



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

September 10, 2017

INSTRUMENTS OF PRAISE IN THE CHURCH

One of the first questions about the church of Christ is “Why don’t you have instruments?” Even though our worship does not involve instruments that can be seen, we do have instruments of praise. It all revolves around faith! Faith is a strong conviction of religious truth based on what God has revealed (**Hebrews 11:1-6**). It extends to the way that we live and the way that we worship as we listen to the commands of God. The only way that faith comes to us is by hearing the Word of God (**Romans 10:17**). So, when God issues a command, we have the authority by faith to carry out that command without adding or subtracting anything from it (**Revelation 22:18-19**).

As far as worship goes, God specifically commands each person to sing with one instrument of praise: the heart. The heart is the only instrument that can be offered to God by faith “...singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (**Ephesians 5:19**). The phrase, “making melody in your heart” is the same thing as “singing with grace in your hearts” (**Colossians 3:16**). Or, you might say, “singing and playing the heart strings.” Every Christian should be an “instrument of righteousness” (**Romans 6:13**) as we surrender ourselves to God. In the worship assembly, each person surrenders himself to “offer the sacrifice of praise to God...the fruit of our lips” (**Hebrews 13:15**) as even Jesus is pictured as saying, “in the midst of the church will I sing unto thee” (**Hebrews 2:12**).

The church of our Lord has wonderful music and that music comes simply through singing. God expects each person to teach and admonish with his own instrument of praise (**Colossians 3:16**). Every person has a voice and every person can fulfill God’s command (**I John 5:3**). Our goal is to live and worship by the authority of Christ (**Colossians 3:17**).

Derrick Coble

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Minister:

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Service Times:

Sunday

Bible Study 10 am
Worship Service 10:45 am
Worship Service 6 pm

Wednesday

Bible Study 7:30 pm

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EXCUSES

Man has made excuses for his behavior and actions almost since the beginning of man's history. In the Garden of Eden, the devil tempted Eve to sin and eat the forbidden fruit. She in turn enticed her mate to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. When God asked Adam if he had eaten of the tree, he excused his behavior by saying, *"The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate"* (**Genesis 3:12**). When God asked Eve, *"What is this you have done?"* *The woman said "The serpent deceived me, and I ate"* (**Genesis 3:13**).

And so it began, the human predisposition to make excuses for their behavior. This attitude of making excuses has continued throughout human history. Moses was afraid to be a leader of God's people and so he claimed he could not speak well enough (**Exodus 4**). King Saul had been tasked with destroying the Amalekites but he didn't. They let the king live and kept the best of the animals. Samuel met him and asked him about the animals. Saul made the excuse that the people did this so that they could sacrifice. Samuel let him know that God favored obedience over sacrifice.

Nothing much had changed hundreds of years later in regard to the human response to their own behavior. In Jesus day, folks wanted to follow Him but gave excuses for not doing so. Luke writes *"Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, that someone said to Him, 'Lord, I will follow You wherever You go.' And Jesus said to him, 'Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.' Then He said to another, 'Follow Me.' But he said, 'Lord let me first go and bury my father.' Jesus said to him 'Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God.' And another also said, 'Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house.' But Jesus said to him, 'No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.'" (Luke 9:57-62).*

There is a song that says "Excuses, Excuses, you hear them every day." It is a true statement. The problem is that God has never accepted excuses. He demands that we own our behavior and be accountable. Have you decided to follow Jesus? He expects it to happen now. Have you decided to renounce Satan, sin, and self? Jesus is not giving any excused notes. He wants all of us to become engaged in the service of the Kingdom and He wants us to start now. How about serving Him? He wants and needs you. No excuses.

Ken Hamilton