

Conclusion...

Clearly, instrumental music *is* an addition to God's law of worship, not an aid. Aids will not add a type of music to the worship service if they truly are scriptural. The instrument not only adds a type of music, but also hinders the full expression of the worshiper's heart in singing songs of praise to God. The instrument is a crutch that the religious world needs to throw away, so they may walk in the ordinances of God's word!

NEWSWORTHY NOTES:

This section removed to preserve member's privacy

Radio Program: WJLS 99.5FM every Sunday at 9:00AM
Website: www.beckleychurch.com

The *Carriage Drive Messenger*
is published weekly by the
Carriage Drive church of Christ,
Beckley, WV
Editor: Bob Pulliam
Building Phone: 252-8108

TIMES OF SERVICES

Sunday: Bible Study 10:00am
Morning Worship 10:50am
Evening Worship 6:30pm
Wednesday: Bible Study 7:30pm

The Carriage Drive Messenger



Volume 4

March 29, 2009

Number 12

PITCH PIPES, TUNING FORKS, AND PIANOS

by Bob Pulliam

The question is often asked: "What is the difference between using a songbook, tuning fork or pitch pipe, as opposed to using a piano or organ? Aren't they all aids?" While this question is sometimes asked to sidetrack the issue (after all, if instrumental music is wrong, then my using a pitch pipe would not make such right), some honestly don't understand the difference between the use of a pitch pipe and a piano. For these I submit the following

The Songbook...

The songbook is held up as a parallel to the instrument by those who do not understand the reason for opposition to the instrument in worship. The instrument is not opposed simply because God did not mention it with regard to the worship of the church. If he had simply told us to make music in worship to God, we could use either of the two types of rendered music that exists: vocal or instrumental. The instrument is opposed because God specified vocal music. If he had wanted both, he would have made his command general ("make music"); or he would have specified

both types.

The songbook is neither vocal or instrumental music. Therefore, the songbook does not add to God's command. Instead, it facilitates vocal music. A similar situation is created by the command to go and preach the gospel to all creation (Mark 16:15). Jesus specified what to preach, but He did not say how to go. We may choose the expedience for travel, but not the message conveyed. In like manner, we may choose the expedience of unified singing (all using the same songbook), but we may not change the type of music specified (singing).

The songbook, then, is an expedient; but the instrument is a different kind of music than that which was specified by God.

The Pitch Pipe & Tuning Fork

Some would say, "Surely the pitch pipe and tuning fork are instruments and therefore fall into the same category as the piano or organ." There are two very important factors that should be considered when comparing pitch instruments with instrumental accompaniment.

- ① One single note is *not* "music". Note the following definition of music:

"1. the art and science of combining vocal or instrumental sounds or tones in varying melody, harmony, rhythm, and timbre, esp. so as to form structurally complete and emotionally expressive compositions 2. the sound or tones so arranged, or the arrangement of these 3. any rhythmic sequence of pleasing sounds..."

(Webster's New World Dictionary, p938)

A single tone tuning fork is incapable of making music. The pitch blown on the pitch pipe is not within the scope of the word "music". It is only a sound. If a group of Christians were to rent and meet in a public meeting place that already had a piano present, the striking of a single note on that piano to get the pitch could not be called instrumental "music".

Consider for a moment the illustration of Noah used two weeks ago. Noah could not substitute any other wood for gopher wood, nor could he add other types of wood. God told him what material to use in building the ark. But how would he fasten the wood together? Nails (in whatever form) do not add to the material nor substitute for the material used in building. Think of what would happen if you told a contractor to build a house of cedar for you, but he didn't use any fasteners because you didn't mention them! God left the means of fastening to Noah.

A single note is *not* "music" and therefore cannot be a substitute for, nor an addition to the command to "sing". It does not take part in the singing, but rather shows the leader *where* to *start* the singing (point being, the leader *hasn't started* the song when the note is blown or struck).

Obviously, the pitch pipe and tuning fork are not in the same class as instrumental accompaniment.

- ② All things done during a worship service are not necessarily recognized to be a part of that service. If you sneeze, is that a part of your worship to God? What if you have to blow your nose? Cross your legs? Feed the baby? Burp the baby?!? This is an obvious fact. And yet some contend: "Because the pitch pipe is present, and blown, during the assembly, it is a part of the worship service."

To say that because the pitch pipe, tuning fork or piano are present, they are therefore a part of the worship service, is absurd. The brethren meeting in the community center, mentioned earlier, would have to move the piano outside every time they wanted to worship God. When the child drops a set of keys, is the jingling sound a part of worship to God? I should think not!

Instrumental *accompaniment* (and I emphasize that word intentionally) plays each note that is sung (another type of *music*), leads in the speed and syncopation, and usually guides the singers in the amplitude of the volume.... all adding to God's command! There is a big difference between blowing my nose, blowing a note on a pitch pipe, and playing the piano during worship services!

(continued on next page...)

Song Leader Training Class

For who?... song leaders & men who want to learn how to lead songs

When?... Sunday, April 12, 3:30pm

Where?... Carriage Drive Meeting House