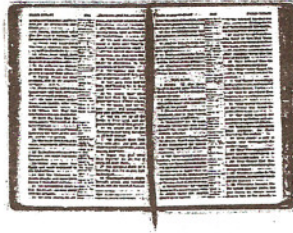


THE INSTRUCTOR



"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." (2 Timothy 3:16)

Volume 45

JULY, 2008

Number 7

CAN WE SEE THE BIBLE ALIKE?

The above question is often asked. Sometimes people will say, *"After all, we cannot see the Bible alike."* Can we? Let us study the question.

I. IF WE CAN UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE AT ALL, WE CAN UNDERSTAND IT ALIKE! Let us illustrate the principle with a math problem. We either understand the math problem or we misunderstand it. Eph. 5:17 says: "Wherefore be not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is." Can we understand it? Of course we can! In Acts 2:38-41 about 3,000 souls understood alike, received the word and were baptized.

II. IF WE CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT ALIKE, WHY DID:

A. Moses say: "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." (Dt. 29:29).

B. The Psalmist say: "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding un-

to the simple." (Psa. 119:130)

C. Isaiah say: "...And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." (40:4-5; also see 35:8).

D. Paul say: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Tim. 2:15). Also see Eph. 3:2-6; Rom. 10:17; etc.)

E. John say: "Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein..." (Rev. 1:3).

III. YES, WE CAN SEE THE BIBLE ALIKE IF WE:

A. Are not blinded by Satan (& error). (See 2 Cor. 4:3).

B. Are not blinded by prejudice ("colored glasses"). Read James 1:21 very carefully.

C. Approach it humbly, with the desire to understand the truth and to obey it from your heart when you learn it. (See 2 Thess. 2:9-12; Matt 5:6; 1 Pet. 2:2).

Do you sincerely desire to understand the Bible? (CRS)

THE INSTRUCTOR

(USPS # 581680)

Published monthly in the interest of truth and righteousness by the congregation of Christ, meeting at 4777 US Highway 431, Albertville, AL 35950.

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Second-class postage paid in
Albertville, AL 35950.

Editorial...

WHY WE SING AND DO NOT PLAY IN WORSHIP

(Conclusion)

In our previous studies we considered (and proved by the Scriptures) that it is Scriptural (i.e., authorized in the Scriptures) for Christians to sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs in our assemblies in worship to God. It was also proven by the Scriptures that the playing of mechanical instruments of music in our assemblies in worship to God is sinful.

Those who engage in a practice in worship (or service) to God, Scripturally (and logically) have an obligation to prove by the Scriptures that such is authorized by God. (See the teaching in Col. 3:17; Matthew 7:21-23; 2 John 9). Most (if not all) of those who play mechanical instruments of music in worship (or who justify those who do), do not feel an obligation to show authority from the Scriptures for their

practice. They insist that those who question, object to or oppose their practice show where the Scriptures condemn it.

Although scripturally (and logically) we were not obligated to do so, in the preceding pages of this study, without question, in the minds of those who love and seek the truth, we have done so.

About 600 or 700 hundred years or so, after the church was set up here on earth, mechanical instrumental music was introduced into worship because of an apostasy (or a departure from the truth, according to historians, as we have shown in prior studies.

During what was and is known as "the reformation movement" (when many denominations sprang up), many (probably most) of their leading scholars and preachers vigorously opposed and severely condemned the introduction and use of mechanical instrumental music in their worship. As time continued, most denominations, including their leaders, acquiesced and accepted the instruments in their worship without question.

During most of what we call "the restoration movement" (until 1859) many churches did not use mechanical instrumental music in their worship.

It is my understanding that L.L. Pinkerton introduced a mechanical instrument of music (a melodeon) into the worship of the church at Midway, Kentucky in about 1859. It was "at a time when churches questioned the use of musical instruments in worship." I understand that as late as Nov. 13, 1972, that melo-

deon was housed in the Midway Junior College Library in Midway, Kentucky. NOTE: It may still be housed there.

