

Historical Quotes About Using Mechanical Instruments in Worship

"I have no objection to instruments of music in our worship, provided they are neither seen nor heard."
-- John Wesley, known as the founder of Methodism, quoted in *Adam Clarke's Commentary*, Vol. 4, p. 685.

"The organ in the worship is the insignia of Baal...The Roman Catholics borrowed it from the Jews." -- Martin Luther, *McClintock & Strong's Encyclopedia*, Volume VI, p. 762.

"Musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting 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 apostles is far more pleasing to him." -- John Calvin, Commentary on Psalm 33.

"But were it even evident, which it is not, either from this or any other place in the sacred writings, that instruments of music were prescribed by divine authority under the law, could this be adduced with any semblance of reason, that they ought to be used in Christian worship? No; the whole spirit, soul, and genius of the Christian religion are against this; and those who know the Church of God best, and what constitutes its genuine spiritual state, know that these things have been introduced as a substitute for the life and power of religion; and that where they prevail most, there is least of the power of Christianity. Away with such portentous baubles from the worship of that infinite Spirit who requires His followers to worship Him in spirit and truth, for to no such worship are these instruments friendly." - Adam Clarke (Methodist), *Adam Clarke's Commentary*, Vol. II, pp. 690-691.

"I am an old man, and I here declare that I never knew them to be productive of any good in the worship of God, and have reason to believe that they are productive of much evil. Music as a science I esteem and admire, but instrumental music in the house of God I abominate and abhor. This is the abuse of music, and I here register my protest against all such corruption of the worship of the author of Christianity." -- Adam Clarke, Methodist.

"Question 6. Is there any authority for instrumental music in the worship of God under the present dispensation? Answer. Not the least, only the singing of psalms and hymns and spiritual songs was appointed by the apostles; not a syllable is said in the New Testament in favor of instrumental music nor was it ever introduced into the Church until after the eighth century, after the Catholics had corrupted the simplicity of the gospel by their carnal inventions. It was not allowed in the Synagogues, the parish churches of the Jews, but was confined to the Temple service and was abolished with the rites of that dispensation." -- The Presbyterian Board of Publications, *Questions on the Confession of Faith and Form of Government of The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1842, p. 55.

"For years the Baptists fought the introduction of instrumental music into the churches...Installation of the organ brought serious difficulties in many churches." -- Wm. B. Posey (Baptist), *The Baptist Church In The Lower Mississippi Valley*.

"*Praise the Lord with the harp.* Israel was at school, and used childish things to help her to learn; but in these days when Jesus gives us spiritual food, one can make melody without strings and pipes. We do not need them. They would hinder rather than help our praise. Sing unto him. This is the sweetest and

best music. No instrument like the human voice." – Charles Spurgeon (Baptist), Commentary on Psalm 42:4. "What a degradation to supplant the intelligent song of the whole congregation by the theatrical prettiness of a quartet, bellows, and pipes! We might as well pray by machinery as praise by it." – Charles Spurgeon, Baptist (Spurgeon preached to about 20,000 people every Sunday for 20 years in the Metropolitan Baptist Tabernacle and mechanical instruments of music were never used in those services).

"We have brought into our churches certain operatic and theatrical music; such a confused, disorderly chattering of some words as I hardly think was ever in any of the Grecian or Roman theatres. The church rings with the noise of trumpets, pipes, and dulcimers; and human voices strive to bear their part with them. Men run to church as to a theatre, to have their ears tickled." -- Erasmus, Commentary on 1 Cor. 14:19.

"The first organ certainly known to exist and be used in a church was put in the cathedral at Aix-la-chapel by the German emperor, Charlemagne, who came to the throne in 768AD. It met with great opposition among the Romanists, especially among the monks, and that it made its way but slowly into common use. So great was the opposition even as late as the 16th century that it would have been abolished by the council of Trent but for the influence of the Emperor Ferdinand-. In the Greek church the organ never came into use... The Reform church discarded it; and though the church of Basel very early introduced it, it was in other places admitted only sparingly and after long hesitation." -- *Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia*, Vol. 2, p. 1702.

"The custom of organ accompaniment did not become general among Protestants until the eighteenth century." -- *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia*, 1953, Vol. 10, p. 257.

"So far as known to me, or I presume to you, I am the only 'preacher' in Kentucky of our brotherhood who has publicly advocated the propriety of employing instrumental music in some churches, and that the church of God in Midway is the only church that has yet made a decided effort to introduce it." -- L. L. Pinkerton, *American Christian Review*, 1860, as quoted by Cecil Willis in *W. W. Otey: Contender for the Faith*.

"Apostasy in music among 19th century churches that had endeavored to restore New Testament authority in worship and work began, in the main, following the Civil War In 1868. Ben Franklin guessed that there were ten thousand congregations, and not over fifty had used an instrument in worship." -- Earl West, *Search for the Ancient Order*, Vol. 2, pp. 80, 81.

"We have just received an extraordinary account of about 30,000 Methodists in England, withdrawing from that church and connexion, because the Conference disapproved of the introduction of instrumental music to the churches. The full account shall appear in our next. To us, backwoods Americans, this conduct of those seceders appears be the extreme of folly, and it argues that they have a greater taste for music, than they have for religion." -- Barton Stone, *Christian Messenger*, Vol. 3, No. 2, Dec. 1828, p. 48 in bound volume.

"If instrumental music was not part of early Christian worship, when did it become acceptable? Several reference works will help us see the progression of this practice among churches: "Pope Vitalian introduced an organ in the church in the seventh century to aid the singing but it was opposed and was removed." -- James Hasting, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*.

“The Greek word 'psallo' is applied among the Greeks of modern times exclusively to sacred music, which in the Eastern Church has never been any other than vocal, instrumental music being unknown in that church, as it was in the primitive church.” -- *McClintock & Strong*, Vol. 8, p. 739.

“Both sexes joined in singing, but instruments of every kind were prohibited for a long time.” -- Thomas Tapper, *Essentials of Music History*, p. 34.

“We have no real knowledge of the exact character of the music which formed a part of the religious devotion of the first Christian congregations. It was, however, purely vocal.” -- Frederic Louis Ritter, *History of Music from the Christian Era to the Present Time*, p. 28.

“There is no command in the New Testament, Greek or English, commanding the use of the instrument. Such a command would be entirely out of harmony with the New Testament.” -- J.H. Garrison, *Christian Church*.

“The early Christians refused to have anything to do with the instrumental music which they might have inherited from the ancient world.” -- Theodore Finney, *A History of Music*, 1947, p. 43.

For many more quotes like these, visit <http://www.bible.ca/H-music.htm>.