Cannot*

Numbers 22:16-18 (16) And they came to Balaam, and said to him, Thus saith Balak the son of Zippor, Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder thee from coming unto me:
(17) For I will promote thee unto very great honour, and I will do whatsoever thou sayest unto me: come therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people.
(18) And Balaam answered and said unto the servants of Balak, If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, **I cannot go beyond the word of the LORD my God, to do less or more.**
These are the most noble words that ever came from the mouth of Balaam. But he made a huge mistake, he taught King Balak how to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel. Balaam understood perfectly, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord. *However, he gave counseling that was full of mischief that caused Israel to leave sound doctrine despite the fact that both he and Israel should have known better. Although he understood he could not directly curse the Israelites, Balaam devised an evil plan for King Balak on how to tempt the Israelites into disobeying God. This is what happened;* Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD (Numbers 31:16). *Why study Balaam? Should we be concerned? Find out why in;*
Jude v10-11 (10) But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.
(11) Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.
The story of Balaam is as relevant today as any other time in history. Just as prophets like Balaam existed in Moses' day,

teachers exist in the Church Age with a striking similarity. Today the apostasy of Balaam is everywhere. It fills the pulpits of apostate religions all over the world; Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake (Titus 1:11). *We should encourage men to come out of spiritual Balaam, out of confusion of the many corrupt, human forms of worship and vanities of the world for Jesus' sake and not for filthy lucre's sake. There is reason in these last days to beware of the doctrine of Balaam which is not a religious system, but claims to act on the instructions of God. The doctrine of Balaam is the breaking down of faith and commandments of the Bible by indirect means and is one of the most widely received advisories in religions today. It remains close to Biblical teaching, but j-u-s-t outside Biblical truth thus falling headlong into the pit of unbelief. The Lord's brother said;* Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and **not by faith only** (James 2:24). *An example in breakdown of faith is the "faith only" doctrine prevalent in the religious world today, but it underminds the "faith only" doctrine taught by James. His words are* "**not by faith only**" *contrary to "faith only" which is "just believe." Christians today know — as their counterparts in the church in Pergamos knew — that they have been saved by grace through faith, born again by water and Spirit. They now possess spiritual life, which can never be taken from them; however, because of the unchangeable nature of the life that they presently possess, some may reason unwisely that they can conduct their lives in any manner they choose, and it cannot make a difference. However, as in the case of the Israelites who sinned, so it be in the case of Christians who sin. And the reason is in;*
2Peter 2:15-21 (15) Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;
(16) But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking

with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet.
(17) These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.
(18) For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.
(19) While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.
(20) For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.
(21) For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.
One commonly used indirect way of Balaam breaking down Biblical faith is found in this pernicious quote, 'the Bible does not say we cannot.' But listen to what Jesus had to say to the Church at Pergamos. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication (Revelation 2:14).
The Bible teaches; faith cometh by hearing, and by hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17). *Do you believe it? The stumblingblock, "The Bible does not say we cannot", is skirting with the doctrine of Balaam. What does Jesus say to those who follow unbiblical doctrines,* ***Repent****! Listen; There is not one verse that says; "the Bible does not say we cannot." The Jews believed most firmly that all that Moses had said was true, but yet they did not believe what Moses said; for he spoke of Christ whom they continued to reject. So, most men in a Christian land believe that what the Bible says is true, but they do not believe the things that the Bible says. This is just*

the fact. Many believe the Bible is true but they do not believe what it says. The Bible says, He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved (Mark 16:16)*, how few believe it. Do they not understand because they cannot hear?*

The jaw dropping argument, "the Bible does not say we cannot", is a colossal difference between doctrines of the Church of Christ and the doctrine of Balaam. Doctrines in the Church of Christ are what the Bible ***does say****, not what the Bible does not say. Listen,* Tertullian (204 A.D.) wrote: "The church of Christ composed of baptized believers, does meet each Lord's day to partake of the Lord's Supper." *This is new testament doctrine; Romans 16:16, Acts 2:41, Colossians 1:13, Acts 20:7. But someone may say, you are splitting hairs. That's exactly the point. When someone says, "the Bible does not say we cannot", that infers they are seeking a way to justify their actions in the absence of a 'thus saith the Lord.' "Thou shalt not" and "cannot" are similar. Sometimes the Lord will use the phrase, "thou shalt not", as we are all aware. The Lord will also use the word cannot;* Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he **cannot** enter into the kingdom of God (John 3:5)*. The word "cannot" does emphasize the placement of man in the absence of "*born of water and of the spirit*."*

Perhaps the doctrine most often strained by the quote "the Bible does not say we cannot" is music. Often we hear the refrain, "the Bible does not say we cannot use instrumental music in worship". Well, that is 100% correct to that point. Neither does the Bible say "we can use" instrumental music. Doctrine must be by Biblical command, example and/or inference. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: (2Tim 3:16)*. In the absence of scripture, there can be no doctrine, reproof, correction or instruction in righteousness.* And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth

(Matt 28:18). *In light of this colossal declaration, does Jesus Christ authorize the use of instrumental music in the worship? Jesus said,* Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me (John 5:39). *This is the clue to rightly dividing the truth, they which are ordinances of the law and they which testify of Christ; Listen,* Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace (Gal 5:4). *In these latter days one cannot be justified by the ordinances of the Law, but there is eternal life in the scriptures which testify of Christ;* Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me (John 14:6). *By objective investigation of the divine word the conclusion is, there is neither command, example or precept, for the worship of God with the use of instrumental music during the New Testament dispensation. The Church of Christ may be alone that sincerely believe the practice of instrumental music in the worship service is a departure from the divine plan. So what does the Bible say? Is there a thus sayeth the Lord? Yes there is;*

[1] 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).

