

# “SINGING WITH A ‘SINGING HEART’ ”

## [OUR REAL DAILY WORSHIP DUTIES]

THE TEXT OF BOTH PASSAGES IS CONTAINED AT THE VERY FRONT OF THIS DOCUMENT.  
PLEASE READ AND CONSIDER BOTH BEFORE GOING FURTHER.

### LEVEL ONE:

1. There are two principle passages that are used by the members of the Church of Christ to advocate acapella music in worship. These passages are Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16. They are used to say that acapella music, without any musical instrument accompaniment, is God directed and thus the biblically required manner of worship. They are included in the addendum to this article. So, is this the real case and can these passages be used in this particular manner? Or else we must investigate the question, **“What is the real, true, truth about the preferred music used in worship, today?”**
2. The first problem we must deal with in this larger question’s context is that these two passages are general in nature. They are not specific and thus direct statements made to formal worship. They are totally Christian, life-style-directed admonitions, that are used to described how the entire Church needs to be meeting the daily challenges of keeping the whole church focused and upwardly ‘lifting’ in its daily ministrations, as well as in the more external general public element of worship. Remember that both of these passages are written in the much bigger generic perspective of our full-on, Christ-sharing, every-day lifestyle, and not in the smaller specific perspective of just our worship on Sunday that we render to the Lord. **REMEMBER: These two passages written within a setting of our common daily practice goals and duties, “24/7”. Have we been out doing them, today, or are we just allowing them to be our foundational proof-texts for acapella stylized music? [NOTE: Acapella based music is not wrong, but if all these two passages teach us is this one acapella point, then the true value of these passages is totally lost and the devil wins by default.]**
3. One can read these two passages and come away from that reading with two very good and common points.
  - A. **First** is that singing can be, and definitely should be, included in our common worship experiences. It does say to ‘sing’, after all, in the very context of both of these two passages. The question we must answer next is just what does this pivotal word ‘sing’ mean in this general context? What are its widths and what are its constrictions?
  - B. **Second** it says to sing with the heart, and thus the actual sound produced is not that important, but the up-lifting heart is that important, and much more so.

- C. **So**, this second point does pave the way for true acapella singing in all spirited worship, and that without necessarily the accompaniment of any mechanical instruments of worship.
- D. This is **definitely possible** in the context, but **not demanded** by the context.
4. \*\*\*\* In saying this, we must return to the intended purpose of these two passages as Paul wrote them, and that is to lift up and strengthen the hearts and souls of everyone of like faith around us, -every day-, regardless to the musical skills we have developed within us. Do you have the strength and energy to carry around a piano, or even a guitar or clarinet, every day, all day, everywhere you go? Thus, thinking just on the opposite side of the question, yes, a bit farther down the track, “Can you carry good words and good vibes with you, naturally, every day, everywhere?” If you can, have you then fulfilled these two passages in their original context?
5. Therefore, we need to ask the question of every member and practitioner, “Have you, have I, **sung** to someone this week, in some way the beautiful words of the whole gospel life-style?” If we have not, then to be true, we must follow the course of Paul’s direction and go out teaching the daily duty, with all tools such as singing, Psalms and spiritual songs of words or actions in hand. If we do that, and thus go sing to some member, or to some person who is not yet a member but who has suffered under the calamities of life this very day, helping lift both sets of eyes ever heavenward, then we understand what Paul is saying here in both passages. This brings us back to that primary question, **“What does Paul really mean by singing? Is it the simplewhite and black worship meaning? ...Or is it the full-service meaning attached to the all things that pertain to our lot as the the servant-slave of Jesus? It is in us all!”**
6. This contextual over-picture of a heavenward repositioning of the heart-eye, is the common mission which we all hold, universally, -one of being a fully serving servant, touching someone constantly for the Lord, in a positive manner. You never know, but the people we touch, like Paul, may just be in their own prison cell, be it a cell made of stone and complete with bars, or a wheelchair, or a bad attitude, or a white and black, legalistic mindset. **So, just what is ‘singing’ then?** A basic change is called for, once we embrace the more dynamic full contextual picture of what singing really is here in these two passages.
7. This change in basic perception of these two passages, brings us all to a point of consternation where we all must be looking at our own current service motifs and practices. Are we seeing with only one eye, -one that is so tuned as to see only one option, and give no attention to any other???
8. What is true is that that one-eyed man may just be correct, or he may be so used to seeing one thing that he fails to see the whole picture and misses out on a major bit of teaching of our own heart. As a rule, don’t seek to first argue with someone doctrinally the course of our long dead heroes of the last two

centuries, until there is no other recourse. If forced into such a devilish discussion, then be very accurate with the scriptures, using the very clear and ready duplication of the whole context of all those scriptures, thus upholding the spirit of these two passages in the process. That is the primary wisdom and God focused effort of a true servant at work. Then, do not give in to the dictations of the lesser, legalistic, minds, unless they are correct and have proven it to be so, with every whim of modernistic pressure set aside!!!

9. After having settled the primary message question, then proceed on forward to what history has to say as they lived out the fundamentals of the faith.
  - a. Remember that there is always the conflict between false worship, will worship and true worship to be answered from the heart of every person. Check out what God says and then add in your own mode of expressions as to what His divine will actually says.
  - b. Always be very wary of those who adamantly demand a one way only type of approach to scripture that places absolute obedience and puritanical ethics above grace and Jesus.. They may be correct in the immediate instance of their profession, but the whole life style will thus receive an orientation towards the more legalistic side of church life and that is effectively a denial of Jesus and everything about Jesus. Just obey the law expressly and all is okay. It is called neo-Pharaisism. It is the bailiwick of every legalist and anti-Christian mindset which we must answer for today in the church and in the world.

