



Morrison Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
www.mzluth.org

March 22, 2009
4th Sunday in Lent
Colossians 2:7
Pastor Randy Ott

Continue to Live in Him

Sometimes during the week when I get home from whatever I'm away from home at, it's late and I like to turn on TV and maybe go to one of those channels on Dish where they are running one of those crime shows, like CSI, CSI Poughkeepsie, NCIS, and various things like that. It's kind of a way to unwind while you just sit there and do nothing. It engages your mind and makes you think a little, but not a lot at all, and you just sit back and enjoy it. I kind of enjoy those kinds of shows. I like watching them, but every now and then, I'll sit down and watch one. At the end of the show I'm all excited because it's an interesting show and all of a sudden it comes across the screen, "To be continued." I'm never going to see the end of it! Now I'll never know who did what, where and when and there went an hour of my life when I could have been watching ESPN and instead I wasted it.

But sometimes as I sit there, because I don't get up and go anywhere, and the next show starts and it's the concluding episode. So then I get to stay up an hour later than I should and watch to see who did what, where and when. It's enjoyable and it's really neat when its back to back like that instead of just out of the blue, here's this one and the next one isn't on for who knows when. That's kind of neat when the "to be continued" is continued right away. It makes watching that show much more enjoyable.

You and I who have been blessed with the Holy Spirit, either at baptism when we were so little we don't remember it, or maybe we came to know Christ later in life through someone sharing the gospel with us, but you and I, from that time forward, have been blessed to know that our sins are taken away through the life and death of Christ. You and I have been blessed to get to know him better and better and better as he talks to us through his Word, as he leads us back to his Sacrament where we were clothed in his righteousness and as we kneel or stand and receive his very body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins and we remember his death. We've gotten to know him better and better and better.

But honestly, have you ever taken a break and said "Getting to know Christ is to be continued" and taken a break away from it? Next Sunday we'll have sitting here ten kids that are going to be really, really nervous. They are going to be examined and they will be asked questions. They will be sitting up here answering all these questions. Their education has continued to this point. Will it continue after they put on a white

gown and a red flower? I sure hope so, because if it doesn't, their life is going to be harder than it needs to be.

What about you? As you hear those questions, do you remember them all? Have you continued from that point on? If you took a big break somewhere in the middle there, you faced the things of this life, the things that sin brings about without God next to you holding up your arms and keeping you strong as you faced it. And your life was tougher than it needed to be.

I've seen kids that have sat here and then gone on to one of our area Lutheran high schools, MLHS or FVL, and they've continued. I've seen kids that have gone to public high schools and they've continued to grow in faith. But I've also seen people that haven't.

I've also seen adults that haven't grown in faith and if their Bible had teeth, there would be no bite marks on them because they haven't gotten close to their Bible since they were confirmed.

This weekend we had a Bible Study retreat at the Dells. One of the phrases we learned for getting your family into God's Word is "it's never too early to start and it's never too late to start." Maybe you've taken a break, maybe you haven't in your growing in faith. But whatever the case, you now have the opportunity from this moment forward to continue to build on that rock that is Jesus Christ, to get out your Catechism, to get out your Bible, to get out a remembrance of your baptism or to examine yourself and remember everything that goes together with receiving his body and blood. You have that opportunity from this moment forward to continue to be rooted and grounded in Jesus Christ and to grow. God has now put this in your hands. He's brought you to faith and now he says to you, "You can do it. You can make use of the means of grace, and I will bless you with my Spirit in ways you can't believe. I'll help you to face things you never thought you could face." Or, you could watch more CSI.

Hear the Word of our Lord from Colossians 2:7 – *So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.*