

What I want is calling him from Teh Clayton, I'm selling to Google this■■ uh Thank you.
Thank you.

[13 : 21] Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

We sing again to God's praise. This time in Mission Praise 51. That familiar hymn. A good hymn to sing at the beginning of New Year.

Be thy my vision, O Lord of my heart. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[15 : 06] Amen. Love my soul's shelter, love my high tower, praise thou in heavenward, O power of my power.

Riches I need on your once empty grace, of my inheritance now and always.

Thou art the holy, first in my heart, I, King of heaven, my treasure thou art.

I, King of heaven, after victory won, may I reach heaven's joy so bright and sun.

Heart of my own heart, whatever before, still be my vision, O ruler of all.

[16 : 57] If you could turn now please in your Bible to Psalm 96.

We'll hopefully get back to Genesis. It won't be next Sunday now, it'll be the Sunday after, God willing. But tonight I want to just look at this Psalm, Psalm 96.

We were thinking this morning about the Magi and how they were led to the Lord Jesus and how they came with a desire to worship Jesus and they worshipped him.

And we thought a little just about how we're guided in worship, even as we look at the witness of the Magi. And in this Psalm, we're given a very clear guide in how we worship God.

We're taken into a worship service many, many years ago. And we'll read this Psalm and then we'll step through it in the time that we have.

[18 : 25] Psalm 96 and verse 1. Sing to the Lord a new song. Sing to the Lord all the earth. Sing to the Lord, praise his name.

Proclaim his salvation day after day. Declare his glory among the nations. His marvelous deeds among all peoples. For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise.

He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the nations are idols. But the Lord made the heavens. Splendor and majesty are before him.

Strength and glory are in his sanctuary. Ascribe to the Lord, O families of nations. Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

Ascribe to the Lord the glory due to his name. Bring an offering and come into his courts. Worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness.

[19 : 31] Tremble before him all the earth. See among the nations the Lord reigns. The world is firmly established. It cannot be moved. He will judge the peoples with equity.

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. He comes to judge the earth.

He will judge the world in righteousness. And the peoples in his truth. Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word to us.

We'll sing again now to God's praise. We'll sing from Psalm 40. Psalm 40. And the first five verses. The first six stanzas of the psalm.

[20 : 35] I waited for the Lord my God. And patiently did bear. At length to me he did incline my voice. And cry to hear. He took me from a fearful pit. And from the miry clay.

And on a rock he set my feet. Establishing my way. I'm not actually sure. Who's ENA that's presented? It's not. But he's going to stand up.

So let's stand and let's sing praise to God. Psalm 40 verses 1 to 5. I waited for the Lord my God. And patiently did bear. And let's sing. And let's sing. And let's sing. And let's sing.

He did incline my voice and cry to hear.

[21 : 33] He took me from a fearful pit. And from the miry clay.

And on a rock he set my feet. He established in my way.

He put a new song in my mouth. Our God to magnify.

Many shall see it and shall fear. And on the Lord rely.

Oh, blessed is the man whose trust upon the Lord relies.

[22 : 53] Respecting not the proud nor such. As turn aside to lies.

O Lord my God. O Lord my God. O many are.

The wonders Thou hast done. Thy gracious thoughts to us were far.

Above all thoughts are gone. In order none can wreck on them.

To thee is there and declare. And speak of them.

[24 : 01] Thy word may more. Than God be number of.

Thy word may more. Thy word may more. Let's pray as we turn back to God's word.

Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you for your word which we've sang.

We thank you for the testimony that we hear in Psalm 40.

The song. The new song. Of one who was lifted from the mud and the mire of sin. And whose feet were set upon the rock.

And we thank you that Jesus is the rock of our salvation. We thank you that we can sing that Psalm.

We can enter into that new song.

[25 : 01] If we are those who have trusted in Christ. We thank you that that Psalm is a Psalm that speaks to us about our own testimony. And we ask Lord that each of us would have a testimony to sing out and to share.

