

What Did Early Christians Believe About Using Instrumental Music In Worship?

CLARKE (writing about instrumental music in worship) “I am an old man, and I here declare that I never knew them to be productive of any good in the worship of God. Music as a science I esteem and admire, but instrumental music in the house of God I abominate and abhor. This is abuse of music, and I here register my protest against all such corruption of the worship of the author of Christianity.” (Adam Clarke (Methodist), Clarke’s Commentary, Methodist, Vol. II, pp. 690-691.)

CATHOLIC “For almost a thousand years Gregorian chant, without any instrumental any instrumental or harmonic addition was the only music used in connection with the liturgy. The organ in its primitive and crude form, was the first, and for a long time the sole, instrument used to accompany the chant...The church has never encouraged and at most only tolerated the use of instruments. She enjoins the ‘Caeremonials Episcoporum’, - that permission for their use should first be obtained from the ordinary. She holds up her ideal the unaccompanied chant, and polyphonic, acapella style. The Sistine Chapel has not even an organ.” (Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 10, pp. 657-688.)

(NOTE: An organ was installed in St Peters Basilica in 1952, and a newer Swiss organ -the Sistine Chapel Organ - was installed in 2002.)

(As you can see, music in the Christian church has evolved very slowly over the first 1500 years. Music was primarily vocal, and that was it!)

CHAMBERS “ The organ is said to have been first introduced into church music by Pope Vitalian in 666. In 757, a great organ was sent as a present to Pepin by the Byzantine Emperor, Constantine, and placed in the church St. Corneille as Compiègne. The organ was immediately removed.” (Chambers Encyclopedia, Vol 7, p.112.)