For nearly fifty years debates were conducted, various types of discussions were held and battles were fought over the introduction of mechanical instrumental music into the worship of Christians in their assemblies. These actions caused hard feelings and bitterness among brethren. Lines of fellowship were drawn, brethren were alienated and churches were divided. In some cases, brethren were "driven out" of buildings they helped pay for. Many brethren had to choose between "getting out" and violating their consciences. They chose to be true and faithful to God's word!

There was such a wide divergence of views (not only on instrumental music in worship, churches building and supporting human missionary societies, but also a number of other issues) between true churches of Christ and "Christian Churches" that they were listed as separate churches (or religious groups) when the religious census was taken a few years after the turn of the twentieth century (in about 1906 - 1908).

Since that time there has basically been the "Christian Church denomination" which has gone further and further into denominationalism and the true churches of Christ. A number of years ago the leaders of the "Christian Church" accepted the idea that it was a denomination and accepted its place as such a-

mong the denominational world. NOTE: There has been a few local "Christian Churches" that did not go near as far into religious error as most of them did and they have remained "independent" although they did accept the use of mechanical instrumental music in their worship and they have also embraced a number of other errors. Some of them have gone (and still go) by name "church of Christ."

In recent years a number of churches of Christ have apostatized from the truth in various points such as institutionalism, so-called "fellowship halls", "recreational projects", mechanical instrumental music in worship, partaking the "Lord's Supper" on other days than the "first day of the week", etc. I am not suggesting that every church that has accepted one of these points of error has necessarily accepted all of them or even any of the rest mentioned. It varies with different churches due to their congregational independence. The pace of these departures seems to be increasing.

I understand that in the second week end in February of 2007, the Richland Hills Church of Christ, in Richland Hills, TX, began using mechanical instrumental music in some of their worship assemblies. Rick Atchley was the "senior minister." It is my understanding that this church has more than 6,000 members. No doubt, some other congregations will follow their example into apostasy.

When I reflect on Richland Hills, I am reminded of Hosea 4:6-7 where the Lord said: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children. As they were increased, so they sinned against me: therefore will I change their glory into shame." NOTE: It was a sad and deplorable situation that prevailed in the days of Hosea. The same is true today with Richland Hills and all others who follow their example!

A CHALLENGE!

We **challenge** those who use mechanical instruments of music in their worship assemblies to show that Christ authorized such by showing:

1. A **precept** (that is, a statement or command) in the New Testament authorizing such, or

2. An **approved example** in the N. T. where Christians used such, or

3. Where it is **necessarily implied** in the N.T. that Christians did or may use such!

NOTE: Unless New Testament authority for such can be found, it is iniquitous (lawlessness)! Read & study carefully Matt. 7:21-23; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; John 16:13; 2 Pet. 1:3; Col.3:17; 1 Cor. 4:6; 2 John 9-11; Rev. 22:18-19; 1 John 3:4; James 1:25; 2:12.

ANOTHER CHALLENGE!

We hereby **challenge** any man who uses instrumental music in worship to defend it in a public debate. (CRS)

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>eastalbertvillechurchofchrist.com<

GOSPEL MEETINGS AT East Albertville,
Albertville, AL September 21-26, 2008. Regular times on Lord's day. 7pm each week day. Gary Kerr, Preaching. Come! Tell others!

GOSPEL MEETING at Walnut Ridge, AR
July 20-24, 2008. Carrol R. Sutton, preaching. Make plans to visit with us and please tell others!

SENTENCE SERMONS

Stretching the truth will always ruin it.

* * * * *

You will never get indigestion from swallowing your pride. In fact, it is good for you to do so.

* * * * *

It is good to go through the Bible, but it is better to allow the Bible to direct your life.

* * * * *

A fellow doesn't last long on what he has done. He must keep on delivering as he goes along.

* * * * *

Never test the depth of the water with both feet.

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