

*And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation." – MARK 16:15*

What a strange passage! Preach to the whole creation? How can we proclaim the gospel to something that can't understand it? What is the point of preaching to creation when humans are the ones who need saving? That's as crazy as believing that the sun and moon can praise the LORD, that trees can clap their hands. It's as ridiculous as supposing that hills can sing for joy (see Psalm 148 and Isaiah 55).

Why does the Bible tell us to preach the gospel to all of creation? First, the Bible teaches us that creation is in pain. Because of us, it is groaning, subject to agony as strong as the pangs of childbirth (Romans 8:20-22). Creation needs the restoration of the Kingdom of God to release it from pain, just as we do. This is the gospel of the Kingdom.

Second, the Bible teaches us in numerous places that creation yearns for the LORD to make things right. Consider the closing words of Psalm 96:

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;

let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

let the field exult, and everything in it!

Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy

before the LORD, for he comes,

for he comes to judge the earth.

He will judge the world in righteousness,

and the peoples in his faithfulness.

The entire creation is praising, shouting, roaring, and rejoicing! Why? The LORD is coming to bring his justice. He will arrive to set things right!

The New Testament reveals to us that the LORD who comes in justice is Jesus. When we proclaim his gospel, it is a gospel of freedom; freedom from sin, from bondage and from pain. This freedom is not limited to humans, but is for all of creation.

And this is why Jesus calls us to proclaim the gospel to all of creation. It is not just good news for human beings, but for all beings. It is good news for everything that God has made.

Jesus calls us to, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation." Perhaps this is less about preaching to animals as it is a perspective change. If all of creation will be redeemed, as we will, we will approach all that surrounds us with more intentionality and care.

**Prayer:** God, may we have eyes to see how you would lead us in our role to care for creation, and to proclaim your gospel in a wide variety of ways. Amen.