



Sermon Notes: Steve Stanis,

16 March 2025

“Jesus, the True King Who Restores All Things”

Readings: Mark 6:30-56; Psalm 77:13-20, Galatians 1:1-15

Introduction

Mark's Gospel account was almost certainly the first written. The reference in his account to Jesus' arrest (chapter 14:51) is deeply personal: "A young man, wearing nothing but a linen garment, was following Jesus. When they seized him, he fled naked, leaving his garment behind." No other Gospel text says this: Mark reveals himself as a man inwardly naked and vulnerable. His Story of Jesus comes out of that vulnerability – Jesus, the Restorer of Life is the true King, who restores a fractured world and invites all people to embrace God's eternal purposes.

In Mark 6:30-56, we encounter two extraordinary miracles: the feeding of the five thousand and Jesus' walking on water.

These are not just displays of power; they reveal Jesus' identity and His mission to restore humanity's relationship with God, creation, and one another. Through these events, Mark calls us to realign our naked and vulnerable hearts with God's kingdom and participate in His restorative work.

As we explore this passage, I was drawn into the insights of C.S. Lewis, who writes about the Gospel of Mark. He says that "the world is not a natural order occasionally disrupted by the supernatural; rather, it is a world longing to be awakened to its true purpose. Humanity's fall disrupted the intended harmony, limiting our ability to engage with creation in its fullness".

The storms we have witnessed in the past weeks, Cyclone Alfred in the north and the storm raging around Adam, Avril, and their family in Toliara, Madagascar, are reminders that the naked world needs to be reclothed with God's redemptive plan.

These cyclones are not just random disruptions in a perfectly ordered world; rather, they echo a deeper truth: creation itself is groaning, longing for restoration.

In Mark 6, Jesus supernaturally feeds 5000 and walks on water. This story is a miracle but more than miracle: it is a symbol of life's transformation. Jesus confronts the nakedness, life's limitations, losses and tragedies, and invites us to enter the loss and own our frailty. He will work wonders with us, though we too, we, who need to be clothed by Jesus, have the Gospel, the very bread of life to share with others. These two miracles challenge us to see Jesus not only as a teacher and miracle worker but as the one who restores creation and flings open God's kingdom.

A Weary People and the Compassion of the True King

Mark 6 begins with the disciples returning to Jesus after their missionary journey. They are exhausted and hungry. Jesus, seeing their need, invites them to rest: "Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while" (V 31). Yet their solitude is interrupted by a crowd that follows them. These people are desperate, longing for healing, hope, and purpose. Mark tells us that Jesus "had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd" (V 34).

Like sheep without a shepherd; they are lost, vulnerable, inwardly naked, and searching for guidance. Jesus does not view this brokenness with disdain; He responds with compassion and action, embodying the true King who restores His people.

Jesus' compassion is not sentimental but transformative. He teaches the crowd many things, addressing their spiritual hunger. He then meets their physical needs by feeding them.

The miraculous feeding of the five thousand is a direct echo of God's provision of manna in the wilderness that we read in Exodus 16. Just as God sustained Israel, Jesus now sustains His people, demonstrating that He is the one who fulfills God's promises and provides abundantly.

Jesus, the Shepherd Who Satisfies

The feeding of the five thousand is more than a supernatural miracle; it is a profound declaration of Jesus' ability to satisfy humanity's deepest need. In Psalm 77:13-20, the psalmist reflects on God's mighty deeds, particularly His power in leading Israel through the waters.

From (V 19) "Your way was through the sea, your path through the great waters; yet your footprints were unseen". This imagery speaks to God's unseen yet active presence in delivering His people.

In Mark 6, Jesus reveals this same divine care. By taking five loaves and two fish, blessing them, and feeding thousands, He demonstrates that even the smallest offerings become abundant in His hands. The twelve baskets of leftovers symbolise the completeness of His provision, assuring us that He is not only the provider of our physical needs but also the one who meets our spiritual hunger.

In a sense, the feeding of the five thousand is a foretaste of the banquet prepared for us in heaven, where God's people will be fully satisfied in His presence. This miracle is one more moment to understand Jesus as the fulfillment of God's redemptive plan. God clothes our nakedness with complete love.

