



# Message Discussion Guide

## Week of November 19, 2023

**Message:** Together for Joy

**Key Scriptures:** [Psalm 98](#)

**Preachers:** Pastor Tom Parkinson & Jason Boddy

### Message Highlights:

Has God done marvelous things in your life? When we consider all that God has done for us, it makes us want to sing praise to God. That's what Psalm 98 is all about.

- Psalm 98 is a prayer that gives expression to our joy on a good day and anchors us in the goodness of God on a bad day.
- The psalm invites us to “sing a new song” to the Lord, giving fresh expression to what God has done for us.

The reason we can sing a new song is because God has given us the gift of salvation through Jesus. No matter what is happening in our lives, we always have a reason to sing because of God's eternal love for us in Christ.

When we sing a new song, it's contagious. Singing praise makes others want to praise.

- In the same way, when we sing the old song of the world – a world caught in darkness, discord, division, death, and drudgery – it is also contagious.
- The world needs us to sing the new song because praise brings the world together.

In psychology, the looking-glass self-theory says that our tendency is to understand ourselves through the perception of what we think others think of us.

- Singing the new song means seeing ourselves as God sees us – and God sees us as valuable enough to send Jesus to die for us.
- When we see ourselves through God's looking glass, we have reason to sing, for no matter our circumstances our God has done marvelous things for us.

The new song isn't a blind denial of the hardships and trials we face. Rather, it is a defiant song that says we are not defined by the sin and brokenness of our lives. We can choose to sing the new song. We can choose to be together for joy.

**Discussion Questions:**

- 1.) What are the marvelous things that God has done in your life? Why is it important to take time and remember what God has done?
- 2.) What do you think it means to “sing a new song to the Lord?” Is this about literal singing only? What does it mean to live a life that sings a new song?
- 3.) [Read Psalm 98:](#)
  - a. Why is the psalmist calling upon us to sing praise?
  - b. What does it mean to “shout for joy?” Have there been times in your life where you have shouted for joy? What did it feel like?
  - c. What does it mean for the sea, rivers, and mountains to join in the praise song?
  - d. Why does verse 9 proclaim God’s judgment to be a reason to sing?
- 4.) Jason shared about the looking-glass self-theory, in which we view ourselves through the lens of how we think others view us:
  - a. Do you ever do this? How do your perceptions of how others think of you impact your self-image?
  - b. How can seeing ourselves through others’ perceptions damage our psyche?
  - c. What is the difference between the way God sees you and the way others see you?
  - d. How can you start to see yourself more fully through the God’s looking-glass?
- 5.) Why is it important to sing praise to God even when life is difficult?
- 6.) How can this message influence the way you celebrate Thanksgiving this week?
- 7.) What is your primary takeaway from this message?

**Abundant Life Tip:** When life is difficult, intentionally remind yourself of the marvelous things God has done in your life. Remember that you are loved so deeply that God sent Jesus to die for you. And in remembering, sing praise.