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**Talk** together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11  
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

## Questions for Reflection and Discussion

- 1 What from Sunday's message interested you? ...made sense to you? ...confused you?  
...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you? ...and **why**?
- 2 Read Psalm 98:1-3. (See the text on following page.) What does verse 1 command us to **do**?
- 3 What **rationale** does it give for singing to the Lord?
- 4 In the context of v. 1-3, what exactly are the "wonderful things" He has done? (Does **this** help?)
- 5 **Has** God "accomplished" (v. 1) salvation for you? **Have** you "known" (v. 2) and "seen" (v. 3) it?  
If so, tell us about it.
- 6 Why do you think we're specifically commanded to sing a "**new**" song to God (v. 1)?
- 7 Have you done that? Have you "shouted joyfully" (v. 4-6) to the Lord? Tell us about it.
- 8 Read Psalm 98:7-9. What's more reassuring to you:  
 "that God **has** accomplished wonderful salvation for you", or  
 "that God **is** coming to judge with righteousness and equity"? **Why that one?**
- 9 **Who** do you know who should **dread** the return of Christ as judge?  
Do you think they fear Judgment Day? Why or why not? Have you two talked about it?

### Talking To Others About This Week's Message

If a neighbor or friend at work asked you, "*What kind of stuff do they talk about at your church?*", how would you summarize the most important ideas of this week's sermon and the key lessons you intend to apply to your life? Can you explain it in **plain language** anyone could understand?

### Talking To God About This Week's Message

*"Heavenly Father, today I want to be a 'doer' of the Word, and not just a 'hearer'. Amen."*

- 1 A standard, soft-ball question designed to get discussion going. Don't take too long on this, however... Pay attention, however, to any strong negative responses or major areas of confusion. Take note, and make plans to grab coffee and talk further.
- 2 We are commanded to "sing a new song to the Lord".
- 3 Because "he has done wonderful things" for us.
- 4 "Salvation", mentioned 3x, clearly identifies that "wonderful thing" God has done for us. Remember: "Context is king!"
- 5 You likely will need to "prime the pump", so be prepared with your own answer to this question. (But wait for others to think and answer. Check your watch—20 seconds feels like an eternity!)
- 6 Good question—I'm not sure why! But here are some possible answers:
  - Maybe it's "new" compared to our "old" song—"Lord, help! I'm in trouble!"
  - Since "God's mercies are new every morning" (Lamentations 3:22-23), we have fresh "salvations" to praise him for.
  - As we grow in our appreciation for our salvation, our songs of thanksgiving ought to keep pace.
- 7 Again, you likely will need to "prime the pump", so be prepared with your own answer to this question. (But wait for others to think and answer.)
- 8 There's obviously a connection between these—you can't look forward to Judgment Day as a positive, joyful experience if you're not saved. In fact, you're a slave to the fear of death (Hebrews 2:14–15) until you know that you're born again. Take time to hear from each member and probe their thoughts. Take note of any members you ought to grab coffee with and talk further.
- 9 Urge group members to be **vague** regarding the identity of folks ("I have a cousin. I'll call him Bob..."), but **specific** regarding the details of the situation. You may have to prime the pump on this one. Take time and have a good discussion. End by praying for these individuals.

## Sermon Summary (Key Text: Psalm 98)

Psalm 98 is an interesting Psalm, but it presents a conundrum. Verse 9 says, “For he is coming to judge the earth.” The psalmist is talking about the day of final judgment, and yet it’s a time of joy! How can this be? Verses 4-9 tell us why it’s joyful. But there is a problem, the conundrum mentioned earlier. In verses 1-3, we find God’s provision for that problem.

**1. The joyful promise of judgment** – Why is Judgment Day something to look forward to? Because the Lord is coming, and on that day, all wrongs will be righted, all broken things mended, and everything will reach its full potential. When Jesus returns, creation will be restored to its pre-fall glory. He will establish His rule and put an end to evil. All who have died in faith will be reunited. They will live out eternity on a renewed and rejuvenated earth—no more sin, no more selfishness, no more crime, just perfect peace, as God intended. Psalm 98 captures that! But there’s still a conundrum—a problem.