All of us are sinners. All of us are sinking under the weight of sin. There is none righteous, not one, we are told. But we thank you that there is a Savior in Christ.

There is no other name. There is no other way to be saved. But we thank you that Jesus came. He is the one who lived and died and rose.

So that if we cry out to him in faith. We will be lifted from the pit of our sin and from the pit of hell. And taken to that place of security.

That place where we are able to say that the Lord is our God. Our God. And he is with us. He will never leave us nor forsake us in this world. And even when it comes to the time for us to leave this world.

[26 : 08] We thank you that we have an even greater security in the heaven. That is prepared for those who love the Lord Jesus. So we ask Lord that we would all be in Christ.

And if there is any here tonight who haven't yet responded to that call of Jesus to come to him. And if there is any tonight who still hang on to their sin.

And have not asked for that cleansing. We pray that even in these moments. There would be some. Even one. That would respond. And would call upon the name of the Lord Jesus.

We pray Lord for all those who are absent tonight. We think of those especially who listen online. Some with illness. Some who have been housebound for some time now.

And we ask Lord that you would bless them. We thank you that you are the God who is not bound by these walls. And so we ask that just as we pray that we would know that sense of your presence with us.

[27 : 11] We pray that those who are in their homes. Those in Harris House. Those in different places. Who may even be isolated on their own just now. We pray that they would know the reality of God with them.

As we pray that we would know the reality of God with us. So be with those whose desire would be to be in the house of God. But who are unable to be here.

Bless them. Wherever they are. And we ask that you would move in the hearts of those who have every opportunity but no desire. We pray Lord that you would awaken those who are dead in transgression and sin.

We pray that you would revive, quicken, draw back those who are at a distance from you. Those whose love may have grown cold. You alone know what is going on in our heart.

But we pray for all those who are absent. And we ask Lord that you would draw them close to yourself. We pray for the young ones with us tonight.

[28 : 13] We thank you for them. And we ask that you would bless them. That you would watch over them. We thank you that you are the God who is wisdom. We thank you that as we ask for wisdom you have promised that you will not withhold it from us.

But that you will give it to us liberally. For the young ones especially. You may wonder about times of life and the direction that they need to go in.

Whether it's jobs or university courses or different subjects in school. We thank you that we have a friend in Jesus. Who is able to guide us and lead us.

In every decision. No matter how big or how small it is. And for the young ones we pray. That they would know you as that friend that sticks closer than a brother. We pray that they would know your guidance and your care and your keeping and your protection.

We commit them to you. And we ask that they would walk close with you all the days of their lives. Hear our prayers. Be with those who meet as we do in different places.

[29 : 23] We think of Duncan in Scalpy tonight as he opens your word. We pray that you would be with Farrecher as he opens your word in Leverborough. And we ask that you would speak through your servants.

That you would bring the gospel message through in these places. And in every place where your word is opened and Christ crucified is preached. We ask Lord that you would be working.

And we think especially of those who cannot meet in this way. We think of Christian brothers and sisters that we've never yet met. Who are hiding in the back rooms of homes.

Who are hiding in underground churches. Who are unable to speak the name of Jesus openly. Who even as they come together in a small way to worship.

Risk everything. Their very lives. And we ask Lord that you would minister to them. That you would bless them. That you would give them courage.

[30 : 26] That you would protect them. And that you would help them to know. That you are God. And that you are close. We thank you that in the darkest of places.

Very often the light of Christ is most clearly seen. And we ask that that would be the case. In these areas where your believers are persecuted. And in our own country.

Although we are not persecuted in that way. We are conscious. Of an encroaching darkness. And we ask that you would help us not to be fearful. But to be those who are courageous.

And strong. And ready. To always tell people. Of the hope that is in us. If we are in Christ. And help us when we do so.

To do so with gentleness. And respect. As we are directed to. To hear our prayers. Open your word to us. Now we pray. We pray this in Jesus name. And for Jesus sake.

