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MUSIC IN THE CHURCH

By Glynn V. Purdy

In John 4:24 Jesus informs us that "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." And in Matt. 15:9 Jesus stated, "But in vain they do worship men, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." From these two passages, we may know that if the use of instrumental music can be proven to be from man and not from God, to use them in the worship would make our worship vain. We cannot please God, nor will he accept our worship, if it is of man's design. To worship in spirit is to worship with an attitude of honesty, sincerity and conscientiously believing that our worship is acceptable. To worship in truth is to worship according to the truth, or as the truth directs. In John 17:17 Jesus said that God's word is truth. Therefore, we may only engage in the type of worship taught in the new testament if we want to please God. Man actually has no choice in the matter, he either worships as God commands, or his worship is rejected.

In Gal. 1:8-9 Paul said, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed . . . If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." The reason for this is that Paul's teaching was directly from God (Gal. 1:11-12). So if we do as Paul instructed we can know it is right because Paul was guided by the Lord. But when we hear Paul, he is completely silent concerning instrumental music in worship.

Are we free to change God's word? No. Even in the Old Testament it is stated "Ye shall not add to the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I commanded you." (Deut. 4:2.) And from Heb. 10:26-29 we learn that it is worse to transgress the commands of Christ than the law of Moses. So, if God has not authorized instrumental music in worship, then it is condemned, and those

who use them are violating the authority of God, and will be punished.

In Col. 3:17 Paul said, "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name (by the authority) of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father for him." If Christ, through his will, the New Testament, has authorized the use of instruments, then we may use them by his authority and please God, on the other hand, if they are not authorized by Christ then their use will make our worship vain, according to Matt. 15:9. God has authorized us to sing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), therefore, we may sing by his authority, and on the other hand, if there is no command to play an instrument, then we cannot play one in the name of Christ.

From John 16:13 and 14:26, we learn that the apostles were to be guided by the Spirit into all truth, and that the Spirit would bring to their remembrance all things that Christ had previously taught them. But when all truth was recorded in the New Testament, and all things that Christ wanted them to teach, there is not

one word concerning the use of instrumental music in worship. So since the New Testament contains all of God's truth, and does not mention the use of instruments, then the instrument is outside the truth, and we cannot use them and worship in truth. We must worship in truth to please God, and the instrument is outside of truth, how can one use it and please God? Only the truth can make us free (John 8:32). We must obey Christ if we are to be saved (Heb. 5:9). And if we obey him, we must respect his authority as much in what he did not command, as in what he did command. Since the type of music that God desires is revealed in the New Testament, then all other types of music are excluded. In the Old Testament, for example, when God commanded a lamb to be offered as a sacrifice, this excluded all other animals. No business could operate if the item we state we wish to purchase, did not also at the same time exclude all other items for sale. No bus could operate if the departure schedule did not exclude all other times of day and night. Yes, we must respect the silence of God's word!

THE NEED FOR LEADERSHIP

By Dick Stovall

One of the great needs in the church today is leadership. In God's plan, he is not only interested in saving men, but also in keeping them saved. The Lord has ordained that elders lead and oversee the church. A church without elders is a church that is lacking (Titus 1:5). A church without elders is like sheep without shepherds. Nothing can be more detrimental to the growth, development and safety of a congregation than a lack of qualified leadership. To bring new Christian babes into a congregation without loving and effective leadership is like putting live chicks under a dead hen. Men can only be appointed elders when they are desirous of the work and are qualified

for the work (1 Timothy 3:1-7).

We are aware of the need for good followers as well as good leaders, yet, we all know that there are more followers than leaders. A president of Berea College once said to a group of graduating seniors "A few men build cities - the rest live in them. A few men project subways - the rest ride in them. A few men erect skyscrapers and factories - and the rest toil in them."

Too many Christians are content to start at the bottom of service to Christ and stay there. Minnie Pearl once said about a fellow performer, "He isn't a

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FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS.

