

“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11).

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“I Can’t Say There’s Anything Wrong With It”

by John Isaac Edwards

I had a discussion with a preacher in the church of Christ concerning some differences between us. When the question concerning the use of musical instruments in worship unto God today came up, he made this statement: “We don’t use them here, but I can’t say there’s anything wrong with it.” Like this preacher, there are brethren who will say they do not practice a thing themselves, but can’t say there is anything wrong with it. Let’s explore this together.

1) **Musical Instruments In Worship.** Like the preacher who informed me they did not use a mechanical instrument of music where he preached, but that he did not preach against it because he could not say there’s anything wrong with it, there may be others with the same thinking. I cannot fathom the idea of men in pulpits among churches of Christ who do not know what is wrong with musical instruments in the worship of the church unto God today — can you? There’s just one thing wrong with it — there’s no authority for it! There is not a single statement or command, approved example, or necessary inference anywhere in the New Testament that authorizes the church to

employ the use of any mechanical instrument of music in worship of God. There are, however, ten passages which mention singing, vocal music (Mt. 26:30; Mk. 14:26; Acts 16:25; Rom. 15:9; 1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 2:12; 13:15; Jas. 5:13). That should settle it. To use a mechanical instrument of any kind in worship today is to go beyond the doctrine of Christ (2 Jn. 9).

2) **Social Drinking.** Most will agree that drunkenness is sin (Gal. 5:21), but some get up in arms real quick when we begin to point out that social drinking is also wrong. Just one Scripture should be enough to convince those wanting to do right that the recreational or social use of intoxicating drink of all forms is denounced by the Scriptures. Here are three: Proverbs 20:1 — “Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.” Proverbs 23:31 — “Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright.” 1 Peter 4:3 — “For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revelings, banquetings,

and abominable idolatries.” The Bible not only condemns excess of wine, but also “banquetings” or drinking parties!

3) **Immodest Dress.** Many don’t seem to mind us quoting 1 Timothy 2:9-10 (after all, they think their apparel is modest, even though it might not even wad a shotgun shell!), but when we get down to the nitty-gritty and begin defining nakedness as the Scriptures define it and make application of Bible principles regarding modesty, the fir begins to fly! In the Garden, Adam and Eve “...were naked; and sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons” (Gen. 3:7). God made “...coats of skins, and clothed them” (Gen. 3:21). One may have some covering on his body and still be naked as far as God is concerned. If we wear no more today than they wore then, we are just as naked today as they were then! Exodus 28:42 called for making the priests, “...linen breeches to cover their nakedness; from the loins even unto the thighs they shall reach.” Isaiah 47:2-3 says, “Take the millstones, and grind meal: uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers. Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen.”

Some say, "I wouldn't wear a bathing suit in public, shorts or skirts that rise above the knee, low cut blouses or think about going without my shirt, but I can't say there's anything wrong with it necessarily." Where is our sense of shame?

4) **Gambling.** Some brethren see nothing wrong with a little gambling from time to time. Gambling is a form of covetousness and greed (1 Tim. 6:10). It violates the second commandment (Mt. 22:39). It is dishonest gain (Eph. 4:28; Mt. 13:45-46; 6:1-4). Whether done in a glitz-and-mortar casino, a racetrack, state-operated lottery, raffling, booth at the county fair, office pool or home on the personal computer, gambling is gambling!

5) **Dancing.** Many have difficulty saying there's anything wrong with their son or daughter going to the Valentine's Dance or the Senior Prom. I have in my possession a copy of a special issue on dancing printed in the 1950's that includes about 50 reasons why Christians do not dance, the evils of the modern dance, and dangers of dancing.

Here is a little excerpt, "Fifty thousand women die every year as a direct result of immoral living, and 40,000 testify before death that it is a direct result of dancing. Dancing leads to sin and ruin, and by its fruits it shall be known. It is the cause of thousands of wrecked and ruined lives!! It causes the death of thousands of beautiful girls each year. It is the hotbed of sin, and the rendezvous of the white slavery (commercial prostitution). It saps the soul of its spirituality. It drags its victim into the dark to do its fatal work. It fills its participants with lust, and low ideals, and crowds their hearts with secrets they dare not make known. They who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God (Gal. 5:19-21)" (The Religious Revealer, Vol. 1, July 17, 1957, Num. 31). Do you think dancing has gotten any better in the last 50 years? Dancing comes under the class of "lasciviousness" (Gal. 5:19), defined by Thayer's Greek Lexicon as, "wanton acts or manners, as filthy words, indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females, etc."

6) **Church Support Of Human Institutions.** Some don't seem to mind that we do not make contributions or donations to a human institution, but when we preach against the support of human institutions from the church treasury as being unscriptural, this is when the rub comes. Some may belong to a church that contributes to such and not particularly like it, but stay and go along with it, thus partake in the wrong themselves, because they really can't say there's anything wrong with it. Produce one passage of Scripture, just one, that authorizes the local church to send one cent to a human institution in doing the work the Lord ascribed to the church. The Scriptures show the church is all-sufficient to do the work of the Lord (Eph. 4:11-16).

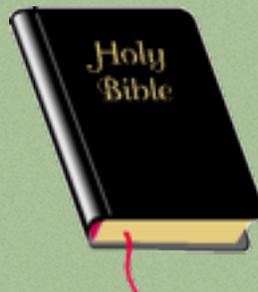
It is a sad state of affairs when we do not know wrong from right, or lack the conviction to say what we believe. We may not practice a thing ourselves, but if we go along with it and fail to speak out against it, we are just as guilty as the participants in it. "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11).

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