
Sermon Notes

December 31, 2023

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

A New Day... A New Song Psalm 98

Sunrise... Sunset

- ❖ *For everything there is a season* (Ecclesiastes 3:1-4)
 - life is a one way journey: we cannot go backwards, replay or repeat the past
 - some parts of life are full of joy and celebration
 - other parts of life are more difficult and draining
- ❖ Despite the repetitive pattern of daily living, those who follow Christ can find meaning and even joy in the minutia of daily life

Psalm 98

- ❖ One of the most joyful songs in the Bible
 - part of Isaac Watts' paraphrase of this Psalm becomes the Christmas song: *Joy to the World!*
 - James Montgomery Boice describes Psalm 98 as "a noisy, effervescent song from its beginning to its end."
- ❖ The language of Psalm 98 is compact and economical
 - every word counts
 - every phrase is a springboard that launches the heart in a different direction to offer praise and worship to God

- ❖ Psalm 98 seems to divide quite naturally into three stanzas
 - vv. 1-3 directed to Israel
 - vv. 4-6 addressed to all people every where
 - vv. 7-9 call all creation to anticipate the way God will come to judge the earth and establish His righteousness over the entire cosmos
- ❖ The psalm helps us focus on what God has done in the past is doing in the present and will do in the future

God the Savior

- ❖ The basis for the new song we are commanded to sing rests on the marvelous things God has already accomplished in the past
 - salvation = deliverance or rescue, the defeat of enemies, great victory
 - no matter whether or not the psalmist has a specific salvation moment in mind, we can read the Psalm with fresh, NT eyes
- how has God worked to provide victory and deliverance for us through His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ?
 - ♦ in the past, Jesus rescued us from sin's penalty
 - ♦ in the present, Jesus rescues us from sin's power
 - ♦ in the future, Jesus will rescue us from sin's presence
- Jesus has done marvelous things: ***His right hand and His holy arm have worked salvation for Him***

God the Sovereign

- ❖ in vv. 4-6 all people everywhere are called to acknowledge the LORD as King
 - such worship is meant to be joyful and loud
 - lifting your voice in song in the company of God's people and joining the universal symphony of praise that continually ascends to God is not optional
 - it is not a matter of style or personal preference
 - it IS a matter of obedience!
- ❖ God listens to the heart

God the Judge

- ❖ In bringing Psalm 98 to a close, the psalmist calls upon the entire creation to praise God, the coming Judge
 - the sea is to roar, the rivers are to clap their hands
 - creation is engaged in an ongoing, unfolding symphony of praise to God (Psalm 19:1-2)
- ❖ Both the visible and the invisible world proclaim the glory of God
 - the Bible opens with the account of God's creation of the world and ends with the account of His recreation of the heavens and the earth
 - Romans 8:19-21 describes how the current creation groans in anticipation of the coming day when everything will be restored and renewed to the way it is supposed to be

- ❖ God will come to *judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity*
 - all the pain and the suffering and the brokenness of our broken world will be set right
 - Randy Alcorn: "Christ, who rules His world 'with truth and grace', will not be satisfied until every sin, every sorrow, every thorn is reckoned with."
- ❖ Do you have a new song?
 - you can begin every day of the coming new year with total peace and confidence that everything God promises about Jesus' second coming will come to pass exactly as God has promised
 - what God promises God will do!
- ❖ Christ has come! Christ is coming!

Personal Reflection

1. How well are you able to maintain a "new song" of praise to God in the midst of the mind-crushing mundanities and minutia of daily life?
2. How will the truths outlined in Psalm 98 about God's past, present and future work as Savior, Sovereign and Judge help feed your soul and strengthen your song?
3. Read Psalm 98 again and rejoice in advance over what God has in store for you in the coming year and for the future moment when He will make all things new by creating a new heavens and the earth.