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EDITORS: Erwin Cowen and Harold Turner

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What About Mixed Swimming?

By Ted Knight

One of the problems which plagues the church of our Lord in almost every place is the problem of immodesty. We have short dresses, hot pants, tight pants and sweaters and other types of immodest clothing, sometimes worn by those who profess to be Christians. May I first of all point out that modest people do not buy immodest clothes. Immodesty begins in a person's heart. He does not buy it in a store. Hence, if we can get people to be modest and pure in heart, then we will see people dressing in modest clothing.

you without sin if you contribute to their lusting? Would you dress in a bathing suit in a mixed party if you knew someone would commit sin by looking at your exposed body? Ladies, it is very likely that unless a man is extraordinarily strong, abnormal or dishonest, that he will commit sin under these circumstances.

Let's also consider the influence that mixed swimming has upon others. We are told in Matt. 5:16 to let our light shine so our Father in heaven will be glorified. We are to be living examples of Christianity in the world. The world is to see Christ in us. Do you really believe that the wearing of a bathing suit in public will leave the kind of example upon the world that our Master would have us leave? Do you believe that it will enhance our chances of winning the lost? Would you want that person whom you are trying to lead to Christ to see you in your bathing suit? What about our weak brother upon whom we are to have a good influence? The Bible says that if we cause a brother to stumble that it would be better for us to have a stone put about our neck and be cast into the sea (Luke 17:2). Brother, there are many people in the church who are offended at the wearing of bathing suits and all other types of immodest dress. Are we willing to offend our brother just to enjoy a few hours of selfish pleasure? Isn't it time to reexamine our thinking and our actions?

But what about the problem of mixed swimming? Are we guilty of sin when we get together in a mixed group and go to the lake or public swimming pool? Is there a possibility that sin is committed when we go swimming or water skiing in mixed company? Let's look at this subject in light of Bible principles which are to guide us in our activities. Men, there is a hunger in you that can be satisfied only with food. Let's suppose that one day you arrive home from work all tired and hungry. While your wife puts the finishing touches to the dinner, you sit down in the den to enjoy relaxing and reading the paper. As you relax the aroma filters through the house into your room. As you wait the time gets longer and longer. Your appetite grows and grows. What is happening? You are getting hungry! You can hardly wait until she yells, "Come and get it.!"

My friend, if we are honest with ourselves I believe that we can see that mixed swimming is wrong and sinful. It does not bring good to the cause of Jesus. It brings nothing but harm and sin. It is such a shame that sometimes professing Christians will engage in such a practice and then when someone objects they say, "Well, I can't help it if there are so many dirty minded people in the world." Of course the argument won't hold water. It is high time that we become more interested in what is best for the cause of Jesus Christ and his church than in the things we do for our own pleasures. Brethren, think on these things.

Now let's suppose that you are a normal, healthy, American man. God has placed in you another kind of hunger. There isn't anything wrong with that hunger being aroused under the right circumstances. Let's say that one day a group of men and women decide to go swimming or water skiing together. Can you say that you will not be affected by the sight of the women in their bathing suits? Is it even possible that you might lose control of your thoughts for a moment? Is there the slightest possibility that you might lust after someone in a moment of weakness? Jesus says that if you do you are guilty of committing adultery in your heart (Matt. 5:28). Ladies, would you want to dress in a bathing suit in front of the men if you thought they might lust after you? Are

"Strengthen the weak, forgive the erring, scatter rays of sunshine, assure every person of your love, then watch for happy results."

THE NEED FOR LEADERSHIP

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failure. He just started at the bottom and liked it there." What she said of him is true of too many Christians. They stay at the bottom because they like it there. It takes no effort to do so. Though it is no sin to start at the bottom, it is a sin to stay there. We all begin the Christian walk as newborn babes in Christ. Yet, the Bible emphatically condemns all who remain babes after having had sufficient time to grow and develop spiritually (Heb. 5:11-14). Like the one talent man, too few Christians realize that to withhold one's talents and abilities from the service of Jesus is to turn them over to the service of the devil.

