

Sing a New Song Psalm 96:1-13

Do you like getting things that are new?

There's something about that new car smell or a coat of fresh paint on the living room wall. It could be a new suit or outfit or some new dishes to replace the chipped ones you've had for years. Even a new flower bed or garden is exciting, except maybe when it's time to weed.

The dictionary has no fewer than 11 entries in defining the word new. Some of them include: Something that has never existed before whether in appearance, thought, or production.

Something that has existed before but is now just being discovered, like a new planet or new species.

It could be something that was experienced or revealed or understood for the first time, like learning a language that is new to you but has been around since, well, the tower of Babel.

New could be something recently grown, such as new potatoes or recently made, like a new car fresh off of production.

Every month there is a new moon, which refers to the cycle of the moon not the disappearance of the old one and the beginning or birth of a new one.

There are a lot of nuances to the meaning of new. As we open our Bibles to **Psalm 96**, the psalmist is inviting us to join him in a new song. This particular Psalm has three commands that we will consider this morning.

We are told to praise the Lord with delight
We are told to present to the Lord His due
We are told to prepare for the Lord is coming

Join me in looking first at the command to praise the Lord with delight.

I. PRAISE THE LORD WITH DELIGHT – vv. 1-6

In **verse 1** we are told to sing a song that's new.

A. Sing a Song That's New – v. 1

Based on our understanding of the multifaceted definition of the word, what does the author mean by “new song?” Let me begin by saying that new is both something that is **unveiled** and **universal**. Let me also remind you that this new song is directed to the Lord. He is the rightful recipient of our singing, the one as we have seen the past two messages and again will see today is worthy of our songs of praise and thanksgiving for who He is, what He has done, even what He will do.

This new song is one that will be **unveiled**. As a matter of fact, we might even say that it isn't just one new song that will be sung, but the idea is that new songs will be revealed throughout eternity. Because we have a God who is infinite, new songs will be sung as we discover new characteristics of our God. But hold that thought for a moment.

Not only is this new song unveiled, we see in this Psalm the **universal** – all the earth is invited to this new song sing fest. **Psalm 150:6** reminds us that everything that has breath should praise the Lord. In fact, **Psalm 19:1** says that all of creation declares the glory of God. The word “**declare**” means to make clearly known, to announce openly, to say emphatically. In other words, everything in the universe sings praise of one kind or another in a way that openly makes the glory of God known. The owl that hoots sings praise.
The wolf that howls sings praise.
The lion that roars sings praise.
The leaves that rustle in the wind sings praise.
The tide that ebbs and flows sings praise.
The stars that twinkle sings praise.
The whale that leaps out of the water sings praise.
The rainbow sings praise.
The brilliance of the sun sings praise.
Every day, all of creation is engaged in singing a new song and we, along with the psalmist, are invited to echo this song to the Lord, our Creator.

It has been said that **Psalm 96** holds the key to understanding why worship has continuously evolved throughout history, why each generation creates new songs that are sung to the Lord. Other Psalms invite us to “**sing to the Lord a new song.**”

Psalm 33:3 “Sing to Him a new song; play skillfully, and shout for joy.”

Psalm 98:1 “Sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things; His right hand and His holy arm have worked salvation for Him.”

Psalm 144:9 “I will sing a new song to You, my God; on the ten-stringed lyre I will make music to You.”

Psalm 149:1 “Sing to the Lord a new song, His praise in the assembly of His faithful people.”

Psalm 40:1-5

Each of these times the word **“new”** appears, it means something that is ‘fresh,’ ‘one of a kind,’ or as is the case in our Psalm, ‘never heard before.’

If you believe in God, and if you believe that God is the Creator, glance around the world and you soon discover that God is creative. We marvel at the variety of animals, all the trees and flowers; the depth and richness of colors; and the vastness of space with marvels that continue to be discovered. Although there are no new things being created, we marvel at new discoveries in science. We are overjoyed when He delights His people with answered prayer, intervenes in difficult situations or savies a person who was once estranged and far away chained by sin but now set free.

Through the prophet Isaiah, God said: **“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.” (Isaiah 43:18-19)**

Just before the Lord said this, He made this remark: **“Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them. Sing to the Lord a new song, His praise from the end of the earth.” (Isaiah 43:9-10)**

We are told in **II Corinthians 5:17** that when we were born again into the family of God, that He made us a new creation – the old has passed and the

new has come. We are not only made new in character, but we have also been given a new song in our heart. It’s not in our hymnal, but some of you may remember this song by John W. Peterson.

There’s a new song in my heart
Since the Savior set me free.

There’s a new song in my heart
‘Tis a heavenly harmony.

All my sins are washed away
In the blood of Calvary.

O what peace and joy

Nothing can destroy,

There’s a new song in my heart.

