

The Old Paths

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“Aids Or Additions?”

Jarrold Jacobs

The discussion and justification for instrumental music in the worship of the church is something that rears its head from time to time. Those in the denominational world take part in this unscriptural practice, and sadly we see those in the church of Christ who do not understand that instrumental music in the worship to God is a sin.

Seeing that this is true, I thought it would be helpful in our study to read a letter sent to me from a brother and a response I wrote to him on the subject of “aids and additions.” That is, what is the difference between an “aid” and an “addition” to the worship, especially as it applies to pitchpipes, songbooks, etc. and the mechanical instruments of music.

Also, since we are currently in a series concerning how to establish Bible authority, this letter certainly fits in our study. There is a difference between an “aid” and an “addition”. In other words, there are such things as expediencies that can be utilized by God’s people. Also, there are things that are not expedient!

The Letter To Me:

“I am in the midst of a class on Bible authority How do you answer the world on the use of pitch pipe, song books, and not

use an instrument in worship? In other words the difference between aid and addition?”

I have, what I believe the Bible teaches, but I would like to hear how others answer the same question.

Thank you”

My response:

Brother,

You write: “How do you answer the world on the use of pitch pipe, song books, and not use an instrument in worship? In other words the difference between aid and addition?”

I wish to give you some suggestions in answering this question if I may:

1) The pitchpipe/songbook/etc. are aids in the singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. They add nothing to the worship. When one uses a pitchpipe/songbook/etc. he is still simply singing praises to God. When one plays the piano, or other mechanical instruments, you have introduced another KIND of music.

2) One can use a pitchpipe/songbook/etc., or not use these things, and the result is still the same -- singing will be done. This cannot be said of one using the instrument. You cannot “use” or

“not use” the instrument and still have the playing of the instrument!

3) The use of a pitchpipe is used merely to obtain the pitch, and that before any singing is done. Instrumental music is used to carry the tune throughout the song.

4) To add the instrument to the worship is to add another ACTION to our worship (Playing). The Bible teaches us that our action is to SING praises to God, with our “heart” being the instrument (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19). The pitchpipe/songbook/etc. do not add another action in any way. (We do not “sing and songbook,” we sing! However, the parallel breaks down when one talks about “singing” and “playing an instrument”!)

5) Simply put, when one uses the pitchpipe/songbook/etc. singing, the thing commanded by the Lord, is still the only thing that is done. When instruments of music are used, a thing NOT commanded by the Lord is done. We are to make our appeal to what the Bible says, and not where it is silent!! (I Pet. 4:11; Col. 3:17) The Lord was silent as the tomb about the instruments of music!

The question is, “When is a thing an addition?” The answer is, when another element is added! When the instrument is used, another KIND of music has been obtained! Pitchpipes/songbooks/etc. do nothing in addition to what has already been commanded by the Lord. Thus, they are an “aid” and not an “addition”!

I hope this will help you.

Brotherly,
Jarrod Jacobs

THE ABUNDANT LIFE

Stan Adams, Hickory, NC

In John 10:10 Jesus said- "...I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." The life of a Christian is to be an abundant life. This does mean however, that our lives will always be filled with an abundance of material things as some teach. Jesus promised us that we will have the things necessary for our lives if we "seek the kingdom first" (Matt. 6:24). He also told us to pray in Matthew 6:11- "give us this day our daily bread." He also told us to not "lay up for ourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust corrupts and thieves break through and steal." He told us our treasure is to be in heaven (Matt. 6:19, 20). In the parable of the rich fool in Luke 12:15 Jesus taught that "a man's life does not consist in the abundance of things which he has." In verse 23, 24 of Luke 12 the Lord admonishes us not to fret over the necessary things of life. In all of these passages the Lord is telling us that earthly wealth holds little worth. True riches are found in spiritual things.

While it is true that we need a certain amount of goods in this life to be comfortable, it is not true that we should pursue them at the expense of service to the Lord. Too many have confused and twisted what Jesus said about an abundant life to fit their get rich schemes. Many religions today are built around a carnal concept of life.

The abundant life of a Christian consists of so many blessings. Ephesians 1:3 tells us that all spiritual blessings are in Christ.

Some of those blessings are:

- 1. Prayer-** we are able to take anything to the Lord in prayer with a hope of an answer. His ears are tuned to His children.
- 2. Love-** we are always loved, first by God (Jn. 3:16) and then by our brethren if we are faithful. Each brother and sister in Christ is interested in our spiritual destiny and is ready and willing to help us if we falter and encourage us when we do well.
- 3. Unity-** in the body of Christ we are blessed with unity as described in Eph. 4:4-6. We are surrounded by people who want to go to heaven and desire for us to go also.
- 4. Forgiveness-** the child of God is forgiven of sin when he seeks forgiveness and truly repents and confesses them (1 Jn. 1:9). He can pillow his head at night knowing he is forgiven.
- 5. Peace-** Phil. 4:7 tells us that we as Christians have a "peace that passes understanding that shall keep our hearts..."

6. Blessed assurance- if we walk in the light as He is in the light we have fellowship with God and the faithful (1 Jn. 1:7).

Finally we have hope (Heb. 6:19) that is an anchor of the soul and is sure and steadfast. We are getting ready to go home to heaven to be with God. No matter what happens to us in this life it pales in comparison to what we have awaiting us. These are only a few things that make our life truly abundant.

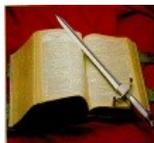
Editor's Note:

Our brother Stan Adams is scheduled to be here and hold a gospel meeting on September 8-13. I thought folks would like to read from his pen before he arrives. Let us get busy praying for Stan and his wife Carla in their travels, as well as pray for the meeting, invite others, and make plans to be here, ourselves!

It is not our job to make the message acceptable, but to make it available not to make them like it, but to be sure that they get it.

- Anon.

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- Sunday Worship - - - - - 10:45 a.m.
- Sunday Worship - - - - - 5:00 p.m.
- Wednesday Bible Study - - - - - 7:00 p.m.

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