

Hope For All Creation

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A NEW CREATION / Hope; Creation / Mark 16:1–15; Psalm 96:1–2; Psalm 96:11–13

In resurrecting, Jesus gives us hope for new life. This hope is life and joy for all creation!

[Psalm 96:1-2, 11-13](#) (NLT)

Focus Statement

- In resurrecting, Jesus gives us hope for new life.
 - This hope is life and joy for *all* creation!

Things to Consider

- We have all faced setbacks in our life and felt lost, disillusioned, or helpless.
 - Sometimes, even when we see God at work,
 - we still struggle to grab ahold of the hope offered to us.
 - We are stuck in our old ways.
 - Yet, in the Easter story according to Mark's Gospel,
 - we are told of how Jesus relentlessly shows up with the promise of hope and new life
 - and persistently calls us to respond, not only for our own sake but for the sake of all creation.

What Scripture Says

- In [Mark 16:1-3](#), Mary Magdalene and the other women are off to anoint the body of Jesus.
 - We can all imagine what they were feeling.

- Despair.
 - Grief.
 - Fear.
 - Uncertainty.
 - LOSS
- Verse 3 tells us they have no idea who will roll away the stone.
 - We can guess they might be feeling helpless or worried.
 - Nevertheless, they still go.
 - One way to move away from hopelessness
 - is to simply move from where we are stuck to another place physically, emotionally, or spiritually.
 - This action can open us up to new insights from God.
- The women are certainly surprised as they arrive at the tomb,
 - first to find the stone has already been rolled back
 - and then in their meeting with the young man and the news he shares (verses 4-7).
- After the encounter of verses 5-7, including the instruction to,
 - “go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you,” (v. 7),
 - the women leave frightened and unable to do as they’ve been commanded, even though what they’ve been told is good news – the best news!
- We are in the midst of a time of fear right now.
 - And fear can cause us to lose focus...to look wayward instead of upward...
 - and it can cause us to make rash decisions for the sake of trying to “have” control over a desperate situation.

- Friends, we need to be diligent in such a time as this to make sure that we lean inward and look upward toward Jesus.
 - We need to avoid the temptation to seek our way over God’s way...
 - and to avoid going wayward.
- Now, on Easter, you’ll remember I said that the Scripture ends at verse 8, but here you will see that the passage continues on past verse 8.
- Why is that?
 - Well, the oldest manuscripts we have of Mark stop at verse 8, with the women leaving afraid and saying nothing.
 - From there we find some newer manuscripts that have an alternate endings...a shorter ending that ends with “Amen.”
 - And then a longer ending includes the great commission to “Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone.”
 - The word is “everyone” is actually translated to “the whole creation” in the New Revised Standard Version...
 - because the Greek word *Pas* means every or all.
 - The KJV translates it to every creature...
 - So there is a sense of the Gospel affecting more than just people...but that we are to proclaim it to all CREATION...
 - So, Jesus gives the instruction to “Go into all the world and proclaim good news *to the whole creation.*”
 - We often hear such words as a call to evangelism (or sharing the gospel with other people) and it is certainly that.
 - But “the whole creation” is broader than the human species and is all interconnected.
 - The news of resurrection and new, changed life is, indeed, for the whole creation.

- The verses from [Psalm 96](#) are among many in scripture that describe non-human creation praising God for God's mighty works.

What This Means for You

- Let me ask you these questions:
 - How have you encountered the risen Christ?
 - How has that encounter changed you?
 - What are you doing to invite other people into this same encounter for themselves?
- What's more, how do we sometimes neglect the broader creation-wide vision of God's redeeming work
 - and what practical steps can we take to proclaim, in word and action, the good news in, to, and *with* all creation?
- As human beings, we have a reciprocal relationship with (the rest of) nature.
 - How can we, on the one hand, learn what it means to praise from the roaring sea and the exulting field ([Psalm 96:11-12](#)),
 - and on the other hand, care for sea and field that they might continue to praise God?
- I want to remind you all of Jesus' persistence in showing up to the disciples.
 - Even if/when we feel scared, doubtful and discouraged,
 - Jesus keeps showing up in persistent ways – big and small –
 - to call us to new life.
 - That new life isn't merely an internal spiritual life to be kept a secret, but one that is in relationship with all of God's creation
 - Spiritually, emotionally and physically.
 - So, we often think of spreading the good news through words to other people...

- But we need to shift to see the bigger picture.
 - Our life in Jesus Christ is one that flips things of this world on their head...
 - Instead of shunning people, Christ calls us to embrace and love them...even enemies.
 - Instead of hoarding our resources for ourselves, Christ calls us to share them in common for the common good of all.
 - Instead of seeing creation as a means to human ends, Christ is calling us to treat all of creation as sacred...divinely created...loved by God.
 - Remember, God looked upon all that God created and called it good...
 - And God put humans in charge of caring for the earth as we see in Genesis 1:28
- Friends, the resurrection can be something hard to wrap our heads around....
 - But it is the power of God to bring life to the dead that gives us our greatest hope...
 - That in Christ, death has been conquered and abundant life and love reign supreme.
- So, I am inviting you to see signs of the resurrection all around:
 - trees blooming after winter,
 - recovery from illness,
 - healing from a painful past.
 - God has given us these small forms of resurrection that we might take the leap and believe in
 - *THE* resurrection and the promise it offers us of new life.

What This Means for Us

- Sisters and brothers, as a church, we need to recognize our responsibility to live out the story of hope for a new life with Christ.
 - What are our responsibilities not only to each other but also to the world, creation, itself?
 - Don't we have the responsibility to be the good, caring stewards of each other, of the world, of creation itself:
- Can we even consider ourselves followers of the risen Christ
 - if we tend only our relationships with each other but not our relationship with all of creation as well?
 - Did Christ not tell us to proclaim the good news to the whole creation?
 - Friends, let us bear witness to the hope that exists for all creation in Jesus Christ.
 - Let us be known as the community that all around cares...and tends well to the resources
 - (personal, financial and natural alike)
 - we have been given. Amen? Amen.