## LEVEL TWO:

1. At this full-on point of concern then for us today, we must answer the question of **“Can we use musical instruments in our direct obeisant modelled worship service?”** Or more simply, “Why not have a piano, some drums and horns, and some highly skilled singers to ‘lead’ the worship before us? The answer is never actually covered, directly, in any passage in the New Testament. Without the Ephesian and Colossian passages, we do not have one passage that clarifies the subject simply, pointedly, or even by directly referenced example. That is the fact and there is not one preacher training school or minor university that ever discusses it. We are left totally on our own.
2. However, by way of historical fact, we do have 1750 years of testimony, whereby no Christian group, of any persuasion, used musical instruments, at all. This says a lot. It took a prince, giving an organ in the mid 1700’s a.d., to get the church *“rocking along”* to its current beat. What a tragedy, that most of the church does not study, like, or even reference recorded history.
3. Thus, ask yourself this one question; “Why did the church at large wait so long to get an instrument included in worship?” And as a follow on; -“Did the first century crowd even have musical instruments to consider? (Please see the first addendum to get a picture of all of the instruments the early church could have used, but choose not to do so. And then again, ask yourself, “Why?.”.)

4. One of the reasons that has been offered as to the absence of instruments in the early church is the problem of religious entertainment. If I were to be very bold and start naming names, I could include some prominent, neo-Pentecostal voices like all of the people who like showy productions and slick paper promotions and magazines ...all are, are all actually conservatives who wish to control things on the monetary and power broker advantages, that flows in their direction. Some of us are still their disciples, unwittingly so. Some of us even go to their schools and get partially educated in their 'restorationism' gone to the head of the class.
- a. [NOTE: There is nothing wrong about the "general restoration model", as long as we understand that it is simply a filter we add on top of the actually perfectly clear and simple context of the bible, using methods and contentions that are over two hundred years old and deeply influenced by the events of the English Civil and Religious wars, to the disgust of both sides of the formative debates. Remember, God wants us all to know and understand things alike. He is not capricious nor conniving!]
- b. To choose to follow the pattern of the first 1750 years is thus not wrong and it has certain crucial benefits. .... "**THE FOURTEENER's**"
- 1) **First:** It does not violate or contravene any scripture, at all.
  - 2) **Second:** Every person is thus a part of the whole worship act.
  - 3) **Third:** It makes my own voice important.
  - 4) **Fourth:** It conforms within the general consensus of history.
  - 5) **Fifth:** It is above the charge of mere religious entertainment.
  - 6) **Sixth:** It is usable, everyday, as a tool to lift up down-trodden.
  - 7) **Seventh:** It is universally understood as a tool of up-lifting.
  - 8) **Eighth:** Christian words, done with a Christian heart, reveals God.
  - 9) **Ninth:** There is no "ego-centricism" in real music simply from the heart, and it does not have to be a full melodic harmony, but it must be fully 'yareh' in context.
  - 10) **Tenth:** God sings along with my heart to those who are 'down'.
  - 11) **Eleventh:** It is as close to first century worship as we are able to get, given current, and long-standing, scholarship, with which no scholar at all disagrees.

12) **Twelve:** “Sing” does not have to just mean “to pluck” or to harmonically emulate itself tonally, but it can be used in a more psychiatric format of basic healing as well. This is the dynamic interpretation and conforms to both the connotative and denotative usage of the word, “sing”

**Thirteenth:** Contextually interpreting these two verses is dynamic and uniformly accepted.

**Fouteenth:** Always seek God’s direct assistance in all matters of interpretation. He will help us to understand.

## **ANIMALS THAT 'SING' JUST FOR THE FUN OF IT ...**

- 1. Meadowlark**
- 2. Lyre bird**
- 3. Yellow Tail Cockatoo**
- 4. Canary / Buddgie**
- 5. Nightingale**
- 6. Hump-back Whales**
- 7. Killer Whales**
- 8. New Guinea Singing Dogs**
- 9. Wolves**
- 10. Coyotes**
- 11. Domestic Cats (purring)**
- 12. Tigers (chuffing)**
- 13. Cows (lowing)**
- 14. Chorus-toads (Melanesia)**
- 15. Forest Ground Squirrel**
- 16. Flying Fox [Bats]**
- 17. Asian Crickets**
- 18. Chimpanzees**
- 19. Howler Monkeys**
- 20. .... others???**

**...and none use written music, 8-part harmony, pitch pipes, words or even academic training. Most do not even speak English. They just sing because... If they can be said to sing, what is the result? For some it is a form of warning, for others a search for a mate, but for most it is more for orientation and the up-lifting of the pack, pod, or flock.**

**POINT: We tend to read the word 'sing' and automatically discount many different forms of singing, thinking only of a vocalization coupled to a known musical line. Our minds just go directly to what we have been taught by our 'heroes' in the faith.**

**European melody and Asian melody are quite different from one another, as is rap from opera and yodelling from lullabies, yet all are "singing". There is a great difference in regards to the purpose of human music, as well.**