

## What Will You Be Tomorrow?

I suppose that most people dream of better things for tomorrow, or for the future. A larger bank account, a newer car, a nicer house, and more free time to relax and enjoy life constitute the bulk of many people's vision of tomorrow. However, the principle aspirations of right-thinking individuals lie not with this world and the transient, slippery security it offers, but rather with the spiritual — being better, more spiritually minded, and possessing the hope of an eternal home in heaven, being in the presence of God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the angelic host, and the redeemed of all ages!

But, concerning a better tomorrow, too many people just dream. They forget that the happiness (or misery) of tomorrow is based upon the preparation (or lack thereof) that is made **today**. Someone has said “we make our future by the best use of the present.” This is very true; yet there is more to it. Really, we make a **better** future “by the best use of the present, though, in reality, what ever our future shall be (whether better or worse) is largely determined by our “use of the present.” This is why we should make the “best use of the present” because the quality of the future depends upon the quality of our usage of the present. One reason why many, in later life, reap the harvest of misery, doubt, uncertainty, and a conscience laden with guilt is because their early life was spent sowing “wild oats.” One indulges in foolish, irrational thinking (?) when he imagines himself able to sow one thing and yet **reap** something else. The inspired apostle Paul wrote, saying, “*be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting,*” Gal. 6:7,8.

No man ever became “hooked” on tobacco who refused to take that first puff. No one ever became “hooked” on marijuana who refused to smoke that first “joint.” No person ever became an alcoholic who refused to take that first drink. One does not become a sex-pervert by thinking on things “*pure,*” Phil. 4:8. Illegitimate offspring are not produced by those who obey the injunction to “*keep thyself pure,*” I Tim. 5:22. You are today what you were **becoming** yesterday!

Even the judgment to come will be based upon our usage of the present. The following words, penned by that inspired apostle to the Gentiles, should enter our minds everyday we live: “*for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad,*” 2 Cor. 5:10.

**What** will you be tomorrow, and **where** will you be in the eternity to come? That depends upon the quality of your usage of the present. Those who have never obeyed the fundamental requirements of the gospel would do well to take heed. The spasmodic, hit-or-miss, sometimes-attending, on-again-off-again, lukewarm church member would also do well to take heed. Dear reader, **what** will you be tomorrow? As we have stated, you will be tomorrow what you are **becoming** today. For it to be otherwise would be to defy the law of God, the law of nature, the law of experience, and the law of sowing and reaping. Please think on these things!

\*\*\* —Bobby Witherington  
**Why We Sing and Do not Play**

One of the first things a visitor to our worship assemblies usually notices is the presence of vocal music and the absence of instrumental music. We are frequently questioned as to why we sing but refuse to play (on instruments of music) in our worship to God. Desiring to “*give an answer*” (I Peter 3:15), we are herein studying the question.

But first, let us approach the subject negatively. We do not refuse to play just for the sake of being different. We do not refuse to play just because mechanical instruments are expensive to purchase. We do not refuse to play just because we dislike instrumental music; in fact, with most of us, it is quite to the contrary. We do not refuse to play just because we traditionally have rejected it and must therefore continue this rejection in order to “save face.” Our reasons are much, much more valid.

As to why we **sing**, the answer is obvious; the New Testament Scriptures **authorize** singing. Please read the following: Matt. 26:30; Acts 16:25; Rom. 15:9; I Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 2:12; Heb. 13:15; James 5:13. In these references the words “*sing*,” “*sang*,” “*sung*,” and “*singing*” denote the **kind** of music specified, it being vocal or acappella in nature. To my knowledge, whether or not singing is authorized in Scriptural worship has never been questioned.

As to why we refuse to play the answer is equally obvious; the New Testament Scriptures do not authorize playing. In every scripture that pertains to the worship of the New Testament church, instrumental music is neither mentioned, commanded, or inferred, nor do we read any example of it being engaged in. According to the New Testament (which is now in force, Heb. 9:15-17) the only instrument upon which “*melody*” is to be made is the “*heart*,” Eph. 5:19, the instrument which God made. God made the heart; man made the harp!

However, our reasons for refusing to thus engage go even deeper than we have stated up to this point. You see, Christianity, as a system, is a system of faith, Gal. 3:23, and those who walk therein must “*walk by faith*,” 2 Cor. 5:7. And inasmuch as “*faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*,” Rom. 10:17, we cannot religiously do a thing “*by faith*” unless we can find New Testament Scriptures authorizing the thing to be done.

Then, too, we are mindful that not all worship is acceptable to God. For example, we read of: (1) **Vain** worship, Matt. 15:9, (2) **Ignorant** worship, Acts 17:22-23, (3) **will** worship, Col. 2:20-23, and (4) **true** worship, John 4:23-24. Obviously the only kind of worship which God accepts is true worship, which must be directed by the word of God, His word being “*truth*,” John 17:17. Keep in mind that we are discussing music as worship and not just as an art. Its esthetic value is not the thing under consideration; rather we are concerned with whether or not it is acceptable to God, the proper Object of our worship, Matt. 4:10.

More could be said about the danger of adding to, subtracting from, or

substituting in place of that which God has authorized. Please read Rev. 22:18-19; Gal. 1:6-9; 2 John 9-11. Then, too, we could observe that from a historical standpoint the New Testament church got along just fine without mechanical instruments of music in worship until the seventh century; Pope Vitalian being the one who introduced such in the year 670 A.D. Its greatest claim to authority, therefore, is the authority of the Pope of Rome — that being none whatever. Friend, you pass this way but once. Can you afford to risk your soul by offering unto God that which is of man, and not of God? After all, if God is the true Object of our worship (and He is, John 4:24!), then we must follow **His** instructions, and not submit to the innovations of man. --Bobby Witherington

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