[31 : 26] Amen. Psalm 96. If you have that open in front of you. You will find that helpful. And I want to start tonight.

Just by. Noting. Something that we noted in the morning. As well. And that is. The fact that. It is a new year. We are. In the early part.

Of. A new year. So for those who take points. That is point number one. We are. In a new year. And. When we are. At the beginning of a new year.

We tend to be a bit more thoughtful. a bit more thoughtful than normal. Life is busy, things just keep on coming at us and as we get further into the year it seems like we're just trying to keep up with the workload and all the different things that are flying in our direction but at the beginning of a year we try to take a little time to reflect, to think things through, to hit the reset button in our own lives. It's a time where we hope to be recalibrated. It's a significant time, the new year and in the experience of the psalmist in Psalm 96 and in the experience of Israel, God's people, this was for them a significant time. If you want the full context of what was going on in their lives you can take a note of 1 Chronicles chapter 15 and chapter 16. We're not going to read it but you can read it yourselves later on but that was the juncture they found themselves in. The ark of God which had been away for a period and the ark of God which spoke to them of the presence of God was brought back into their midst. And so God's people, they were conscious that this was a significant time where they recognised the reality of the presence of God with them.

Spurgeon gives us a summary of what was going on. He says, this psalm is evidently taken from that sacred song which was composed by David at the time when the ark of God was set in the midst of the tent which David had prepared for it and they offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings before God.

[34 : 10] So for God's people, the very simple point to note is that this psalm was first written and it was first sung at a significant time. It was a new chapter in the spiritual experience of God's people as they went forward with that assurance of the presence of God with them.

And for us, at the beginning of a new year, we don't know what's ahead of us in a new year.

And if anything, if we've been taught anything over the last three or four years, we're so conscious of how little we do know.

Things can change in an instant. We've lived through a pandemic that we could never have seen coming. We don't know what's ahead of us in this year.

Hopefully none of that. But what we do know is the one who is with us and who promises to never leave us nor forsake us.

[35 : 26] We don't know the future, but we know the one who holds the future as the hymn puts it. And we know the one who holds us as his children if we're trusting in Christ.

And so just as God's people were looking forward with that sense of God's presence, we too have that desire to know the presence of God with us as we go forward.

Remember the familiar verses in Proverbs 3 that we're to acknowledge the Lord in all our ways and he will direct our paths.

Trust in the Lord. Lean not in your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him. He will go ahead of us. He will direct us. And that's our prayer. And that was their prayer.

And in that context they are going forward with a sense of worship. So there's a new year for us. It was a new chapter for them.

[36 : 32] And the second point that we see here is that God's people they have a new song to sing. And that takes us into verses 1 to 3.

Sing to the Lord a new song. Sing to the Lord all the earth. Sing to the Lord praise his name.

Proclaim his salvation day after day.

Declare his glory among the nations as marvelous deeds among all peoples. And so in verses 1 to 3 we can hear that there's well there's direction for us and there's a determination on the part of the psalmist that he shares with us.

David is teaching us and he is directing us to praise God. And David himself is determining he is resolving that he will praise God.

Now one of the things that we do at the beginning of our new year is we make resolutions. Does anyone get any new year's resolutions? Anyone going to be brave enough to share with us their new year resolutions?

[37 : 47] No? No? Very wise people. Last Sunday when I was in Smithton Church Ennis McSween who was leading the service he told us he shared with us that his new year resolution was that he was going to across the whole year he was going to drink no fuzzy drinks.

That was his new year resolution. No fuzzy drinks for a whole year. So maybe that's your new year resolution. Maybe your new year resolution is to lose a little weight.

I could do with that one. Get a bit fitter. Maybe it's a new year's resolution to read more books.

Maybe it's a new year resolution to have less screen time in our lives.

That would be a good one too. Well the psalmist resolution, David's resolution, that he's honest enough to share with us is he is going to praise God.