Let us all see the need, count the cost, consider the reward, and then commit ourselves to the task before us. Men should desire the work and then qualify themselves to do the work. Women should encourage the men to lead. The church of tomorrow will be expressive of the leadership the church receives today.

"The life of blessedness comes not by hoarding, but by sharing. Give, and you shall live."

CONTRIBUTIONS

CHURCHES OF CHRIST

Viola	\$10.00
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FOUR REQUIREMENTS FOR UNITY

By Harold Turner

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. 4:1-3)

Without doubt, one of the saddest things that can happen within the church is when God's people cannot dwell together in love and unity. In Psalm 133:1 David said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" And, we might also add how bad and unpleasant it is when brethren cannot dwell together in unity!

Throughout the New Testament the Holy Spirit has placed a continual emphasis on the need for unity among God's children. Shortly before his death, Jesus prayed for all who would believe in him, saying, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." (John 17:21.) The influence that we as Christians have upon the world is greatly affected by the way we get along together. Love and unity will attract others to want to be a part of us, but where these are absent, people are turned away from us. Thus, Paul wrote, "Do all things without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life . . ." (Phil. 2:14-16.) In Gal. 5:15 he wrote "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." We can become consumed by the spirit of faultfinding and criticism, and thereby destroy ourselves. God wants us to love one another, to forgive and help one another. And only by this can we be identified with Christ as God's children.

In the introductory Scripture, Paul lists four things that are so vital to our living together in the right relationship. The first requirement is to have a spirit of lowliness. As long as we view ourselves above others, we can never develop the right relationship. We are all saved by the

grace of God. There is no person going to be saved by the merits of his own goodness. We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). Why then should we have the attitude that we are better than others? We need the attitude that Paul had about himself. In 1 Cor. 15:9 he said, "For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle . . ." And in Eph. 3:8 he said, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints . . ." While to many of us, Paul is the greatest of apostles, yet, to himself, he was less than the least of all saints. Paul's attitude about himself causes us to have a greater admiration for him. In Phil. 2:3 he encourages us to have this same attitude, saying, "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." This attitude will contribute greatly to a better relationship with others.

The second requirement that Paul gave for unity was that of meekness. Meekness is a spirit of gentleness and understanding. Christian people are also human, with weaknesses and faults. All of us need and want to be treated with gentleness. None of us want or need severe criticism and condemnation for our weaknesses. Paul told the Christians of Galatia, "If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." (Gal. 6:1-2.) A sinner is much more easily led to repentance through love and gentleness than by criticism and force. If we will learn to first consider ourselves before condemning others, we will be much less critical, and we will be much more loving in trying to help others bear their burdens. In Rom. 12:10 Paul said, "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another." There is no place for rudeness and unkindness among God's people. Such an attitude only destroys unity. Gentleness brings people closer together.

The third requirement that Paul listed for unity was longsuffering. Evidently, Paul is discussing an attitude of putting up with the weaknesses and faults of others even to the point of suffering long

with them. Actually, this is an attitude of love, for "Love suffers long." (1 Cor. 13:4.) In Eph. 5:1 Paul said, "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love . . ." Certainly we realize that God has been, and is, longsuffering toward us. Where would we be without the longsuffering of God? No doubt we would be eternally lost, and without hope of salvation. If we can realize this to be true, how, then can we be so impatient and intollerant with others? We are admonished to "Put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." (Col. 3:12-13.)

And the fourth requirement listed for unity is forbearance. Forbearance denotes a holding back or a delay of judgment or punishment for wrong doing. Forbearance, like love, will believe the best about others until proven wrong. It seems only natural that we believe any and every thing that we hear others say about someone. Forbearance does not pass judgment until we are sure of all the facts, and, even then, is slow to pass judgment. We must never assume the attitudes and motives of others to be wrong when faults are seen in their life. We cannot see the heart, and therefore we cannot know the struggles others may be making to live right. In Rom. 7:18, 19, Paul made a statement that is typical of all of us. He said, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." As great as Paul was he wasn't perfect, and as hard as he tried to do right, he evidently failed at times. None of us would judge his failures as coming from wrong motives; shouldn't we be as considerate of our other brethren?