Jesus Walks on Water: The King Who Restores Creation

Following the miraculous feeding, Jesus sends His disciples ahead by boat while He withdraws to pray. Late into the night, the disciples struggle against the wind and waves on the Sea of Galilee. Then, in a moment that startles them, they see Jesus walking on the water.

This act is not simply an impressive miracle; it is again a profound declaration of Jesus' authority over creation. Psalm 77:16 reflects on God's power: "When the waters saw you, O God, when the waters saw you, they were afraid; indeed, the deep trembled." By walking on the water, Jesus reveals Himself as the one who calms chaos, echoing God's deliverance of Israel through the Red Sea.

Jesus walking on water is not an interruption of creation's laws, but a sign that creation is being restored to its rightful harmony under its true King.

From 2 Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."

Based on this verse, let me share a poem with you.

Clothed in Grace

*We come as we are
exposed, fragile, carrying the weight of what was.
No mask can hide the emptiness,
no walls strong enough to keep out the truth.*

*Mark tells the story of a King
who walks among the broken,
who reaches into the places we fear to reveal.
He does not turn away.
He sees, He knows, and still, He calls.*

*In Him, the past releases its hold.
The old self, once clinging to shame, fades.
A new creation rises
not by our own doing,
but by His love that clothes us in grace.*

*We are no longer abandoned to our own frailty.
We are wrapped in mercy,
covered in forgiveness,
held in the arms of the One who restores.*

*Step forward, unafraid.
You are seen. You are known.
You are made new.*

As a new creation, clothed in the love and forgiveness of Christ, we move forward with faith. Faith is not simply about seeing; it is about perceiving and trusting in Jesus' authority.

The disciple's actions remind us that faith is not about having all the answers but about reaching out to the one who does.

A Call to Transformation: Faith and Alignment with Divine Purpose

To grasp who Jesus is and what He offers, requires a complete change of heart. The Gospel is not merely a story to be passively observed; it is a call to transformation. Faith is about aligning ourselves with God's purposes.

This transformation is echoed in Paul's words in Galatians 1:4, where he speaks of Jesus giving Himself to "deliver us from the present evil age." The "present evil age" is marked by a reliance on God-substitutes and a world out of sync with God's design. Faith invites us to leave behind these substitutes and embrace Jesus, the rightful King, and allow His authority to reshape our lives. It is Jesus who is the one who restores our relationship with God, creation, and one another.

Jesus' invitation to faith is an invitation to rediscover God's grace and live as agents of His restoration, bringing hope and healing to a broken world. Our faith must be active and engaged in the day to day of living.

The Invitation to Hunger After Jesus

Faith allows us to trust God's provision, even when we feel inadequate or overwhelmed. Today, Jesus extends the same invitation to us. Are we willing to trust Him with our deepest needs? To do so is to enter into the abundant life He offers, a life marked by peace, restoration, and hope. Humans are not passive recipients of God's grace but active participants in God's redemptive work. God clothes our nakedness.

By reaching out in faith, we acknowledge our dependence on Him and open ourselves to His transformative work. This faith is not passive but active, calling us to trust, follow, and align our lives with His Kingdom. When we are aligned with God's purposes and when we trust Jesus as

the true King, the restoration of relationships, with God, creation and one another is transformational, ultimately culminating in participation in the eternal joy and glory of God's kingdom.

Challenges

This passage challenges us to:

Firstly, recognise that the world is not limited to the visible and material but is deeply infused with spiritual significance and divine purpose. As we open our hearts and minds to God's greater reality, being **prayerful** becomes essential in deepening our awareness of His love and forgiveness.

Secondly, embrace the call to examine our nakedness and vulnerability to allow the ongoing renewal of the mind and heart, aligning our lives with God's will. This **transformation** is not by our own strength but through the work of the **Spirit of God**, who clothes us into Christ's likeness.

Thirdly, live as agents of God's restoration, contributing to the healing of creation and the flourishing of others. This calling is not meant to be lived out in isolation but in **deep connection with others** as we all walk our journey of faith.

Finally, like the woman who touched Jesus' garment; approach him with humility and trust, confident in his power to restore. As we glorify God, we are called to **make Jesus known**, demonstrating His love and truth in our words and actions. This faith is lived out as we **love and serve together**, embodying Christ's compassion and grace. He is the King who Restores All

Amen!