



The Biblical Foundations of Instrumental Music in Worship: Four Pillars

Brian L. Hedrick

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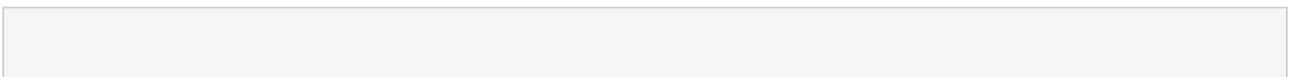
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The purpose of this book is to provide an accessible, comprehensive biblical philosophy of instrumental music in worship for church instrumental directors and instrumentalists in churches. This information will better inform and enrich their ministry, transforming them as worship leaders, and ultimately, transforming the worship practices of their churches. This book will prove to be a valuable resource for directors, as they justify their ministry in their respective churches, but also as an apologetic to those from churches and denominations who refute the use of instrumental music in New Testament worship. Furthermore, this resource will provide a biblical basis for the practice of instrumental music ministry, beyond a simple justification, examining the scriptural guidelines for the ministry and operation of instrumental music in the worship of the church. This information is formatted in the appendix as a series of devotionals, so directors are able to present it to their instrumental groups, making sure both directors and instrumentalists understand the biblical basis and guidelines for their practice of instrumental music in Christian worship. As the director presents this devotional series to his instrumentalists, he will more effectively internalize the biblical principles of the series, as he is required to study the material and then verbalize it to his group.

A biblical understanding of the use of instrumental music in worship is of utmost importance to practicing church instrumentalists and directors. My concern is the fact that a well-defined, comprehensive biblical philosophy on this subject has not been readily available for church instrumental directors. When church instrumental directors are asked to justify their ministry from a biblical perspective, they have had relatively few resources to consult. I have discovered no books dedicated exclusively to the subject, and only two books with a complete chapter devoted to the biblical foundations of instrumental music in worship. On the other hand, there is an abundance of written material readily available concerning the prohibition of instrumental music in worship. Individuals and denominations that generate this material take a position based solely on the regulative principle, otherwise known as the negative hermeneutic. "The 'negative hermeneutic' says that because something is not found in the New Testament - in this case, instrumental music - it is inherently wrong and unbiblical." I believe this position is unfounded, and needs to be addressed with a strong, comprehensive rationale for the use of instrumental music in Christian worship.

As I examined the biblical references to instrumental music in worship, I have organized the references into four basic pillars. The first pillar is the many references to instrumental music in the Psalms, which is related to the second pillar, the Davidic tradition of instrumental music in worship. King David is associated with many of the psalms, and was in large part responsible for establishing a tradition of instrumental music in ancient Hebrew worship that extended to Temple worship in Jesus' time.

The overwhelming majority of biblical references to instrumental music in worship are found in the Old Testament, but there are also limited references in the New Testament. The third pillar is the implied references in two familiar worship passages, Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16, and their reference to using psalms in Christian worship. I will also consider the reference to "making melody" in Ephesians 5:19, which is from the Greek word *psallo*, and has a possible connection to instrumental music. Finally, the fourth pillar is the mention of instruments in the context of heavenly worship in the book of Revelation.



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