His determination is that he will praise God. So how do we praise God as we look at this psalm?

Well the first thing, the obvious thing, is we sing.

[39 : 01] Three times in the first verse and a half, there is that resolve to sing. So God's people are being taught, we are being directed, to sing out.

Praise to God. So in terms of application, unless we have some medical condition that prevents it, let's make sure that we do sing.

I'm sometimes amazed when I go to services in different places and I'm sitting in this place, sitting in this position and I look out and the praise is announced, the people stand up and some sing and I see some and their jaws are clenched.

I sometimes recognize them, they're Christian people. I don't understand it. I think we're challenged on that here. If we are God's people, then there is a clear instruction here that we sing.

We may not sing in tune, doesn't matter. We're not called to sing in tune, we're called to sing and make a joyful noise. Three times in a verse and a half.

[40 : 25] It's therefore great emphasis where to praise God by lifting our voices, by singing out. But what do we sing? Well, we sing a new song.

We don't sing the old song about the sin that causes us to sink, but we sing the new song of the Saviour who lifts us from the slimy pit and from the mud and the mire and puts us in that place of safety.

That's the song we sing. We sang it in Psalm 40, in Psalm 40 verses 1 and 2 and 3 in NIV.

It says, I waited patiently for the Lord. He turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and the mire. He set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song. In my mouth. A hymn of praise to our God. So we're to sing.

[41 : 37] We're to sing a new song of praise to God. If we are saved, if we've been saved from sin, if our sin has been cleansed from us, if we have been made righteous in Christ, if we have the promise that we are escaping the sinking pit of hell and we have an assurance that we are given a place that's prepared for us in heaven, surely we've got a song to sing.

We have new life, then we have a new song. song. So we sing. We sing a new song.

When do we sing? Well, the psalmist tells us in verse two, we sing day after day. Not just on one day, but day after day.

day after day. There's that resolve to keep on singing praise to God. It's easy to make resolutions, isn't it?

Especially on the first of January on New Year's Day. It's easy to make the resolutions, but the test of a resolve is not settled on January the first.

[42 : 58] day after day thing. And David says that he will praise God. He will sing this new song of the salvation that he's received, and he'll sing it day after day.

He will declare the marvelous deeds of God day after day after day after day. And if David can say that all these years before Christ, surely we can say that all the more.

As David talks about the marvelous deeds of salvation, verse 3, the marvelous deeds, he's pointing us forward to Jesus.

Because the most marvelous deed that will ever be done will be done at Calvary. the work of grace, where he who knew no sin would become sin, so that we who are sinners can be saved.

David is pointing us forward to Calvary, and yet he can't see it, but he's still singing. We can look back.

[44 : 23] we recognize that the Savior who was promised, he came, he was born, and he lived perfectly that sinless, righteous life as a substitute in our place, because we can't live it.

And he died on the cross to pay the punishment for our sin. he took our place. He took the punishment that we deserved, and he rose to secure our salvation.

The most marvelous deeds that were ever done, we see in Christ. so we have much to sing praise about.

And when the volume of our praise falls, when we go silent, and sometimes we do, then where do we need to go?

Well, I need to go back again and look at Jesus. I need to go back again and see the cross.

[45 : 46] I need to go back again and see the stone that's rolled away. I need to go back again and listen to the words that came from the cross when Jesus cried out with a loud voice, Teta Lesta, which means done it, finished, the marvelous deed of salvation, your salvation, done.

And when we see that, when we meditate upon that, surely we will have praises to sing again. So a new year, a new song, and the third point is a new vision.

And David in verses four to six, he has a clear vision of God. For great is the Lord, he says, and most worthy of praise.

He's to be feared above all gods, for all the gods of the nations are idols, but the Lord made the heavens. Splendor and majesty are before him, strength and glory are in his sanctuary.

