

SERMON NOTES

SUNDAY 01.12.24

PREACHER: CAM HALL

PSALMS OF HOPE:
JOYFUL CELEBRATION

BECOMING CHRISTLIKE

*BEING, **THINKING** & DOING*

Conviction of a Disciple: As we journey in our growth into Christlikeness, we become more secure in our identity in Christ, trusting that He reigns with justice and righteousness, bringing restoration and hope to our lives.

OVERVIEW

Advent calls us to sing a new song, celebrating YHWH's faithfulness, justice, and righteousness as He brings salvation, restoration, and hope through Jesus, the King who reigns over all creation.

ACTION

Step 1: Reflect: How does the idea of YHWH's judgment as restoration and justice reshape how you view God's reign?

Step 2: Commit: What old "songs" of failure, fear, or worry do you need to let go of this Advent season to sing the new song of hope and freedom in Jesus?

Step 3: Act: How can you celebrate God's justice and faithfulness this week, practically showing His hope and deliverance to someone in need?

THOUGHT

SCRIPTURE: PSALM 96

Psalm 96 begins with a call to “Sing to the Lord a new song!” It’s a command not just for us but for the whole earth—an invitation to join in a universal chorus of praise to the one true God, YHWH. As we step into Advent, this psalm invites us to celebrate with joyful anticipation, remembering that YHWH, the God who reigns, is worthy of our worship because He brings hope, salvation, and justice.

We are told to sing a new song because YHWH’s glory and righteousness are unmatched throughout creation. His greatness fills the heavens and the earth. The psalmist reminds us that the “other gods” we create are nothing but idols - lifeless and empty. They can promise a lot, but in the end, they only lead to disappointment and destruction. But YHWH stands apart—the Creator of the universe and the One who reigns forever.

Advent is a time of waiting. But it’s also a time of celebration! We remember that YHWH comes, bringing salvation, deliverance, and justice for his people. Verse 13 says:

*“Let all creation rejoice before the Lord, for He comes,
He comes to judge the earth.
He will judge the world in righteousness
and the people in His faithfulness.”*

For Israel, these words were a promise of hope. Having suffered oppression under so many of their ancient neighbours, they knew YHWH’s judgment meant justice - God’s restoration as he healed and made whole all that had been lost and broken.

Often, we hear the word “judgment” negatively, but here it speaks of God’s faithfulness. YHWH is not coming to condemn but to rescue, to restore what has been lost, and to make all things new. His judgment is righteous and good, bringing salvation to those who have trusted him.

This psalm was a pilgrimage song, sung by the Jewish people as they journeyed to Jerusalem for Passover. Imagine Jesus hearing and even singing these words, “For He comes!” He would have certainly known that he was the psalm’s ultimate fulfillment. YHWH had come and he had come in the flesh to reign as king, bringing the justice and righteousness hoped for in this psalm.

Advent reminds us that there is a new song to be sung, a new story being written. YHWH, through Jesus, reclaims our past mistakes, failures, and traumas. He pronounces freedom over us. The hoped-for King is here, reigning over all creation, renewing and restoring everything broken by sin. His justice sets captives free, His faithfulness delivers, and His righteousness brings peace.

This Advent, Psalm 96 calls us to joyful worship—a worship that rises above our circumstances and declares that God reigns. As we celebrate the arrival of Jesus, we join in the song of creation, magnifying and celebrating a God who is with us, a king who brings salvation, and a Lord who makes all things new. Sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done great things, and He is coming again!

DISCUSSION

1. How does Advent help us celebrate both the arrival of Jesus and the promise of His return to set all things right?
2. What does it look like to live as though Jesus' justice and righteousness are already at work in our lives?
3. How can we, as a Connect Group, sing a "new song" together, testifying to the freedom and restoration that Jesus has brought into our lives?

PRAYER

Lord,

We thank You for coming to bring salvation, justice, and restoration to our lives and our world. Teach us to sing a new song, one that overflows with joy and celebrates your faithfulness. Help us to trust in your reign and live in the freedom and hope you have brought through Jesus.

Amen.