**2. The problem of judgment** – The Judge of the Universe is coming, and what do judges do? They confront evil, right wrongs, and set things straight. Anyone who has done wrong must answer for their crimes. For us, that’s a problem, because the Bible says, “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” We are all guilty criminals. How can we rejoice at judgment day? Some people don’t even worry about it, because they don’t believe in divine judgment. Their Postmodern worldview tells them there is no ultimate truth. But such a worldview is self-defeating! If there is no ultimate right or wrong, how can we say that racism is wrong, or stealing, or rape? If there’s no God and no objective truth, then there’s no ultimate hope for justice. Our hearts yearn for a day when all evil-doers get their just due, but if we’re honest, we realize that **we are not without fault**. We all act selfishly sometimes and mistreat others. On one hand, we **want** a Judgment Day, but on the other hand, we don’t. If there’s no Judgment Day, then there’s no hope for the world. But if there is a Judgment Day, what hope is there for us? We can’t even live up to our own moral standard (much less God’s), and that leaves us guilty before a holy God. That’s the problem, the conundrum. So what’s the answer?

**3. The provision for judgment** – The answer is found in verses 1-3. We can look forward to future judgment because of something that happened in the past. Psalm 98 looks back to God’s great deliverance of Israel from Egypt. He sent the angel of death to judge them by killing all the firstborn. The firstborn of Israel would have died too, but God substituted an innocent lamb. He told them to slay it and put its blood on their doorposts. It’s the story of the Passover. Because everyone is guilty, everyone deserves judgment, and God is completely impartial. Our only hope is for His judgment to fall on a substitute. Jesus solved that problem. He put Himself where we deserve to be. The Righteous Judge pronounced a guilty verdict upon us, and then sentenced Himself to take the punishment. In His great love for us, God stepped out of heaven and became a man, the Lord Jesus. He lived the perfect life we could not live, and then willingly substituted himself on the cross, taking our guilt. Because God’s judgment fell on Him, we can anticipate the joys of Jesus’ return without fear. If you have placed your trust in Jesus as your sin-bearer, the judgment for your sins is past. Now all you have to look forward to on Judgment Day is beauty, glory, and love!



## Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

***Psalm 98 promises that God will return to judge with righteousness and equity. This often is called "the Day of the Lord", and it will be a happy event for some, but an eternal catastrophe for others. Let's learn a bit about the Judgment Day...***

**Monday**— Read Isaiah 2. Circle the word "day" (or, "days") in v. 2, 11, 12, 17 and 20.

- Make a list of everything you learn about "that day".
- What emotions will people feel "in that day"? How does that square with Psalm 98:7-9?

**Tuesday**— Read Isaiah 22. Circle the word "day" (or, "days") in v. 5, 8, 12, 20 and 25.

- Make a list of everything you learn about "that day".
- What emotions will people feel "in that day"? How does that square with Psalm 98:7-9?

**Wednesday**— Read 2 Peter 3:10–13. Circle the phrase "day of the Lord/God" in v. 10 & 12.

- Does this scene terrify you or excite you—and **why**?
- **What** does v. 12a command us to do? **How** do you think we are able to do that?

**Thursday**— Read Philippians 1:3-11 & 2:14-18. Circle the phrase "day of Christ" in 1:6 & 10 and 2:16.

- Now we're getting a bit more clarity! What do you think is "the day of Christ"?
- Describe the sense of confidence found in Philippians 1:3-11.
- What is the one risk related to "the day of Christ" (see 2:14-16).

**Friday**— Read 2 Peter 3:3–10. Circle the word "day" (or, "days") in v. 3, 7, 8 (2x), and 10.

- What do mockers say about "the day of the Lord"?
- What is their logic (see v. 3-4)?
- But what escapes their notice (v. 5-7)?
- What must not escape **our** notice (v. 8-10)?

**Saturday**— Are **you** ready for "the day of the Lord"? Are you **sure**? **How** do you know?

***"Dad! Ellen stuck her tongue out at me!"***  
***"Mom! Tim won't get out of my room!"***

They're asking you to be a judge—and to recognize the righteousness of their claim and the injustice of their sibling! We all want justice—unless we know that we did wrong. Then, we want mercy, not justice!

At the dinner table, bring up typical complaints your kids have about each other, and then ask:

- "When **you** tattle on your sister/brother, what are **you** hoping for?" [justice]
- "When your brother/sister tattles **on you**, what do **you** hope for?" [mercy]
- Then, discuss—at a child's level—what you learned from Psalm 98.