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There’s an old saying that goes “same song, second verse, a little bit louder and whole lot worse.” If that’s the song you’re singing, then check your heart, there ought to be a new song that brings peace and joy and comfort and strength to each struggle in life or each blessing received.

GotQuestions has this to say about being a new creation and singing a new song: **“One thing our inventive God loves is for His newly created people to express innovative, spontaneous, and unrehearsed praise and thanks to Him. Singing unto the Lord a new song is the natural reaction of an individual who is newly saved and transformed by the Lord: ‘He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the Lord.’” (Psalm 40:3)**

But I want to add to what they said and say that a new song isn’t just for new believers, it’s for all believers. In other words, if we are living in the strength of the Holy Spirit for the glory of God, there should be a joyfulness evident to others because we have been changed by the Lord. The evidence will not only be visible to others as they see a transformation in our character, but it will also be verbal in our spontaneous praise through singing.

GotQuestions continues with this insightful and important note: **“The ‘new song’ we sing does not have to be a newly composed worship number. The new song is merely a fresh response of praise and thanks – one that matches the freshness of God’s**

goodness and mercy, which are ‘new every morning’ (Lamentations 3:23). A new song springs forth unrehearsed from the heart of a worshiper who has been struck anew with wonder at the greatness of God and the salvation He has provided. When we see the mighty hand of God working in a way we’ve never observed before, we can’t help but burst forth with a song we’ve never sung before.” And I will add to that seeing with new spiritual eyes to see an old spiritual truth.

Think about that for a moment. The song in your heart was put there by the Holy Spirit and celebrates something you consider worthy of celebrating. The song in your heart may be an old hymn you have sung a thousand times, but for some reason, right at that moment, something was happening in you from which that song came to mind and you began to sing whether in your mind/heart or out loud.

How many of you have been driving somewhere or maybe just out for a walk and you see a rainbow or something in nature that brings a song to mind and you get lost in singing. Here’s one that comes to mind in such a moment.

O Lord, my God, when I in awesome wonder,
Consider all the worlds Thy hands hath made.
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee,
How great Thou art. How great Thou art.
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee,
How great Thou art. How great Thou art.

How great Thou art is an exclamation. It’s declaring His greatness. Let’s not stifle our praise. When God touches your heart, sing your praise either in a song you already know that now has new meaning or maybe a song you just made up. I think we dishonor God when we keep our praise silent. If God’s mercies are new every morning, then we have good reason to respond with a new song.

Matthew Henry writes: “We have reason to do it often, and we have reason to be reminded of it often.”

Charles Spurgeon adds: “Singing has become the

universal expression of love, the fitting voice of reverent adoration. ‘Men are made new creatures, and their song is new also’...the song is holy, heavenly, and pleasant.”

A new song will never grow old nor fade away.
A new song is the product of new affections.
A new song is eternal and will never be outdated.

John reminds us in his Revelation of Jesus that there will be a new song sung throughout eternity.

Revelation 5:9 “And they sang a new song: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because You were slain, and with Your blood You purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.’”

Friends, let’s fill our heart with a new song.

But I want to confess a struggle. My struggle is that I like what I like and so it can be a challenge for me to learn a new song, but I don’t want to be a spectator, I want to be a participant in singing. I am learning when I visit a church while on vacation to be taken in by songs I don’t know. Before, I would just stand there and attempt to mouth the words hoping I don’t sing off key too loudly and disturb those around me. Lately though, if it’s a song I don’t know, I am learning to just listen to the words and the melody, to think about the message of the song and how it fits where I am in my journey with Christ. Then I jump in and join with others in the wonder of the God who we are singing about and to whom we are singing. Sometimes a song will make me tear up because the Holy Spirit has touched my heart in a special way.

Let your praise to God be about singing a new song to Him. But the psalmist doesn’t stop there. He also says we should sing a song that is evangelistic.

B. Sing A Song That Is Evangelistic – vv. 2-3

If you have a KJV, it will read “**show forth.**” The NIV translates it as “**proclaim.**” It’s the same word in the New Testament for evangelize. It means to

cry out, to make an official announcement. In this case the psalmist is telling us to announce to others our salvation and to do so every day. In other words, don't be quiet about God's deliverance. That's what the word salvation means – to deliver from something. Because we are delivered from bondage to sin, proclaim it. We are delivered from temptation – proclaim it. We are delivered from trouble – proclaim it. Deliverance belongs to the Lord – proclaim it.

The psalmist said: **“I lift up my eyes to the hills – where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.” (Psalm 120:1-2)**

You remember those old John Wayne westerns where the Cavalry always came riding over the crest of the hill. The first thing you saw was the flag, then their heads bobbing up and down. Our help comes from the Lord.

