



## 2. Sing all four stanzas of “Joy to the World” with your group.

*You might do this acapella, live with a guitar or piano or along with your favorite musical artist. Make sure you print out copies of the hymn for everyone to have.*

*Joy to the World, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare Him room,  
And Heaven and nature sing,  
And Heaven and nature sing,  
And Heaven, and Heaven, and nature sing.*

*Joy to the World, the Savior reigns!  
Let men their songs employ;  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.*

*No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
Nor thorns infest the ground;  
He comes to make His blessings flow  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as, far as, the curse is found.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace,  
And makes the nations prove  
The glories of His righteousness,  
And wonders of His love,  
And wonders of His love,*

### UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

#### **Read Psalm 98:1-9.**

*Joy to the World wasn't necessarily written to be a Christmas carol. It was based on Psalm 98. As you look at this Psalm answer the following questions.*



### 3. What are some “marvelous things” that the Psalmist might have been thinking about?

*Take your group to Psalm 96 also. The beginning and end are very similar to Psalm 98. Here are some ideas the writer mentions in Psalm 98*

- *has gained salvation or victory, Ps. 98:1*
- *has made known His salvation, Ps. 98:2*
- *has revealed His righteousness, Ps. 98:2*
- *has remembered His lovingkindness and faithfulness, Ps. 98:3*
- *all the earth has seen His salvation, Ps. 98:3*
- *he will judge the world in righteousness. Ps 98:9*

*Joy to the World traces the redemption story throughout history, from the promise in the garden (Genesis 3:15) to Christ’s glorious return. “No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground; He comes to make His blessings flow far as the curse is found” Tremper Longman III rightly summarizes Psalm 98’s expression of God’s salvation in three movements, which are fulfilled in Christ our Savior, King, Judge: “Israel is to praise God for saving them in the past” (1 – 3). “All the earth is to praise God for being King in the present (4 – 6). “The entire universe is to praise God for coming to judge in the future” (7 – 9).”*

### 4. Want “marvelous things” has God done in your life? Share them with the group.

### 5. Pastor Tom mentioned three of the same highlights from both the Psalm and the song. How can they encourage you during this Christmas season?

***Don’t be discouraged, you are not forgotten***—*The curse is what it is. We have to deal with sin, sorrow and thorns, but the Lord has not forgotten us. - We were cursed.*

***Our King is revealing His redemptive plan***—*A plan that will transform the curse of sin into an international display of God’s righteousness and love. - He was clear.*

***Join the intergalactic celebration***—*make room in your hearts to joyfully participate in what all of creation is preparing for. - They were quick.*

### 6. How does Psalm 98:9 fit into the Christmas story, and how are both a cause for joyful celebration?

*The Birth of Christ wasn’t the end goal. The point of Christ’s birth was to bring salvation to all creation. God judged the world and that judgement fell on Christ’s shoulders. All the sin, pain and curse was paid for on the cross. This should cause us and all of creation to shout for joy. Most of the time judgment doesn’t bring joy, but we can be joyful because when the Lord judges it will be done in and with righteousness and no one will be able to escape the Lord’s coming.*

*Christ’s redemptive work always results in an outpouring of praise, a praise which deepens as it approaches the complete fulfillment of God’s redemptive work.*



## **APPLICATION**

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

- 7. How can you help bring joy to your oikos this Christmas season?**
- 8. Go around the group and share who are you inviting to a Christmas Eve service? Break up into smaller groups and pray for each of those people by name.**