[2] Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, **in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee** (Heb 2:12).

[3] 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).

[4] Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, **singing and making melody in your heart** to the Lord; (Ephesians. 5:19)

[5] By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the **fruit of our lips** giving thanks to his name (Hebrews 13:15).

It is true, the Bible does not say we "cannot have a piano" in Church services. But neither does the Bible say we can. The Bible command is to sing, it gives examples to sing, it infers singing. Even historical evidence eliminates the use of instruments in the worship in the Church.

Historical Information; There is not a solitary reference to the use of instrumental music in the worship of any New Testament church during the entirety of the apostolic age. The first appearance of instrumental music in church worship was about the sixth century A.D. The exact date of its introduction varied in different localities; but it can safely be concluded that there was no general practicing of it until after the eighth century.
(She worships in song by James M. Tolle)

Chambers Encyclopedia, Vol. 7, page 112, says: "The organ is said to have been introduced into church music by Pope Vitalian in 666 A.D." *Most likely the number 666 does not have anything to do with music specifically, however, it was man that added inanimate instruments to musical worship and 666 is the number of a man; that is haunting to me. Listen to this;*

Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six (Rev 13:18).

The number 666 is a mysterious number. Many have tried to determine who or what this number is directed to or about. However trying to figure out the meaning of 666 is not our point of investigation, only that 666 is the number of a man, and instrumental music was introduced into worship service by man. However, in spite of scriptural and historical objections to mechanical music there are reasons why a church could have musical instruments. Although such reasons are not flattering.

{"Instrumental music is permissible for a church under the following conditions:

1. When a church never had or has lost the Spirit of Christ.

2. If a church has a preacher who never had or has lost the Spirit of Christ, who has become a dry, prosing and lifeless preacher.
3. If a church only intends being a fashionable society, a mere place of amusements and secular entertainment and abandoning the idea of religion and worship.
4. If a church has within it a large number of dishonest and corrupt men.
5. If a church has given up all idea of trying to convert the world." Ben Franklin, editor of American Christian Review, 1860}

Cannot is a verb expressing incapacity, inability, withholding permission, etc;. With this meaning in mind let us explore other Biblical cannots, listen to this;

As the host of heaven **cannot be numbered**, neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me (Jer 33:22).

*Scientists estimate that there are **more than 100 billion** galaxies scattered throughout the visible universe. (World Book at NASA)*

*The Milky Way system is a spiral galaxy consisting of **over 400 billion** stars. (University of California)*

To me, this number is mind-boggling. IF the number of galaxies is 100 billion and IF they each should consist of 400 billion stars, that would be 40 thousand billion stars. Of course that is only an estimate. The fact of the matter is that man does not know how many stars there are in the Milky Way, much less in the entire Universe. When man will use words such as, "more than" or "consisting over," it is a clue that man does not know. The Milky Way galaxy is that milky or cloudy part of the night sky. Man certainly cannot count the stars therein. The stars we see are in our neighborhood. For instance, we cannot see the stars on the other side of the Milky Way. Now we must remember what God said, 'the host of heaven **cannot** be numbered, so will I multipy the seed of David,' *This*

does not mean the seed of David will equal the number of stars, we cannot count them so we do not know. It means the seed of David cannot be numbered. Listen to this concerning Solomon; And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart (1Kings 11:3). *We do not know the number of David's descendants bequeathed from King Solomon and his numerous wives and concubines, plus the descendants of all the other sons and daughters of David, the number must be staggering. So man cannot number the stars or David's descendants, he does not have the capability or the ability to do so. Why? because God has withheld permission. Turn with me to;*
1Corinthians 1:20-29 (20) Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?
(21) For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.
(22) For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:
(23) But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;
(24) But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.
(25) Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.
(26) For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:
(27) But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;
(28) And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

(29) That no flesh should glory in his presence.
After all the experience of the world, it was ascertained that human beings would never by their own wisdom come to the true knowledge of God, and it pleased Him to devise the gospel power of salvation. All the stars and moon cannot make it day; that is the prerogative of the sun. Nor can nature's highest gifts make the moral day arise; that is the office of Christ. The world through its wisdom knew not God. These words might be written as an epitaph on the tomb of science falsely so called. We have here a contrast drawn between God's wisdom and that of man. Man's wisdom could but inquire and argue. God's wisdom had decreed that by such means, man should learn his weakness. A man ***cannot find out*** *the work of God. Though a wise man think to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it. But worse than this is the man that cannot find salvation. Jesus said;* And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, **cannot be my disciple** (Luke 14:27). *What does this mean? To bear his cross and come after Christ. I ask, where did Christ go when He was bearing His cross? To His death, turn with me to;*
John 19:16-18 (16) Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.
(17) And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:
(18) **Where they crucified him**, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.
Now Paul said; I am **crucified with Christ**: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me (Galatians 2:20). *How is one crucified? For the answer turn to;*
Romans 6:1-6 (1) What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?
(2) God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any

longer therein?
(3) Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?
(4) Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.
(5) For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:
(6) Knowing this, that our **old man is crucified with him**, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

The error of Balaam is still with us today. Many believe a person can be saved before and without being baptized in water. How can that be seeing Faith in Christ is the effect of belief, and baptism is the effect of that one faith; only those who have first believed the testimony of God, and by faith repent of their sins, and by faith confess Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and by faith are baptized into His death for remission of sins, have the full and explicit testimony of pardon. This is the gospel. If you have not done so, will you do so now? Come while there is time. Need prayer for other reasons?, come while we persuade with song.

This message approved by
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Study Aids; Barnes' Notes on the Bible
Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary
Revised; 02242018
This message presented to; BaronOk-Dec.2010/
PineMtAr-Oct2018/