If there is anything that is abundantly clear from Scripture throughout its pages, it is this: God is both personal, pursuing you with an everlasting love and He is incredibly capable. So when you cry out in your distress like the psalmist we can proclaim **“This poor man cried and the Lord heard him and delivered him from all his trouble.” (Psalm 34:6)** So believe Him, take Him at His word and proclaim His deliverance day after day. **Verse 3** continues that thought by saying that we are to declare His glory and marvelous deeds among all the people. Let everyone know who God is, that's speaking about His glory, and then tell them what He has done, that's His marvelous deeds.

In the '70's Contemporary Christian artist Andre Crouch gave us a song that resonates praise to the Lord for all He has done.

Bless the Lord, Oh my soul
And all that is within me
Bless His holy name.
He has done great things,
He has done great things,
He has done great things,
Bless His holy name.

For those of you who like a more traditional hymn:
To God be the glory, great things He hath done!
So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,
Who yielded His life an atonement for sin
And opened the life gate that all may go in.

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the earth hear His voice!
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the people rejoice!
O come to the Father through Jesus, the Son,
And give Him the glory great things He hath done.
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We are to proclaim His salvation or deliverance and we are to declare or make known His glory and marvelous deeds. Someone has said that God's glory is the display of all His God-ness. In other words, it's all of who God is on display – His worth, His goodness, His beauty, His justice, His majesty, His holiness.

John Piper describes God's glory as the display of His magnificence, which can include the praise and honor that are showered on His great name. Isaiah talks about the angels declaring God's glory which is evident in His holiness.

Isaiah 6:3 “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory.”

Piper adds that **“the glory of God is the manifest beauty of His holiness,”** or to say it another way, it is the way He puts His holiness on display for us to understand. The glory of God is His holiness revealed. Let's just say that God's glory or magnificence is something that is beyond our comprehension but what is around us opens the window of our spiritual eyes to see His glory and holiness on display.

We are to sing a new song through what we experience in God's presence.
We are to sing an evangelistic song that speaks of His deliverance and that reveals His glory and mighty deeds.
We are to sing a song that is reverent.

C. Sing A Song That Is Reverent – vv. 4-6

This is a call for all the world to praise God. **Why?**
Because He is great and because He is worthy.
That's what the four living creatures and the 24
elders declare.

Revelation 4:9-11 "Whenever the living
creatures give glory, honor and thanks to Him
who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and
ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before
Him who sits on the throne, and worship Him
who lives forever and ever. They lay their
crowns before the throne and say: 'You are
worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and
honor and power, for You created all things, and
by Your will they were create and have their
being.'"

He is to be honored as THE ONLY God. All other
gods are mere idols, the workmanship of mans'
mind and hands. Only the Lord made the heavens,
and He alone is God. His splendor and majesty and
His strength and glory are divine attributes that
stand before Him proclaiming His exalted nature.
He is not just the King of Israel, because He made
the universe, He is its rightful King and Ruler.
Because He made it all He deserves praise by all,
from the four corners of His creation. And while
some still object to giving Him the reverential honor
He deserves, there will come a day when every knee
will bow before Him and give Him the glory owed
to Him.

Praise is to be given to Him because of His **position**
– He is above everything that is created.

Praise is to be given to Him because of His **power** –
He is the Creator/Sustainer of everything.

Hebrews 11:3 "By faith we understand that the
universe was formed at God's command, so that
what is seen was not made out of what was
visible."

With the opening verses of Scripture and then
woven throughout all its pages we peel back page
after page revealing His power in creation, in His
provision, in His protection, in His promises. Past,
present, and future, the power of God remains
constant and unchanging. He has no equal and we
fall reverently before Him giving Him the glory and

majesty that He is deserving of and yet our efforts
fall far short of what is really due Him.

Andre Crouch asks the question we should all have
in our minds:

How can I say thanks
For the things you have done for me
Things so undeserved
Yet You gave to prove your love for me
The voices of a million angels
Could not express my gratitude
All that I am and ever hope to be
I owe it all to thee
To God be the glory, to God be the glory
To God be the glory,
For the things He has done
With His blood He has saved me
With His power He has raised me
To God be the glory,
For the things He has done
Just let me live my life
Let it be pleasing Lord to thee
And if I gain any praise
Let it go to Calvary,
With His blood He has saved me
With His power He has raised me
To God be the glory
For the things He has done!

Praise Him for His power.

Praise is to be given to Him because of His **place** –
His sanctuary. There is His sanctuary on in the
Tabernacle that was made in the days after Israel's
exodus from Egypt. Then there was the Temple
made by Solomon and restored by Ezra – again the
place of God's presence. God's glory was evident in
both places.

Then there is the sanctuary of heaven where He sits
on His throne with the angelic host surrounding
Him with praise and their willing service.

