Old Light on New Worship

In 2005, John Price while preaching for the Grace Baptist Church in Rochester, NY, wrote a delightful book arguing for only acappella music in church worship. John writes, “I have come to this subject with the conviction that the Scripture alone should be our final guide in all matters of faith and practice.” p12.

COMMONLY BELIEVED TODAY

“Musical instruments are believed to be neither commanded nor forbidden, and, therefore they are considered matters of indifference and liberty”, p. 17 Then Mr. Price shows why this common belief is wrong.

OLD TESTAMENT COMMANDED

“you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings” (Num. 10:10).

“These two trumpets were the only musical instruments used in public worship throughout the time of the Tabernacle in the wilderness” (p.18). These were not optional in the Tabernacle worship, but a command.

MORE INSTRUMENTS COMMANDED

Then about 400 years later God commanded other instruments to be used, “He then stationed the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, with harps and with lyres, according to the command of David and of Gad the king’s seer, and of Nathan the prophet; for the command was from the LORD through His prophets.” (2Chronicles 29:25). So now additional instruments are authorized. But not at anytime the worshiper wanted, nor by anyone. The Levites were the only ones authorized, and only at the time of the sacrifices on the altar. Each time Israel fell away from true worship, they later restored true worship with the two trumpets & David’s instruments (700BC Hezekiah 2Chron.25:20-28), (458BC Ezra 3:10), & (445BC Nehemiah 12:24-27).

NO MECHANICAL INSTRUMENTS IN CHURCH

“Hebrews 7:12 “For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also.” This verse asserts the connection between the Levitical priesthood and the ceremonial laws of the temple worship. When the priesthood is abolished, so also are all the laws of worship connected with them; both stand or fall together.” (p.36).

670AD

“Church historians agree that the first recorded example of a musical instrument in Christian worship was an organ introduced in about 670 A.D. in a Roman Catholic Church in Rome by pope Vitalianus.” (p.79). It’s use does not become common in churches until the 1200’s. (p.80). That means for over 600 years the church never used one. Why? Obvious isn’t? God in the New Testament didn’t ask for it (Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16). If God didn’t authorize it, who did? DP