

WALKING IN WISDOM (**Colossians 4:5**) Number #71

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All Scripture quotations from the Editor are from the New King James Version
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QUESTION: Why don't the churches of Christ worship services have people jumping, singing with instruments, clapping and otherwise excited?

ANSWER: Not all excitement, singing, jumping, and clapping is spiritually motivated. Anyone been to a basketball, football, or soccer game? Or attended a rally for any of these?

1. Jesus put us on notice when, confronted by those whose traditional practices meant more to them than God's Word, He said: "Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men'" **Matthew 15:7-9**. Not all singing, praying, or fervency is acceptable to God. God told worshippers: "Take away from Me the noise of your songs, For I will not hear the melody of your stringed instruments" **Amos 5:23**. It is useless ("vain") to emphasize a "revival" of worship practices from hearts not led by God's Word! A careful study of God's Word will show the difference between what is pleasing to God and what is rejected.

2. Through Solomon, God has said: "One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, Even his prayer is an abomination" **Proverbs 28:9**. It is the Gospel of Christ that should unite people, not just any worship practices. Jesus said: "'And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.' This He said, signifying by what death He would die" **John 12:32-33**. After His resurrection He commanded: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" **Mark 16:15-16**. The Apostle Paul recorded: "I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still

pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ" **Galatians 1:6-10**. To change the Gospel, or ignore its fundamentals, may "please men," but is "accursed" by God!

3. The Gospel of Christ unites those who are: "buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with *Him* through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses" **Colossians 2:12-13**.

4. God Was Specific In Giving Details About His Old Testament Worship. In **Exodus 20-40**, **Leviticus**, & **Deuteronomy**, the priests were never instructed to use instruments of music in connection with the sacrifices offered! *Musical instruments were never included in the tabernacle, and later, the temple!* The issue is not that such instruments were used by people, but whether they were authorized by God for His worship.

5. David Takes Credit For Authorizing Instruments For Praise: "And the children of the Levites bore the ark of God on their shoulders, by its poles, as Moses had commanded according to the word of the LORD. Then David spoke to the leaders of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers accompanied by instruments of music, stringed instruments, harps, and cymbals, by raising the voice with resounding joy" (**1 Chronicles 15:15-16**). Though David said these were instruments "which I made" (**1 Chronicles 23:5**), and they were used outside the holy tabernacle, they were assumed to be "musical instruments of God" (**1 Chronicles 16:42**). *They were never authorized by God to be used in the Holy or Most Holy parts of the tabernacle/temple.* When Hezekiah restored burnt offerings, "He stationed the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, with stringed instruments, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, of Gad the king's seer, and of Nathan the prophet; for thus was the commandment of the LORD by his prophets. The Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets" (**2 Chronicles 29:25-26**). Gad had commanded the place for David to build the altar (**1 Chronicles 21:18-19**), Nathan had forbidden David from building a temple (**1 Chronicles 17:1-15**), but it was David's authority that had commanded the instruments! *The Levites and sacrifices were authorized by God in the Law of Moses, but the musical instruments never were authorized by anyone other than David.* Condemning the "ease in Zion" God later pronounced a "woe" to those who "sing idly to the sound of stringed instruments, And

invent for yourselves musical instruments like David" (**Amos 6:1, 5**). God never condemns what He is actively authorizing!

6. The church of Christ is the spiritual temple of God today. To the Corinthians, Paul wrote: "you are the temple of the living God" (**2 Corinthians 6:16**). Peter wrote that Christians: "as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (**1 Peter 2:5**). Music in praise and worship to God should spring from heartfelt faith: "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" (**Colossians 3:16**). *God did not authorize musical instruments before or during the time of the Law of Moses, and God has not authorized worship with musical instruments under the Law of Jesus Christ!* "Singing" must come out vocally from our Bible filled heart, and not our talented hands upon musical instruments. ----jtpll

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Salted Speech Colossians 4:6

- ~ *You know you're getting old when you stoop to tie your shoe and wonder what else you can do while down there.*
- ~ *"You cannot swim for new horizons until you have courage to lose sight of the shore." — William Faulkner*
- ~ *"He who returns from a journey is not the same as he who left." — Chinese Proverb*
- ~ *The churches of today are full of willing people: Some are willing to work and others are willing to let them.*
- ~ *Some old fashioned mothers who can remember their husband's first kiss have daughters who can't remember their first husbands.*
- ~ *Slander, like coffee, is usually handed to you without grounds.*

BIBLICAL JESUS	VS	MODERN JESUS
- Born as God Almighty in the flesh (John 1:1-14)		- Was a good teacher and man
- Loves us enough to speak the truth (John 4:1-38)		- Waters down words to avoid offense
- Points us toward eternal treasure (Matthew 6:19-21)		- Promises us earthly treasure
- Warns of sin, judgement & hell (Matthew 5:29)		- Sends all to heaven, dismisses hell
- Commands repentance of sins (Matthew 4:17)		- Minimizes need for repentance of sins
- Gives you salvation, hope, peace & joy (John 15:9-17 & John 14:1-14,27)		- Gives you health, wealth & happiness
- Hated & despised by the world (John 15:18)		- Loved & accepted by the world
- Hates sin & exposes the truth about sin (John 3:18-21)		- Overlooks sin & never corrects you
- Commands with divine authority (Mark 5:1-20)		- Gives suggestions not commandments
- Says to expect persecution in his name (Matthew 10:22)		- Promises our best life now
- Brings division when necessary (Luke 12:49-56)		- Promotes unity & tolerance at all costs
- Exalts God the Father's will (John 6:38)		- Serves your will above God's will
- Warns of false signs & wonders; magnifies God's Word (Matthew 24:24)		- Exalts signs, wonders & mysticism above God's Word
- Demands that emotion, experience & opinion conform to sound teaching (Matthew 23:1-39)		- Exalts emotion, experience & opinion above sound teaching
- Commands you to deny yourself & be willing to lay down your life for God (Matthew 16:24)		- Encourages you to love yourself first & gratify all your fleshly desires

WHICH JESUS DO YOU FOLLOW?