When we become mature enough to walk in lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering and forbearance toward others, then we can attain progress toward unity and building the right kind of relationships with others. Without these we lack the true spirit of Christ. May each of us endeavour to build these great attitudes in our attitudes toward one another. Such will bring glory to our Father, and personal happiness to our own lives as well as with others.

The Conversion of Apollos

By Harold Turner

"And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly."

(Acts 18:24-26.)

It is evident from the above passage that Apollos was a very unique person. He possessed some very commendable traits. He was eloquent, knowledgeable, enthusiastic, diligent, and bold in preaching. Yet, as outstanding a person as Apollos was, he was in error. Apollos had a limited knowledge about baptism. We are not told the source of his information but the information was outdated. In Acts 19:4 Paul described John's baptism, saying, "John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." John's baptism was no longer valid. It had fulfilled its purpose (Acts 13:25).

There are several distinctions between the baptism preached by John and the baptism taught under the new testament. While both were preached for the remission of sins (Mark 1:4; Acts 2:38), there were several things that John's baptism was not designed to accomplish. John's baptism was not designed to put the believer into Christ, which is one of the purposes for the baptism of the new testament (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27). John's baptism was not designed to put one into the church, which the baptism of the new testament was designed to accomplish (Acts 2:41; 1 Cor. 12:13). John's baptism did not offer the promise of the Spirit, which the baptism of the new testament promised (Acts 19:2-4; Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:26-27; 4:6). John's baptism was designed only for the children of Israel (John 1:31; Mark 1:5), whereas the baptism of the new testament is designed for all nations. There are several other differences between these two baptisms, but these should suffice to show that Apollos lacked information on a matter that was vital

to one's relationship to God.

When Aquila and Priscilla heard the teaching of Apollos, they took him aside and taught him "the way of God more perfectly." This clearly shows that the way of God includes baptism. This would also indicate that anyone today who does not preach baptism as a part of God's way is also in error. In every example of Bible conversion, following the cross, the people were taught to be baptized. In his final words to the apostles Jesus instructed them to go teach all nations and to baptize those who believed (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15-16). In Peter's first sermon, after convincing the people of their sins, they asked him what to do, and he instructed them, saying, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." (Acts 2:38.) And "they that gladly received his word were baptized." (Acts 2:41.) Too, when Philip took the gospel to Samaria, the record states, "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." (Acts 8:12.) There was something in their preaching about Jesus that led people to be baptized. Notice also in Acts 8:35,36, "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Evidently, to preach Jesus in the same way that the apostles did will include preaching baptism as a part of the way of God.

What was required of those who had been baptized with the baptism of John at this time? In Acts 19:1-5 Paul found twelve disciples, who had probably been baptized by Apollos. Paul asked these men, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the

name of the Lord Jesus." Since these had not received the right baptism, upon learning about the baptism of the new testament, they were baptized for the right purpose.

Today in the religious world there are many different baptisms preached and practiced. In Eph. 4:5 Paul stated that at that time there was only one baptism to be administered. Any baptism that differs from what the apostles preached is not the right baptism. They preached a baptism that was only by immersion (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12). It was for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38); for the washing away of sins (Acts 22:16); it was designed to put one into Christ (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27) and it also was essential for membership in the church (Acts 2:41; 1 Cor. 12:13). Is this the baptism that you have received? If not, shouldn't you do as Apollos and those of Acts 19:1-5? Apollos was not just a unique person because of the reasons previously stated, but was willing to change when he learned the way of God more perfectly. It is sad when a person holds to something that he knows is not scriptural. We urge you to study this matter further, and to act upon what you find the word of God to teach.

"The man who tries to keep a book account of the good he does never does enough good to pay for the binding of the book."

*Harold Turner
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