

**Group discussion** *Each number below includes questions that relate to the scripture. I offer a few answers, but your perspective may be better. The point is to discuss, not to get 100% agreement. Rule of thumb: the fewer questions you ask, the better. Save time for "the big question."*

1. Read Psalm 96 aloud.

This text would work well for devotional reading. Select three readers to read the entire text out loud slowly, with a minute or two of silence between each reading. Close with silent prayer after the third reading.

As you listened, what words or phrases stood out?

2. Who is invited to this worship service?

Why do the psalms call on creation to join worship?

When have you seen or heard creation proclaim God's glory?

3. How much outreach occurs in this psalm? Are non-Jews invited?

*This psalm includes the entire earth (1,9,11,13) and all the nations (3,5,7,10), so it clearly has an outreach to non-Jews.*

Why would Jews want Gentiles to join in worship?

*Because God is so good that believers are not an adequate chorus to sing his praise. We need more singers!*

*Because their faith leads the Jews to care about God's other children.*

*When you care about others, you want them to experience the blessing of life with God.*

When believers proclaim God's glory in worship, how does it affect non-believers?

*See I Corinthians 14:24-25.*

4. What is special about a new song? Aren't we more comfortable with familiar songs?

*God must love new songs, since he requests them repeatedly (see list on back page). It would not be wrong to say that all the songs ever written fall short of giving God adequate praise.*

5. What did you think of the judgment theme in Psalm 96 (10,13)? How surprised are you to find judgment in a praise song?

Why would you praise God as judge? How is it a good thing for God to judge the world?

*Did you notice the descriptions of his judgment in 10 & 13? If you live under unjust rulers, you cannot wait for real justice.*

6. I know a worship service is good if...

How might our evaluation of a worship service be different from God's evaluation?

† **The big question** *If you ask only one question, let this be it. Allow at least 20 minutes. Go around the circle and give each person an opportunity to answer. It's okay if they pass, but at least they get a chance to respond.*

When have you experienced Psalm 96 worship?

## Resources

### Bible notes

- Texts talking about how God deserves a new song:

<a href="#">Psa 33:3</a>	Sing to him a <b>new song</b> ; play skillfully, and shout for joy.
<a href="#">Psa 40:3</a>	He put a <b>new song</b> in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the Lord.
<a href="#">Psa 96:1</a>	Sing to the Lord a <b>new song</b> ; sing to the Lord, all the earth.
<a href="#">Psa 98:1</a>	A psalm. Sing to the Lord a <b>new song</b> , for he has done marvelous things; his right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.
<a href="#">Psa 144:9</a>	I will sing a <b>new song</b> to you, O God; on the ten-stringed lyre I will make music to you,
<a href="#">Psa 149:1</a>	Praise the Lord. Sing to the Lord a <b>new song</b> , his praise in the assembly of the saints.
<a href="#">Isa 42:10</a>	Sing to the Lord a <b>new song</b> , his praise from the ends of the earth, you who go down to the sea, and all that is in it, you islands, and all who live in them.
<a href="#">Rev 5:9</a>	And they sang a <b>new song</b> : "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain..."
<a href="#">Rev 14:3</a>	And they sang a <b>new song</b> before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the <b>song</b> except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth.

### Kid-friendly activity...kids & adults growing together.

Celebrate the good things God has done this last week! *Applause!*

Pray the alphabet. Give thanks for one thing that begins with each letter of the alphabet.

Read Psalm 96 aloud.

Ask the kids to draw a picture of Psalm 96. You might give each kid 2-3 verses, or ask everyone to draw the entire psalm.

After the adult discussion, invite the kids to show their drawings of Psalm 96.

Close with a prayer.



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## LIFE Group Guide

### Psalm 96 - Worship

By John Grant (jgrant@collegehills.org)

The theme for this conversation: **worship.**

How do you know when worship is good? Is it the songs or the sermon or something else? Why is one person inspired and another bored by the same service? Kevin will suggest that the audience who matters most is God.

Leadership tip: Sign-up tables in the lobby did not yield a lot of new LG members, but we are not giving up on building more and better groups. Every Sunday, we have over 500 people in the assembly who lack a LIFE group. The best way to connect is personal invitations.

Who are you inviting to your group? You will be a blessing to them, and they will be a blessing to your group.

**I. Relate** Use a few of these to introduce the theme and "break the ice." No right or wrong answers – maybe goofy but not wrong! Look for opportunities to affirm and encourage individuals through these questions.

- ❖ Sing some of your favorite praise songs.  
*Bring a song book or print-outs.*
- ❖ Pair-share: The best pet I ever had...
- ❖ What is something in nature that reminds you of God's goodness and majesty?
- ❖ How do you know when worship is good?