



Sunday, December 27, 2020

Pastor Keith Sovo

## **Intro to Psalm 96**

Do you ever wonder why we sing in church? Some don't like to sing. For some, they feel like if they can't carry a tune or their voice doesn't sound very good, then they shouldn't really participate. If that's you, it's important that you know that the God who commands us to sing is the same God who gave you your voice. He is the One we sing to, and He delights to hear His people's praise—even if it doesn't sound good to you or to others!

Others have used singing in church to make a name for themselves—to shine a spotlight on their talent. This is also inappropriate because music in the church is meant to glorify God and edify and build up the body of Christ, not glorify a member of the congregation. So, when we think about singing, we must keep our focus on the One we sing about and to Whom we sing.

But beyond all this, it is simply important for us to be disciplined about getting “outside ourselves.” We spend so much of our time focused on our desires and our circumstances. We spend too little time contemplating the transcendent realities of our God or of the promises He has made to come, to reign, and to judge. We must make a better effort—whether in singing or any other spiritual discipline.

## **Context**

The psalms are a collection of prayers and songs that are meant to deepen our understanding of God and how our experience fits within the grand narrative of His salvation. The focus of the psalms is always on God and His activity—even though some of the psalms speak extensively about the writer's experience, it is always in service to the greater realities of God and His work. So, may the shape and emphasis that the psalms give us be instructive for how we shape our time and relationship to God.

**Read and Reflect** *(Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.)*

Read Psalm 96

“Sing to the Lord a New Song”

What We Sing (v. 2-3)

- His salvation
  
- His glory
  
- His marvelous works

Why We Sing

- Because He alone is God (v. 4-6)
  
- Because He alone is King (v. 7-10)
  
- Because He alone is coming to judge the world in righteousness (v. 11-13)

## **Discuss**

- 1) Do you enjoy singing in church? Why or why not?
  
- 2) What are some of your favorite Christian songs? Why?
  
- 3) How might a passage like this inform contemporary debates in churches about music style?
  
- 4) How does this passage help us think about our relationship to God?
  
- 5) Read Revelation 4 and 5. What do you notice about what is taking place in the throne room?