

Psalm 96 • Sing to the Lord a new song!

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Psalm 96, beautiful Psalm of praise. Just, very much magnifies the Lord. This Psalm, by the way, along with some of the others that we haven't even gotten to yet, is included in 1 Chronicles chapter 16. It's part of David's songs of praise.

And this one begins by saying.

"1 Oh, sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth! (Take note of that statement about singing to the LORD, a new song.)

2 Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day."
(ESV)

That's where the new song comes in. It's not yesterday's song. It's, I'm going to *"tell of his salvation from day to day."* Because there's a new work of God's deliverance. There's a new work of God's answers to prayer. So sing a new song means, we're praising the Lord, because this is an ongoing work of the Lord in our lives. There's new works that are happening all the time. And so, we're singing a new song.

Verse 3,

"Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among the peoples!"

And so, here once again we come back to this idea, which we were dealing with in the very beginning of our study tonight, with music and singing, and the role of music that it plays in worship.

Do you know that's... We take it for granted. We come to church and we're like yeah, you got music, things like that. But do you know in Islam, there's no music. You go into a mosque there's no guitar, there's no piano, there's no string instruments. There's no worship band. That's not part of their experience because traditional Islam deems those things to be "illegitimate" quote unquote.

But this thing of music and song plays a huge role in the worship of our Lord, as we've already said. And that carries over into the New Testament. Let me show you a passage from Ephesians chapter 5. Here's Paul, writing to the church, he says,

Ephesians 5:18-20 (NIV)

Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. (This is out of the NIV, by the way.) Instead, (he says,) be filled with the Spirit. (So don't be filled with wine, be filled with the Spirit. And he says,) Speak to one another with psalms, (he says,) hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

This whole idea of singing praise, carries over to our New Testament experience, and that's why we do it.

I was listening to a pastor recently who was telling about, a young man in his fellowship who came to church on a Sunday morning and brought his mother. But his mother was from a foreign country and she didn't speak a word of English. And she was an unbeliever but he brought her to church anyway.

And she went through the whole church service. And at the end, she asked her son to bring her back that evening for their Sunday evening service even though she didn't hear a word of anything. But she asked to return because there was something about the way the people were worshiping. There was something about the way the people were caught up in praise and worship. And even though she didn't understand a word of what was being said, she had this... She was just compelled to come back and experience this again.

And that got me to thinking when I heard that story, that I don't know if we ever think much about how our acts of worship on a Sunday morning, or a Wednesday night, or even in a small Bible study group, or whatever, might be very meaningful to someone who comes in from the outside who is an unbeliever.

Do you remember when you first went to church when you got saved? Do you remember seeing people genuinely worship the Lord? I remember it. I

remember because I really started walking with the Lord, when I was in my mid-twenties. And I had never seen people worship like that. Never in my life.

I grew up in church where church was a hymnal, stand up, sit down, and you usually, yawned about 5 or 6 times during the hymn. That's not taking away from the hymn. I'm just saying that it was such a... It was such a dead experience, frankly. But to go to church and see life, to see people who are worshipping the Lord.

And I got to thinking about how somebody might... I guess what I'm asking is, if you're... If the way you worshiped, preached, what would you be saying during worship? What does your worship say to somebody standing nearby, or in another section, who happens to be looking over. And they don't know the Lord, and they've never been in a worship service before but, they're looking at you. And they're watching you worship. What does your worship say about your heart for God, or, just your life in Him?

Is it just - hands in my pocket, looking up at the screen, not really doing anything, saying anything? I don't know what does that say to somebody? Uninvolved? Can't wait for this time to get over, or, whatever? Our worship preaches. It preaches.

Verse 4 says,

"4 For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all gods.

"5 For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols, but the LORD made the heavens.

6 Splendor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

7 Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

8 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts!

9 Worship the LORD in the splendor of His holiness; tremble before him, all the earth!

10 Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns! Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity."

11 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

12 let the field exult, (or rejoice) and everything in it! Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy

13 before the LORD, (Look at this) for he comes, for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness, and the peoples in his faithfulness."

"Let the heavens be glad" because the Lord is coming. The Lord comes. The Lord comes.

There are so many references in the Bible to, the trees of the field clapping their hands when the LORD comes, and the mountains crying out, and stuff like that. I got to tell you, I'm waiting to see it happen. Because I'm looking forward to seeing some trees, clapping hands, I really am. Because... I don't know; I know there's a lot of poetry that's being passed along in these passages.

But He is the Lord of creation. And there's something about this, that I think that we just don't get. I think C.S. Lewis had a little insight. I understand his thing was fairly fanciful and based in fantasy. But in his Chronicles of Narnia, the trees were alive.

And yet, there was a period of time where they just became dead and stuff. And I think C.S. Lewis understood. I think he thought through this whole process pretty significantly. And there's something about the trees of the field are going to clap their hands when the Lord comes. And I'm just looking forward to seeing it. Because I think it's going to be pretty cool.

So we're going to stop there. Let's close in prayer.

Heavenly Father, thank You, again, for Your Word. We've taken time to read through these psalms this evening and talk about their meaning. And talk about our own participation.

And Lord, we think about our praise and our worship. How busy we get in this life. And how easy it is to allow such things to become pretty superficial.

Lord, we ask You to forgive us. We ask You, Lord, to give us a heart of real praise. Offering ourselves to You in surrender, saying, Lord, I'm Yours. I'm tired of being my own. I want to be Yours. I want to yield myself to You. Give me the strength to say no to myself, and yes to You, and let me worship. Worship the Lord my God. Praise my Savior to glory in Your majesty.

Lord, help us to remember when we come on a Sunday, or Wednesday, or whenever, You're worthy of our worship. You're worthy of me taking my hands out of my pocket. You're worthy of a joyful noise. You're worthy of a new song. You're worthy of my praise.

Be with us Lord, we pray. Continue to speak to us through Your Word even though it judges the thoughts and attitudes of our heart, we welcome it. Because we know, Lord God, that You are treating us as sons and daughters. And You are bringing order. Your order into our lives.

Lord, we invite that order into our homes, our marriages, our businesses, our daily lives, our very words, our actions, our resources, money. Lord, bring Your order. We yield to You tonight. In the name of Jesus Christ, who is Savior, soon coming King, amen.