

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,  
and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105).

Visit Us At:  
[www.wjchurchofchrist.org](http://www.wjchurchofchrist.org)  
For Audio Lessons,  
Past Bulletins, Bible Studies  
& More  
Wireless Internet Password:  
94615548

FOR THE RECORD

Sunday Bible Study	14
Sunday AM Worship	22
Sunday PM Worship	15
Wed. Bible Study	16
Offering	\$1201

## Door-Keeping in the House of God

Psalm 84:10

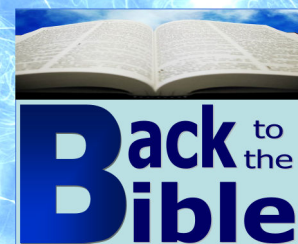
THE FOLLOWING IS DEMANDED:

- ➔ **A KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S HOUSE**  
• Isaiah 2:2-3 • 1 Timothy 3:15
- ➔ **A KNOWLEDGE OF WICKEDNESS**  
• Romans 12:9 • Galatians 5:19-21
- ➔ **GOOD JUDGMENT**  
• Galatians 6:7-9 • Hebrews 5:12-14 • Philippians 1:9-10
- ➔ **A POSITIVE CHOICE**  
• Hebrews 11:24-26 • Joshua 24:15
- ➔ **HUMILITY**  
• Luke 18:14 • Matthew 23:11 • 1 Peter 5:5 • Micah 6:8
- ➔ **FAITHFUL SERVICE TO GOD**  
• 1 Thessalonians 1:10 • Acts 20:19 • Romans 12:11



ARE YOU MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICE?

Barnes' Bible Charts



A Weekly Publication of the  
**West Jefferson Church of Christ**  
130 Robert Street  
West Jefferson NC 28694  
Phone: (336) 846-5615 | Email: [info@wjchurchofchrist.org](mailto:info@wjchurchofchrist.org)  
Volume XVI February 19, 2023 Number 08

Minister:

**Tim Canup**  
[tim@wjchurchofchrist.org](mailto:tim@wjchurchofchrist.org)

**Times of Services:**

Sunday

Bible Study:... 10:00am  
AM Worship...11:00am  
PM Worship:...6:00pm  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday:.....1:30pm

Wednesday

Bible Study:.....7:00pm

Radio Program

Sunday:.....7:30am  
"Back to the Bible"  
AM 580 WSKS  
93.5 FM

**We Extend A  
Warm & Cordial  
Welcome  
To All Our  
Visitors!**

## What Is A Cappella Music?

By Wayne Jackson

One of our readers recently wrote asking that we explain what is meant when it is stated that churches of Christ use only a cappella music. This is an excellent question and we are happy to respond.

The phrase a cappella derives from a Latin expression which, by way of Italian, means "in the style of the church," or "as is done in the church." It reflects the historical reality that instrumental music in Christian worship was not practiced in the Christian movement for many centuries, and that the rather late introduction of it constitutes an innovation void of New Testament authority.

Professor Everett Ferguson, one of the premier historians of church history, has noted that the non-use of the instrument in worship was the "majority tradition of Christian history" until "comparatively recent times" (83).

Between 1708-22, Joseph Bingham, an Anglican cleric, produced his magnificent ten-volume work titled, The Antiquities of the Christian Church, a prodigious effort that required twenty years in composition. The

[Continued Inside]

Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church depicts this work as that which “has not been superseded” (Cross, 173). Regarding the use of instrumental music in church worship, the celebrated English scholar wrote:

Music in churches is as ancient as the apostles, but instrumental music not so: for it is now generally agreed by learned men, that the use of organs came into the church since the time of Thomas Aquinas, anno 1250. For he in his Sums has these words, “Our church does not use musical instruments, as harps and psalteries, to praise God withal, that she may not seem to judaize” (I.315).

He then catalogs considerable testimony from ancient writers of the post-apostolic age to sustain the point.

There is scarcely any controversy regarding this historical matter. In their massive, twelve-volume Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature (1876), John McClintock and James Strong (denominational scholars) noted:

The Greeks as well as the Jews were wont to use instruments as accompaniments in their sacred songs. The converts to Christianity accordingly must have been familiar with this mode of singing; yet it is generally believed that the primitive Christians failed to adopt the use of instrumental music in their religious worship.

These scholars further noted that: “The general introduction of instrumental music can certainly not be assigned to a date earlier than the 5th and 6th centuries [A.D.]” (VI.759).

They also observed that the early reformers, e.g., Martin Luther, and also Calvin and Knox (Presbyterians), protested against the use of instruments. The same could be said of Clarke (Methodist) and Spurgeon (Baptist). The men were the leaders of their respective movements.

In my library I have a volume titled Instrumental Music in Public Worship. It was written by John L. Girardeau, a professor at Columbia Theological Seminary (a Presbyterian institution). The book was published first in 1888. This little volume of 208 pages was delivered initially as a series of lectures that had been requested by some of the seminary students. A dear lady who heard one of Girardeau’s lectures offered to have them published at her expense so that the evidence might stand as a “testimony to the truth.”

Girardeau argued:

A divine warrant is necessary for every element of doctrine, government and worship in the church; that is, whatsoever in these spheres is not commanded in

the Scriptures, either expressly or by good and necessary consequence from their statements is forbidden (9; emp. original).

The professor contended that the evidence shows that instrumental music was not commonly used in churches “until the thirteenth century” (156).

In 1965 James W. McKinnon prepared a dissertation at Columbia University on “The Church Fathers and Musical Instruments.” In this exhaustive document, McKinnon contended that “early Christian music was vocal” and there was a “patristic [the “church fathers”] polemic against instruments” (1-2; quoted in Bales, 351-352).

The truth is there is no authority in the New Testament for the use of instrumental music in Christian worship — neither command, precedent, nor necessary implication. This is so elementary that it is like rehearsing one’s ABCs all over again.

In view of this it is both shocking and disheartening that so many who profess an allegiance to Jesus Christ, and his New Testament revelation, have incorporated the use of mechanical instruments into their worship. As Christ once said of his contemporaries:

These people honor me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. In vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men (Matthew 15:8-9).

.....  
*“Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him. Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection. And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is? For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean” (Acts 17:16-20).*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Feb 26 – Prayer Service
- Mar 5 – Men’s Bus. Meeting & Ladies’ Bible Class after Evening Worship
- Mar 12 – Preach-N-Eat & 1:30 Worship & Song Service
- Please give support money for Chinese orphans to Minnie Kennell