

December, 2006

# Pause Ponder Profit

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## Church Kitchens And Fellowship Halls

By David J. Riggs

Church buildings with kitchens and fellowship halls are quite common today because the social gospel has gained acceptance in the minds of many. In fact, more and more churches of Christ are running head long in that direction with complete apostasy being the only outcome.

### Unauthorized

There is absolutely no Scriptural authority for a local church to draw funds from its treasury to construct a kitchen or fellowship hall. There is Scriptural authority to construct a building for worship services because the commands of worship require a place and facilities. A place and facilities are necessary to obey God's commands, but kitchens and fellowship halls are not for any purpose God assigned to the church. Social and recreational endeavors are not the work of the church, and acting where God has not spoken is a serious offense (Matt. 7:21-23; 15:9; 1 Cor. 4:6; 2 John 9; etc.).

### Creates A New Office

Like the prophet Elijah (1 Kings 18:27), the pioneer preachers forcefully ridiculed the denominations by stating that their church kitchens were creating a new office. When they replied, "What new office?" they answered, "A church cook!" Untold thousands were converted by their plain and forceful teaching. We need hundreds more like them!

### Perverts Bible Teaching

Some contend that the church building is not sacred and therefore can be used for eating and socializing. However, Paul ordered the eating of common food in the home and spiritual food in the church (1 Cor. 11:20-34). We understand that in 1 Cor. 11 Paul was condemning a misuse of the Lord's Supper; however, it is interesting to note how Paul corrected the problem. He did not say, "Keep your common meals separate from the Lord's Supper, but, "If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home." (Verse 34).

Some have argued that their kitchens and fellowship halls are expedients to fellowship which God commanded. On the contrary, the word "fellowship" is never so used in the Scriptures. The fellowship enjoined by Christ is not social, but spiritual (see 1 John 1:3-7). It is a gross perversion to promote human socializing as "Christian fellowship."

### Introduces Worldliness

The entertainment projects go over big for a time, but to maintain enthusiasm, bigger and better schemes must be produced. In the final analysis, it introduces worldliness into the church. Food for the soul is replaced by food for the stomach, worship and spiritual songs by play and

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## Why We Do Not Use Instrumental Music In Worship

by Donnie V. Rader

One of the first things that people notice when they visit our worship services is that we don't use instrumental music. Some wonder whether it is a matter of finance, personal preference or a matter of conviction.

The reason a flag is raised is that most of the denominations have some form of instrumental music in worship. An organ or piano is most common. However, it is not uncommon to find churches with a full band — including drums and brass instruments.

Why do we not use instrumental music in worship?

### It Is Not Authorized

Careful students know that we must have Bible authority for all that we do in service to God. Paul said, "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him" (Col. 3:17). To do a thing "in the name of" someone is to do it by their power or authority (Acts 4:7). John wrote that we must abide within the doctrine of Christ (2 Jno. 9).

Bible authority is established by (1) Command, (2) Example or (3) Necessary inference. All three of these were used in settling the matter of circumcision in Acts 15. Without a command or direct statement, an example that is approved of God or some principle that necessarily infers the matter, it is without Bible authority.

To illustrate: what would be wrong with having grape jelly on the Lord's table — along with the bread and fruit of the vine? There is no command to have it. We find no example of such. Furthermore, there is no passage that causes us to conclude that it was used or should be. Thus, there is no Bible authority for it. The same is true with instrumental music. To do something without Bible authority is sinful (2 Jno. 9).

What God did authorize, as far as music is concerned, is singing. Consider the following passages:

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord (Col. 3:16).

Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord (Eph. 5:19).

There are seven other passage in the NT that deal with music in worship. All refer to singing (Matt. 26:30; Acts 16:25; Rom. 15:9; 1 Cor. 14:15; Heb. 13:15). There is no passage authorizing the instrument.

God did authorize singing. God did not authorize instrumental music. Therefore, it is unscriptural.

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### **An Addition To The Word of God**

Since God *specified* singing, we are not at liberty to use any other kind of music. For example, Noah was told to build the ark of “gopher wood” (Gen. 6:14). Had God said, “wood” (leaving it in the generic), Noah would have been at liberty to use any kind of wood. Yet, because God specified “gopher” that eliminated the use of any other *kind* of wood. To build the ark of oak would not be authorized. To use gopher and oak would not be authorized.

Let’s consider again the matter of the Lord’s Supper. God specified that the unleavened bread and fruit of the vine should be used (Matt. 26:17-28). If we decide that we want grape jelly to go with our bread, we now have *another* element on the table and thus an *addition* to the word of God.

The same is true of music in worship. Had God told us to have music (leaving it in the generic), we could have chosen vocal or instrumental or a combination of both. However, since God specified, *singing* (Eph. 5:19), other kinds of music are thus eliminated. Instrumental music is therefore an *addition* to the word of God.



### **The Blood Of Christ**

by Donnie V. Rader

**W**hat does the blood of Christ mean to you? It is possible to count the blood as something unholy or common (Heb. 10:29). That is what most of the world has done. But, even some “Christians” have tried to rob the gospel of the redemption through the blood of Christ.

### **Jesus Shed His Blood For Us**

1. *A sacrifice had to be offered.* Sin is a violation of the law (1 Jno. 3:4; Rom. 4:15). Law demands that a price (penalty) be paid. Else, the law is meaningless. Man could not begin to pay the price. The blood of animals was not sufficient (Heb. 10:4). The blood of the sinless Son of God was the perfect sacrifice.

2. *Jesus shed his blood for the sins of man.* Jesus said, For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins (Matt. 26:28).

Paul said, “without the shedding of blood, there is no remission” (Heb. 9:22).

3. *Jesus shed his blood for all men.* Paul wrote, But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone (Heb. 2:9).

The same writer said that he died for all (2 Cor. 4:14-15).

The remission of sins that is offered through the blood is offered to one and all alike.

### **The Blood Was Offered In Heaven**

Just as the High Priest had to enter the Most Holy Place to offer the sacrifice of animals (Heb. 9:1-7), Christ also had to rise from the dead so he could enter into heaven to offer his own blood as a sacrifice for the sin of man (Heb. 9:24-26).

This is the meaning of his being “raised for our justification” (Rom. 4:25). Had Jesus died and not rose to offer that blood, we could not be saved.

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### There Is Power In The Blood

1. *The blood of Christ can cleanse us from all sin.* John wrote, But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1:7).

2. *When the blood cleanses us from our sins, God never remembers those sins again.*

For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more (Heb. 8:12).

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laughter, prayer and meditation by fun and frolic. Worldliness is where the long road leads and is the end result of it all.

### Joins Church And Home

Years ago there was a great problem of men joining church and state and mankind in general suffered many bitter consequences. Today, men are joining church and home and the hideous results — loss of spirituality, a flood of worldliness in the church, and in the end, souls ruined, lost, and damned eternally.

Let us go back to the “old paths” of offering the gospel of Christ only, and free ourselves from all the unlawful schemes men have devised to win and hold members. The gospel is not “a” power of God to salvation, but “the” power of God (the only one) to salvation. (Rom. 1:16). God’s Word will accomplish exactly what God intended. (Isa. 55:10-11). It is still quick and powerful, living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword. (Heb. 4:12).



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