Paul speaks of another sanctuary where God
resides. When we become part of God's family
through faith for salvation, the body of each
believer is the Temple of God, the very presence of
God in us through the indwelling Holy Spirit. **Do**

we give Him the glory He is due through our life?

Praising the Lord should be with delight. It is our privilege and obligation to proclaim His glory.

The psalmist continues that thought with the next verses which tell us to present to the Lord His due.

II. PRESENT TO THE LORD HIS DUE – vv. 7-10b

The word “**ascribe**” comes from the root word to scribe or write down and means to assign or attribute something that belongs to someone else. It implies that there is a debt of some kind owed to another. In this case what we owe belongs to God. As we have already seen, what we owe Him is our praise and thanks for who He is and what He has done. In this passage the psalmist tells us three times to give to the Lord what He deserves. It is a command to all people of every nation to come to Him in His courts with their offerings and worship.

According to the Old Testament law, only the priest could bring the sacrifice into God’s presence. Only the priest could enter the inner part of the sanctuary and then it was only once a year. And he could only do so if he had a sacrifice to offer on behalf of himself and the nation. But before he could enter the sanctuary, he had to go through a series of ritual washings and put on special garments that were reserved for this high call of duty.

Keep in mind that in the Temple there was a special section in the courtyard reserved for Gentiles. They couldn’t go any further into the Temple than that area. Signs were posted that said if they went past that area, they could expect corporal punishment. Paul was attacked because the Jews saw him in Jerusalem with a Gentile assuming that he had taken this non-Jew beyond the court of the Gentiles into the place where only Jews were allowed.

In this psalm, all peoples are invited to come into God’s presence with a sacrifice. It points to the culmination of the promise made to Abraham that through him, all the nations of the world would be blessed. It was a reference that they too, would be grafted into the same family tree inheriting the

promise of God to be recipients of His grace and salvation through the coming Messiah.

This is an invitation for all, Jew and Gentile alike, to be clothed in the righteousness that only the Lord can provide so that we too, can stand in His presence. That’s the only way we can come into His courts. These verses remind us that our uncleanness can be cured through the salvation that God alone can provide. The deliverance He provides is the only way we can be welcome in His home. But as we enter His courts, the psalmist reminds us to enter with reverent awe, to fear or tremble before Him.

This trembling is not cowering in utter fear like Dorothy and her three companions as they approached the Wizard of Oz, but to have profound awe for God’s glory, His name, His splendor, and His holiness. It is to bow down in humility and reverence remembering as we learned last week, that He is our Shepherd, and we are the people of His flock joining in the chorus we sometimes sing:
**Come let us worship and bow down
Let us kneel before the Lord, our God, our Maker**

Let’s take our cue from Isaiah and remember who we are and in whose presence we are and bow down in reverence. We revere Him because His kingdom is established. It is secure. It will not be moved. It is eternal. We must present to the Lord what He is due.

In the closing verses, we are to prepare for the Lord is coming. That too, is a reason for praise.

III. PREPARE FOR THE LORD IS COMING – vv. 10c-13

His return is both a time of **examination** and **exaltation**. It’s a time of examination because the Lord’s return means judgment and we need to be ready to face Him. Our passage tells us He will judge with equity. That simply means that when He judges it will be with fairness, impartiality, and justice. It stands to reason that if He is holy and righteous, all His subsequent actions will also be holy and righteous. He will judge fairly. He won’t overlook the sordid affairs or sins of those who

deserve judgment. There may be things we observe today and wonder how they can get away with such egregious actions, but know that when the Lord comes all wrongs will be made right, nothing will be overlooked. All inequities will be made right and for His righteous judgment, He deserves praise. So before He comes and in order to give Him the praise He is due, let's examine ourselves.

His return is also a time of **exaltation** because His judgment will be done in righteousness and truth. Because God's kingdom is one, all His creatures will rejoice when His rule over mankind brings righteousness to full expression throughout His kingdom. That is our future hope, but a hope that captures our heart with rejoicing and the singing of praise.

Right now, because of sin, the world groans waiting for the coming day when the Lord will reign for eternity and everything will be made right. **Romans 8:18-25** tells us that until the time of this future judgment, the world groans because of sin. Some day it will all be made new. That's why the psalmist can say: **"Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let the sea resound, and all that is in it; let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them. Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy; they will sing before the Lord, for He comes."** (vv.11-13a) And we will join in their songs of praise.

If you trust in the coming of the Lord, that future hope of His return and the righteous judgment He brings with Him should cause us to rejoice and be inspired for eternity to sing a new song to Him.

David Mathis writing for Desiring God puts it this way: **"Forever God will continue to 'show the immeasurable riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus' (Ephesians 2:7, and as He does – for His glory and our joy – we will keep singing new songs."**

I hope you're in the mood for singing. Go ahead and make it a new song to the Lord. He deserves it.