

# THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

September 3

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## Some “Outside” Thoughts on Instrumental Music in Worship

The New Testament church worshipped God in song and we, in following that pattern, do the same. We don’t use any mechanical instruments, we have no praise band, and we don’t even use a simple piano or organ to “help” us in our praise of God. The inspired apostle Paul wrote, *“speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord”* in a passage that is familiar to many individuals (Ephesians 5:19). This is one of a number of passages that authorize and command us to sing but says nothing about the use of any mechanical instrument.

Typically, those who are not members of the Lord’s church will strongly disagree with this logic and defend their denomination’s use of such perversions of worship. There are some denominational individuals, though, whose comments on instrumental music might come as a surprise. John Price, a denominational “pastor” wrote, “with no command, example, or any indication whatsoever from the Lord Jesus that He desires a musical instrument in His church, we have no warrant for their use.” In this same book (*Old Light on New Worship, 2005*) the author writes that we have “no authority” to bring pianos, organs, bands, or other instruments into church worship regardless of our preferences.

Wow! To know that these comments weren't made by a “church

of Christ preacher” should be very telling. God made it that the way we worship Him has little or nothing to do with how we sound or impress others but does have a great deal to do with our hearts and our focus on Him. The most beautiful thing in worship we can ever hear may not be voices blended in perfect harmony, but rather minds that our joined in serious, reverent worship of the Creator. All of us are capable of singing (even if we say we can’t!). God has given us that ability. Not all of us, however, have the ability to play an instrument and therein is a great piece of the puzzle as to why God has asked us to sing praises to His name and not use musical instruments.

Throughout history, including in the last few years, churches have prided themselves on their instrumental arrangements in worship to God. Some churches even go so far as to offer different “types” of musical worship so as to appeal to a greater number of people. But, that’s not our purpose as saints. As members of the Lord’s church, we must always focus ourselves on doing His will and following His commands. That’s what matters the most and that’s what we must always strive to do.

✍️ Leland Ping



## We Should Consider...

Being a Christian is not simply something that we do and never give thought to who we are or what we’re doing. Instead, we are instructed to be thoughtful about our godly service, fully aware of the importance of our work in His kingdom. This was the point of the inspired writer when he wrote:

***“For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls” (Hebrews 12:3).***

As with so many other passages in scripture, this single verse teaches us many valuable things. First, take a moment to “consider” the word “consider.” The Holy Spirit is making a deliberate request of saints to actively think about not only Jesus but also how His experiences compare with our own. This ought not to be a rare and passing thought for Christians, but rather a frequent part of our

regular thought process.

Second, the Holy Spirit advises us to consider “Him.” Jesus Christ is the very center of everything that we do, think, and say as servants of the most high God. If humanity would remember this, it would go a long way in clearing up the confusion that comes from false doctrine that has everything but Jesus as the center of our lives.

Third, the writer wants us to appreciate that just as Jesus endured, “hostility from sinners,” so will we. In fact, our Lord taught us that we will be “hated” by others (sinners) for the mere reason that we have pledged ourselves to serving Him (Matthew 10:22). No one is naïve enough to think that, armed with this knowledge, that the sufferings we endure will all of the sudden be more “pleasant,” but we ought to be able to take some level of comfort in knowing that we bear some similarity to our Savior (including His sufferings) as a result of our dedication to Him.

Fourth, the rationale for remembering Jesus is clearly defined by the writer. The goal of looking at Jesus and considering the Savior is to avoid both weariness and discouragement. One of the things that Christians need to always be aware of is the fact that Satan knows us and knows that one of his greatest tools is that of discouragement. That is, Satan doesn’t have to get you or me to “do” something wrong, as long as he can keep us from doing right. No wonder why the Holy Spirit saw fit to provide us with this warning!

✍️ Leland Ping



## What Is Repentance?

This may seem like a foolish question but I am convinced, as I observe the actions of many, that it is a question that needs to be answered. Thayer defines *metanoia* (the word translated *repentance*) as meaning “*a change of mind, as it appears to one who repents, of a purpose he has formed or of something he has done.*” Repentance is something that takes place within the heart or mind of an individual.

Repentance requires a change of behavior or action, but repentance is not just a change of action. A person may be a drunk and he

goes to the doctor and the doctor tells him that his liver is already damaged and that if he doesn’t quit drinking he will die in a few months. He is frightened by this news and quits drinking and lives many more years. He changed his behavior but never had a change of mind. Paul said, “*For godly sorrow worketh repentance...*” (2 Corinthians 7:10). He may be sorry, but it is not godly sorrow. He is sorry for the health consequences of his action. He is not sorry that he sinned against God.

Also, confession of sins is not repentance. It is true that if we are to receive forgiveness of our sins we must confess our sins (1 John 1:9), however one may acknowledge (confess) his sins and have no remorse for such. So many have the attitude, “Yeah I did it; so what?” Until we recognize that we have sinned against God and motivated by “godly sorrow” we have that change of mind we will never have the attitude expressed by David when he said, “*Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.*” (Psalm 51:2-4). Sin is against God. David had sinned against Bathsheba, against Uriah, against the nation, but he realized that the reason his action was so wrong was because it was against God. God “*now commandeth all men every where to repent*” (Acts 17:30).

✍️ James Hahn

### Belleville church of Christ

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#### Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study . . . . .	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship . . . . .	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship . . . . .	5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study . . . . .	7:00 p.m.

#### Evangelist

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