

## Psalm 96:1-4 (ESV)

*Oh sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth!  
Sing to the Lord, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day.  
Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples!  
For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all gods.*

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### I. Worship as Singing

- Worship is more than just music, but music is a primary way we express our worship.
- Our singing should be directed toward God and focused on His great salvation.
- Singing is a biblical command (Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19).
- **What does it mean to bless the Lord?**
  - To bless the Lord is to praise, honor, and acknowledge His greatness. We can't give God anything that He needs from us for He is fully sufficient in Himself.
  - Example: Abraham's righteousness came by faith, and he worshiped God with his life (Genesis 15:6, Romans 4:3).
- **Preach the Gospel**
  - Salvation is the focus of our worship.
  - Charles Spurgeon: *"When we bless God, we do not enrich Him; He is all-sufficient. But we show forth His honor, we spread His fame, and we exalt His name."*
- **Reflection Questions:**
  - How does singing shape your understanding of God?
  - In what ways can your singing be an act of faith?
  - Name some worship songs that you think are God honoring.

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### II. Worship as a Means to Disciple the Nations

- **Psalm 96:3:** *Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples!*

- Worship is not just for us—it is a witness to the world.
- **The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20)**
  - Jesus commands us to make disciples of all nations.
  - Worship fuels missions, and missions fuel worship.
  - John Piper: “*Missions exist because worship doesn’t.*”
- **Singing to God and One Another**
  - Ephesians 5:19: *Addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart.*
  - We are called to sing not only to God but to encourage and admonish each other in faith.
- **Reflection Questions:**
  - How does worship serve as a witness to others?
  - What role does congregational singing play in discipleship?
  - How does singing in corporate (gathered) worship encourage and admonish each other?

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### III. God’s Greatness and the Weight of Sin

- **Psalm 96:4:** *For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all gods.*
- A common view today: “If it makes me happy and doesn’t hurt anyone, it shouldn’t be sin.”
- **Why this is wrong:**
  - Sin is not just about harm to others but about rebellion against God’s holiness.
  - Isaiah 6:3: *Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!*
  - True worship requires us to recognize God’s holiness and our need for repentance. Our view of God should always be growing!
  - **A Call to smash our idols:** What do we treasure more than God?
- **Reflection Questions:**
  - Why does recognizing God’s holiness lead us to true worship?

- What are some idols that can hinder your worship?
- Do you view worship as primarily and individual act or a corporate (communal) act?

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#### **IV. Closing Reflection**

- Worship is not about performance, but about pouring our hearts out to the Lord.
- It is not about smoke machines, lights, or personal preferences—it is about truth.
- Worship is about the **God-man who hung on the cross**, not about our preferences.
- **Reflection Questions:**
  - What is one way you can focus more on God rather than preferences in worship?
  - How can you encourage others to worship with sincerity?

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#### **The Baptist Catechism**

##### Question #52

What is forbidden in the first commandment?

The first commandment forbiddeth the denying,<sup>1</sup> or not worshipping and glorifying the true God,<sup>2</sup> as God and our God,<sup>3</sup> and the giving of that worship and glory to any other, which is due unto him alone.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Psalm 14:1

<sup>2</sup> Romans 1:21

<sup>3</sup> Psalm 81:10-11

<sup>4</sup> Romans 1:25-26