So David's vision is full of God. And we need to determine to have that vision. Because in our fallen state, our tendency is not to have a clear vision of God, we're always looking at ourselves.

[47 : 29] And our vision is such an important thing. our vision is a thing that will determine our course, that will determine everything about the way we live. When our vision is on self, we live for self.

And that's the state that we're born into. And we know that from very early on. You show a child a picture, and it's got 20 people in it, and they're in it.

Where will they look? And where will we look as we get older? We go first, and we're looking at ourselves. For those who post on social media, if a picture is going to get posted on social media, and it's got six people in it, and you're also in it, you're going to make sure the one that's posted is the one that makes you look nicest.

Our eyes tend to be fixed on ourselves because of the sin that is in us. But the psalmist, he has this clear vision of God, God, and he's directing us to look to God.

So what do we see in these verses as we think about this vision of God? Well, the first thing we see is the worthiness of God. Look at verse 4 at the beginning.

[48 : 47] Psalmist says, Great is the Lord, most worthy of praise. David sees the worthiness of God.

I haven't watched the documentary, but I'm told that one of the most watched documentaries at the moment is the one on Harry and Meghan on Netflix.

It's compelling viewing, apparently, and I think the reason it's compelling viewing is because we see this person who has royal position, but as far as I understand from what I read, is not particularly worthy of it.

And yet the reality is that every king and every prince in this world is imperfect. They are sinful, just as we are sinful, and therefore they and we are not worthy of worship.

but God, the God that David the psalmist is focused on, he is the king of kings.

[50 : 01] He's on a level that no one else is on, and he is absolutely worthy, and he is perfectly righteous, and he is sinless, and he is pure, and he is just.

God, the God that David focuses on in this psalm, is everything that we could ever want in a king. And as we go from Old Testament to New Testament, and as we look at Jesus, we see this life that is perfect, and righteous, and just, and we say with the psalmist, great is the Lord, and most worthy of praise.

so there's the worthiness of God as David looks to God, and then there's this reverence that David has for God. We see that in the second half of verse 4, he says, he is to be feared above all gods.

We touched on this in the morning, and it connects with where we're at this evening, although I hadn't made the connection when I was preparing. You think about the magi, they're on this journey, they're on this quest, they're seeking Jesus, they're following the star, they're following the word of God as it's open to them, and then when they come to the place where Jesus is, they don't crash in the door, they don't announce, I'm here, but they bow.

there's a reverence, there's a fear, not a ghastly fear that drives us away, but there is a sense of awe, there is a sense of the greatness of God and the smallness of me, there is a reverence that we saw in the magi and we hear from the psalmist.

[52 : 23] Christ, there's a reverence for God. Mackenzie's dad on Wednesday evening, he touched on this also, he talked about when we're in the presence of Jesus, the great sense of joy that there is, but also that sense of terror that we are in the presence of God.

there was an old lady that used to stay with my granny in Ness. I think she was the cousin, the first cousin of my granny, Murtag was her name, and I can just about remember her, and when she would pray, when she would read the Bible, you would always know, because she would take this wee scarlet, and she would just lift it up and put it over her head.

And I'm not telling you this because I think we should all have our heads covered in worship, but I'm sharing this because it just, it spoke about a sense of reverence that she had for God.

There was a reverence in perhaps past generations that maybe we've lost, and we certainly need to recover.

David has a sense of the worthiness of God, there's reverence for God, there's the truth of God, that he is the one true God, he's the only God.

[54 : 16] All the nations, says David, are idols. the word in the Hebrew literally is, they're nothings. David doesn't seem to have much time for multi-faith.

David would be probably locked up if he was to say this in the public forum today, but that's the truth. There are many idols, there were back then, there still are today, but there's only one true God.

There are many who would claim to be able to give us satisfaction and salvation, but we are told very clearly in scripture that there is no other name, there is no other way to be saved except through Jesus.

And that's the truth. And David here sees the truth truth, of the exclusivity of the one true God.

