

The Bible Doesn't Say "Not" To

Nearly every time a discussion about instrumental music in worship takes place, one supporting it says, "The Bible doesn't say not to." They are right. The Bible does say, "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," and "Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19). Yet, it does not say, "Thou shalt not use instruments of music in the worship of Christ."

If the fact that the Bible does not say "Thou shalt not use instruments of music in the worship of Christ" means we can use them, then we wonder if Noah could have used pine to build the ark? God told him to use gopherwood (Genesis 6:14). Yet, we know that the ark would not have floated if it was made of pine, because God said to make it of gopherwood. Today, many have the attitude that if pine were more appealing to them, then it would be okay to use it.

Perhaps looking at another New Testament worship command will help people see the problem of say "It doesn't say not to." The Lord's Supper is commanded. Jesus said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me...This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me" (1 Corinthians 11:24-25). The body has reference to the unleavened bread (Matthew 26:17, 26). The cup has reference to the fruit of the vine (Matthew 26:27-29). Therefore, Jesus commands partaking of the unleavened bread and fruit of the vine in order to remember His sacrifice. Are we allowed to say, "I want to add peanut butter to the crackers, it sure would make them taste better. It doesn't say not to." Will that work? No. Can we add coffee and donuts to the Lord's Supper? No.

If pine was not specifically forbidden, why would it have been sinful for Noah to use it? If peanut butter is not specifically forbidden in the Lord's supper, why would it be sinful to use it? When God specifies what we are to do, then we know that other things are excluded. When God commanded gopherwood, then pine, oak and cherry were excluded. When Jesus commanded using unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine (grape juice), then peanut butter, coffee and donuts were excluded. In musical worship, when the Holy Spirit said to "sing," "teach," "admonish" and "speak," then we know that "play," "strum" and "beat" are excluded.

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