

Macedonia Primitive Baptist Church

Pastor: Elder Will Martin

www.macedoniapbc.org

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A Capella Singing

By: Elder Will Martin

Primitive Baptists have always been known as a group of people who adhere to a strict interpretation of scripture when it comes to church doctrine and practice. The majority of the Articles of Faith of our churches have at least one article that reads something similar to the following:

“We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired Word of God and the only rule of faith and practice.”

I am thankful to be a part of a people that still use scripture (1611 King James Translation Bible) as our “only rule of faith and **practice**”. I rejoice in knowing that my home church worships in the same manner in which the Lord instructed us to in scripture and I pray that we continue to do it in a manner that is pleasing in the sight of God. Because we desire to align our worship service within a scriptural pattern, we sing a capella (without man-made musical instruments) hymns during our song service. The following New Testament verses of scripture reference the practice of singing.

- “And that the Gentiles might glorify God for (his) mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.” Romans 15:9
- “What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.” I Corinthians 14:15
- “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;” Ephesians 5:19
- “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” Colossians 3:16
- “Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.” Hebrews 2:12
- “Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. Is any merry? Let him sing psalms.” James 5:13

Those verses of scripture above are very clear about the way in which we are to sing.

- We are to sing praises to the Lord (Heb 2:12 and Rom 15:9) and not to man.
- We are to sing with understanding (I Cor 14:15). Based on the context of I Corinthians 14, we know that to sing with understanding means to sing with a clear message of encouragement to the saints and to sing with a clear praise to the Lord. Our songs and our preaching are not to be mangled with words and verbiage that the congregation doesn't understand (i.e. speaking or singing in tongues).
- We are to make melody with our hearts to the Lord (Eph 5:19). Notice that the Apostle Paul didn't say to make melody with an instrument. Any wicked unregenerate can make melody on an instrument, but it takes one who has a heart that has been touched by the Lord to make melody with his heart.
- We are to sing with grace and thankfulness (Col 3:16 and James 5:13) for what the Lord has done for us.

Ones who dispute the necessity of sticking to a New Testament scriptural pattern of singing are sure to mention the words of the Psalmist David in the 150th Psalm to defend their position. David says in that chapter of scripture to praise the Lord with harps, instruments and organs. But those who would use those instruments during their song service would most likely frown upon the use of cymbals, timbrels and dancing, which David also mentions in the 150th Psalm. We should keep in mind that the Old Testament worship service patterns are not for us to imitate. We are in the New Testament dispensation now and our pattern of worship should continue to be in line with examples given in New Testament scripture. The Old

Testament law service involved the sacrifice of goats and calves, the burning of incense and other duties that are certainly not to be practiced by the New Testament Church.

It is my prayer that we never lose sight of the importance of using scripture and scripture alone as our only rule of faith and **practice**. While the world may find it different to sing hymns without man made instruments, our focus should be on how the Lord views our services.

Macedonia Church Announcements:

1. Elder Michael Gowens has agreed to come and preach for us during our February bi-annual meeting. Lord willing, we will meet on Friday night, February 12th and Saturday night, February 13th. Singing will start at 7:00 both evenings. Brother Michael has agreed to stay through Sunday morning with us as well. We look forward to having him with us and pray for a Spirit filled weekend of worship services and times of fellowship.
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Announcements from Sister Churches:

1. Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church in Statesboro, GA will host their annual Thanksgiving meeting starting on Sunday night, November 22nd. The meeting will continue through Tuesday night, November 24th with services starting at 7:00 each night. There will be one service at 11:00 A.M. on Tuesday morning. Elder Ricky Harcrow is the invited speaker. For more information about the meeting, please contact Brother James Deal at (912)536-2065.