And he's our creator, verse 5. The Lord made the heavens. Where did we come from? We came from God. Where are we going?

[55 : 38] Ultimately, we are going back to God. We will stand before him. God. He is our creator. And when we see that, that will impact truly the way that we live.

And when we take all this together in verse 6, as we have this picture of God that is becoming more and more clear and more and more majestic, we see that David is just consumed with the glory of God.

He says, splendor and majesty are before him. Strength and glory are in his sanctuary. And it's that sense of glory that causes this new song to burst out from within him.

God. And I planned on seeing a lot more, but I'm going to stop there tonight. Because I think what we need more than anything as we go into a new year is a clear vision of who God is.

the strength, the power, the majesty, the justice, the purity, the grace, the wonder of God.

[57 : 10] Because it's as we see God that our hearts are moved to worship. It's as we see God that we, from within our hearts, will sing this new song.

And as we sing this new song, then God is glorified. And the nations, or in our situation, the people that God has put around us, in our families, in our workplace, in our community, they begin to see something of the glory of the God that we see.

And they're drawn to him. It's as Christ has lifted up, that many are drawn to him. So at the beginning of a new year, let us fix our eyes upon Jesus.

Let us seek a clearer view and a closer walk with God because he alone is worthy of our praise.

And we'll pray. our heavenly father, we thank you for your word, we thank you for the psalm, we thank you that we know where to take our worship.

[58 : 53] We thank you that when we look to the stars, as the magi did, and when we see the vastness of the cosmos, when we see the beauty of the beaches in this place, when we feel the power of the ocean.

We thank you that we know that we are not to praise the universe, but we praise the God who made it. We thank you that you are the one who is worthy of all our praise, we thank you that you are the holy, the just, the pure, the righteous, the majestic God.

And yet we thank you that we can call you our Father. We thank you that although we are sinners, and you are a God who is so pure that you cannot look upon sin, we thank you that in Christ there is a redeemer, one who takes from us our sin as we look to him, and who brings us into the presence of God.

We thank you that we can be reconciled with God through Christ. We thank you that we have peace with God through Christ. We thank you for the marvelous deeds of salvation that we see in Christ. So we pray that you would lift our eyes at the beginning of this year away from ourselves and away from all the idols which are nothings, that we may fix our eyes upon you and give you the worship that you are due.

[60 : 46] And Lord, we pray that you would use us as you used David the psalmist to tell others about the wonder of who you are and what you have done for us in Christ.

We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. We'll sing to conclude the hymn that's on the screen, What Gift of Grace Is Jesus My Redeemer?

There is no more for heaven I can give.

He is my joy, my righteousness and freedom, my steadfast love, my deep and boundless peace.

Through this I hope, my hope is only Jesus, for my life is only but it is.

[62 : 02] Oh, how strange and divine I can sing, all this one, yet not I, but through Christ in me.

I need to desire, but I am not forsaken, for by my side the Savior, He will stay.

I labor on in weakness and rejoicing, for in my need His power is displayed.

To this I hold, my shepherd will defend me, through the deepest body He will lead.

Oh, the night has begun and I shall overcome, yet not I, but through Christ in me.

[63 : 03] Oh, wait, I dread, I know I am forgiven, the future's sure, the price that has been paid.

For Jesus bled and suffered for my pardon, and He was raised to overthrow the grave.

To this I hold, my sin has been defeated. Jesus, now, I never is my greed.

All that shamed, I have been defeated, I can see, I am free, yet not I, but through Christ in me.

In the earth, I long to follow Jesus, for He has said that He will bring me home, and day by day, I know He will renew me, until I stand with joy before the throne.

[64 : 14] To this I hold, my hope is only Jesus, all the glory evermore to Him.

When the rest is complete, still my lips shall repeat, yet not I, but through Christ in me.
Still my lips shall repeat, yet not I, but through Christ in me. And I may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit, be with us all, now and forevermore.
Amen.