

## **VOICES FROM THE PAST ON INSTRUMENTS IN WORSHIP**

NOTE: All of the following quotes may be found in *INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN THE WORSHIP* by M.C. Kurfees, Nashville: Gospel Advocate Co., 1950.

"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's Cyclopaedia. Vol. VIII, p. 739, Kurfees, p. 153).

"Music in the churches is as ancient as the apostles, but instrumental music not so....The use of the instrumental, indeed, is much ancients, but not in church service....In the Western parts, the instrument, was not so much as known till the eight century; for the first organ that was ever seen in France was one sent as a present to King Pepin by Constantinus Copronymus, the Greek emperor....But, now it was only used in princes courts, and not yet brought into churches; nor was it ever received into the Greek churches, there being no mention of an organ in all their liturgies ancient or modern" (Joseph Bingham, Works, London Edition, Vol. 11, p. 482-484).

"The use of organs in churches is ascribed to Pope Vitalian (657-672). Constantine Copronymos sent an organ with other presents to King Pepin of France in 767. Charlemagne received one as a present from the Caliph Haroun al Rashid, and had it put up in the cathedral of Aix—la-Chapelle. The attitude of the churches toward the organ varies. It shared to some extent the fate of images except it never was an object of worship. . .The Greek Church disapproves the use of organs. The Latin Church introduced it pretty generally, but not without the protest of eminent men, so that even in the council of Trent (1545-1563) a motion was made, though not carried, to prohibit the organ at least in the mass. (History of the Christian Church, Philip Schaff, Vol. IV., p. 439, Kurfees p. 169).

"Our church does not use musical instruments, as harps and salteries, to praise God withal, that she may not seem to Judaize." [Thomas Aquinas (great catholic scholar). . . 13th century... quoted in Bingham's Antiquities, Vol. II, p. 483, London Edition, Kurfees 176).

"It is to be observed the church did not use organs in Thomas' time, whence, even to this day, the Church of Rome does not use them in the

Pope's presence. And truly it will appear that musical instruments are not to be suffered in the ecclesiastical offices we meet together to perform for the sake of receiving internal instruction from God, and so much the rather are they to be excluded, because God's internal discipline exceeds all human disciplines, which rejected this kind of instruments? (Cardinal Cajetan, 16th century, quoted in Girardeau's Instrumental Music, pp. 161-162, Kuffes, 176).

"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 in truth, for to no such worship, are those instruments friendly." (Adam Clark (early Methodist commentator), Commentary, Vol. H, pp. 690-691, Kuffes p. 180-181).

"The organ in the worship is the Insignia of Baal....The Roman Catholic borrowed it from the Jews." (Martin Luther, McClintock & Strong's Encyclopedia, Volume VI, p. 762).

"I have no objection to instruments of music in our worship, provided they are neither heard nor seen." (John Wesley, founder of Methodism, quoted in Adam Clarke's Commentary, Vol. 4, p. 684).

"Musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting up 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, founder of Presbyterianism, Calvin's Commentary on the 33<sup>rd</sup> Psalm and on 1 Sam. 18:1-9, Kuffes, pp. 190-191).

"It (the instrument) was only permitted to the Jews as sacrifice was, for the heaviness and grossness of their souls. God condescended to their weakness, because they were lately drawn off from idols; but now, instead of organs, we may use our own bodies to praise him withal."

(John Chrysostom (370 AD) on Psl. 149, Vol. IH, p. 634, Kurfees p. 192).

"Simply singing is not agreeable to children, but singing with lifeless instruments and with dancing and clapping, on which account the use of this kind of instruments and others agreeable to children is removed from the songs in the churches, and there is left simply singing." (Justin Martyr's (160 AD) Questions and Answers to the Orthodox, Question # 107, p. 462, Kurfees, pp. 193-194).

"If the apostle justly prohibits the use of unknown tongues in the church, much less would he have tolerated these artificial musical performances which are addressed to the ear alone, and seldom strike the understanding even of the performers themselves." (Theodore Beza, associate of John Calvin, Girardeau's Instrumental Music, p.166, Kurfees, p. 194).

"The party which forces an organ into the church against the conscientious protest of a minority is disorderly and schismatical, not only because it stirs up strife, but because it is for the sake of a sinful innovation upon the divinely authorized worship of the church; and, inasmuch as the persons thus acting are disorderly and schismatic, it is the duty of all good people to withdraw from them until they repent. It is universally admitted by those competent to judge that there is not the slightest indication in the New Testament of divine authority for the use of instrumental music in Christian worship" (J. W. McGarvey, Apostolic Times, 1881, pp.4,10, Kurfees p. 236).

"In 1699 the Baptists received an invitation from Thomas Clayton, rector of Christ Church, to unite with the Church of England. They replied in a dignified manner, declining to do so unless he could prove, "that the Church of Christ under the New Testament may consist of....a mixed multitude and their seed, even all the members of a nation ....whether they are godly or ungodly," that "lords, archbishops, etc.,....are of divine institution and appointment, and that their vestments, liturgical services, use of mechanical instruments, infant baptism, sprinkling, signing with the cross in baptism," etc., "are warranted by Scripture."...."It may be interesting to note that this church (First Baptist church of Newport, organized in 1644 cf. p. 88) was one of the first to introduce instrumental music. The instrument was a bass viol and caused considerable commotion. This occurred early in the nineteenth century. (Albert Henry Newman, A History of the Baptist Churches in the United States, American Baptist Publication Society 1915, p. 207, 255).

"To those who have no real devotion or spirituality in them, and whose animal nature flags under the oppression of church service, I think that instrumental music would be not only a desideratum, but an essential prerequisite to fire up their souls to even animal devotion. But I presume to all spiritually-minded Christians, such aids would be as a cow bell in a concert.." (Alexander Campbell, Memoirs of A. Campbell, p. 366, Kurfees p. 210).

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