

## The Choir and Clap Trap

The Bible is clear concerning the innovations of “hand clapping” and “praise teams,” but they still seem to garner support from the unlearned and rebellious (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9). They are innovations, and, for different reasons, both equally damnable when introduced into the worship of God.

Using instrumental music to worship God is sin. How inconsistent, to outlaw the percussion instrument made from dead animal skin while defending the percussion instrument made from living human skin? Be consistent: allow both or neither. A drum is not authorized in praising God (Ephesians 5:19); it can neither speak nor admonish. Further, if a person persists in the silly argument that *psalms* includes the use of an instrument, then it is critical that every Christian snatch up the snare and pound away because the application is inclusive: if you don’t sing, you sin, therefore, if you don’t drum, you’re damned. My advice here would be: “When you bottom out in a deep hole, stop digging!”

The other popular innovation is “praise teams,” or what some call “multiple song leaders”. A good anti-example would be Corinth where, from chapters 11-14, Paul exposed a din of confusion caused by “multiple leaders.” Paul pointed out that worship cannot occur without coherency (1 Corinthians 14:12, 26, 40). Therefore, multiple tongue-speakers, (1 Corinthians 14:27), multiple prophets (v.29), and women usurpers (v. 34), all bidding for attention in the Corinthian assembly, created such a cacophony of conflict that even visitors thought that this bunch was banana-nuts (v. 23).

Notice v. 26 now where *psalm* is mentioned. If it is the case that prophets, tongue speakers, and interpreters were limited (one at a time and in order), what about the singing? Since reciprocal singing is required, what does this say about the order that must be maintained during the singing? I am just curious: when a church employs “praise teams,” who leads them? Do they begin, keep time and end the song by some coordinated form of telepathy? Or, like most robed choirs, do they key off of one member of the “multiple leadership” who is their actual leader? It is a modified choir and simply a matter of geography.

As a dying defense, some argue the four-part harmony parallel. God said sing. In order to sing, one must sing in a key (even the key of “off”). Therefore, singing in a bass, soprano or “also” key is irrelevant. Likewise, books, PowerPoint, sheet music, and paper hymnals fall into the same category of expediency in order to maintain order. We may (not must, but may) use books, etc. as tools to keep our congregational singing of praise orderly; that puts us all on the same page, so to speak (1 Corinthians 14:40).

My friends, if the best one can muster is a chant in monotone, then sing on, brother- but do not believe that one can interject rhythm instruments or introduce a dislocated choir into the worship service with impunity.

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