of pattern and thus order
 1. **I Co 14:33** "For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints."
- B. God in the O.T. set forth a pattern for mechanical instruments & thus authorized them.
 1. **Nu 10:10** "Also in the day of your gladness, in your appointed feasts, and at the beginning of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; and they shall be a memorial for you before your God: I am the LORD your God."
 2. **II Ch 29:25** "And he stationed the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, with stringed instruments, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, of Gad the king's seer, and of Nathan the prophet; **for thus was the commandment of the LORD** by his prophets."
 3. **Ps 150** "Praise the LORD! Praise God in His sanctuary; Praise Him in His mighty firmament! 2 Praise Him for His mighty acts; Praise Him according to His excellent greatness! 3 Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; Praise Him with the lute and harp! 4 Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes! 5 Praise Him with loud cymbals; Praise Him with clashing cymbals! 6 Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD!"
- C. God in the N.T. set forth a pattern for singing w/o mechanical instruments & thus did not authorize them
 1. We never find once where God says use mechanical instruments.
 2. We never find once in the early church where mechanical instruments are used.
 - i. If God didn't say to use them, and He didn't, and if the early church did not use them and they didn't why would we?
 3. The pattern set forth by God was one of singing w/o mechanical instruments.
 - i. **Ac 16:25; Ro 15:9; I Co 14:15; Ep 5:19; Co 3:16; He 2:12; Ja 5:13; Rv 14:3; 15:3**

CONCLUSION

1. Brothers and sisters it is not by any means a matter of opinion that we are not to sing praises to God without mechanical instruments, it is a fact of sound biblical hermeneutics.
 - a. Let us worship as the holy Word of God says and how it says only.
2. Invitation
 - a. God's Plan of Salvation
 - i. Hear/Study God's Word **Ro 10:17; II Ti 2:15**
 - ii. Believe In Jesus As The Christ **Jn 3:16; 8:24**
 - iii. Repent Giving Your Life To Christ **Ac 17:30; Lk 24:47**
 - iv. Confess Jesus As Your Lord **Mt 10:32; Ro 10:9-10**
 - v. Be Immersed For The Forgiveness of Sins **Ac 2:38; 22:16**
 - vi. Strive For Perfection In Righteousness **Mt 5:48; I Jn 1:7**