

WHY WE DON'T

John Edwards

Sometimes we are asked why we don't do some things that a lot of other churches of Christ do. Why we don't:

USE MECHANICAL INSTRUMENTS IN WORSHIP.

Two basic reasons why we don't: First, Christ didn't command it. He commanded “*singing*” (Eph. 5:19). Second, the early church didn't use it. They sang. Hebrews 2:12, “*...in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.*”

HAVE WOMEN IN POSITIONS OF LEADERSHIP.

First of all, elder/deacon qualifications call for “*husbands*” (1 Tim. 3:2, 11-12). We don't have any women husbands so we don't have any women elders or deacons. Additionally, God has limited the role of women. 1 Timothy 2:12, “*But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.*”

HAVE A PRESCHOOL, ELEMENTARY, JUNIOR OR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL. The church is “*...the pillar and ground of the truth*” (1 Tim. 3:15). It is not the work of the church to teach folks how to read, write, and do arithmetic. The mission of the church of the living God is summed up in

seven words when the church at Thessalonica “*sounded out the word of the Lord*” (1 Th. 1:8).

SEND FUNDS TO A MISSIONARY SOCIETY OR ORPHAN'S HOME. It's not that we are not interested in missionary work or are unconcerned about orphans. It's a matter of doing the Lord's work the Lord's way. The Lord has given the church the responsibility of evangelism (1 Tim. 3:15), benevolence (Rom. 15:25-26), and edification (Acts 20:32). He has provided within the organization of the local church everything that is needed to do that work (Eph. 4:7-16). When local churches, in the New Testament, sent funds in the field of evangelism, they sent directly to the preacher (Phil. 4:15-16). Nothing stood between the church and the preacher. In the matter of benevolence, the local church provided for its own need (Acts 4:34-35). When it comes to caring for orphans, the context of James 1:27 shows this responsibility belongs to the individual Christian.

HAVE SPECIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE. Why don't we have youth camps, teen retreats, cookouts, bowling parties, lock-ins, family game nights, skating trips and the like? The church has no business being involved in social affairs. If a group of

Christians want to get together and take their young camping, that is fine and good, but leave the church out of it. The home is the center of social activity (1 Cor. 11:22). Furthermore, the gospel is God's drawing power (Rom. 1:16). If you bring them in with food, fun and frolic, you'll have to keep them with it!

CALL THE PREACHER REVEREND, BISHOP, FATHER OR PASTOR. The term “*reverend*” is found only once in the Bible and refers to God, not man (Ps. 111:9). The words “*bishop*” and “*pastor*” are descriptive of the work of an elder (Acts 20:17, 28). The Lord taught, “*But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ*” (Mt. 23:8-10).

HAVE BAKE SALES, CAR WASHES, RAFFLES, YARD SALES. The only Scriptural method the church has of gathering money to finance its work is through the freewill offerings of its members upon the first day of the week. 1 Corinthians 16:1-2, “*Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the*

week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.” If an individual Christian wants to wash cars or have a yard sale and put the proceeds in the collection basket on the Lord’s day, he may do that. But, don’t associate the wash and the sale with the church.

HAVE A CHOIR OR SPECIAL GROUP TO SING. We are each told, *“Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord”* (Eph. 5:19). What you’re commanded to do, I’m commanded to do. Thus, you sing, I sing, we all sing! Through singing, we praise God (Heb. 2:12) and teach and admonish one another (Col. 3:16). Worship is not entertainment. If you want to be entertained, go to a concert; not the services of the Lord’s church.

HAVE A FELLOWSHIP HALL OR KITCHEN. Such would be a misuse of the Lord’s money. There is Scriptural authority for using the Lord’s money to preach the gospel

(Phil. 4:15-16), relieve needy saints (Acts 6:1-6) and edify the church (Eph. 4:16), but where is Bible authority for using the Lord’s money to provide a fellowship hall or a kitchen? Such is a perversion of the work of the church. The mission of the church is not social, but spiritual. *“For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost”* (Rom. 14:17). Paul asked the Corinthians, *“What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God?”* (1 Cor. 11:22). We don’t have a fellowship hall or a kitchen because we have houses to eat and to drink in.

HAVE THE LORD’S SUPPER MONTHLY, QUARTERLY OR ANNUALLY. As God expected the Jews to remember every Sabbath to keep it holy (Ex. 20:8; 31:14-15), He expects Christians to keep the observance of the Lord’s supper every Sunday (Acts 20:7). One may argue, “But it doesn’t say every.” It doesn’t have to. Any event that is celebrated is celebrated as often as the day rolls around. How often does

the first day of the week roll around? Every week, right? When no particular first day is specified, every first day is implied!

HAVE OPEN FELLOWSHIP. Why don’t we let folks from denominations like the Christian Church, Baptist Church or the Methodist Church just come in and place their membership with us? Or why don’t we have joint services with various denominations? We can only have fellowship with those who are in fellowship with God (1 Jn. 1:6-7; Eph. 5:11; 2 Cor. 6:14-18). If we can understand that there are some in the Lord’s church we can’t have fellowship with (1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Jn. 9-11), why is it so difficult for some to understand that we can’t have fellowship with those outside the body of Christ? In order for an individual to be in fellowship with God, he must be taught the truth, believe the truth, obey the truth and live right in the sight of God.

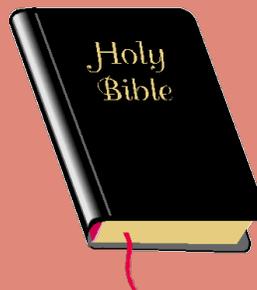
If you have any question as to why we do or don’t do a thing, we’re happy to discuss it with you.

The Terre Haute **SPEAKER** is published weekly by the church of Christ at Terre Haute, Indiana.

Assembling At:
4017 E Margaret DR
Terre Haute, IN 47803
[Exit 11 (I-70) W on HWY 46,
W on Margaret DR approx. 1 mile]

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