



## MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

[www.mzluth.org](http://www.mzluth.org)

November 20, 2011

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Endtime: Christ the King

Sermon Text: [Matthew 27:27-31](#)

Pastor Randy Ott

First Lesson: [Ezekiel 34:11-16, 23, 24](#)

Psalm of the Day: [Psalm 47](#)

Second Lesson: [1 Corinthians 15:20-28](#)

Gospel Lesson: [Matthew 27:27-31](#)

### **Hail, King of the Jews!**

The taunt of mockers

The truth that comforts

One of the things I kind of enjoy about the supplement is at the bottom of the page with some of the hymns they have that little bit that actually tells something about the hymn. Did you read it about the first hymn we sang this morning? In the first hymn we sang “You, Lord, are both Lamb and Shepherd.” It’s often said, and in the sentence on the bottom it’s been called “Christus Paradox,” how in Christ is our Salvation and Christ is our King, all these paradoxes or these seemingly contradictory truths exist at the same time. The phrase in that hymn that we sang over and over would be one of them, right? “You the everlasting instant”... it’s a paradox. Everything is an instant to him and yet at the same time he’s everlasting. It doesn’t seem to make sense. “You, Lord, are both Lamb and Shepherd”... a paradox.

In the hymn we just sang, there were some paradoxes as well. As believers, we reign with Christ above and we suffer with him here on earth at the same time, that’s a paradox. How can that be? The cross which comes with all its grace and all its shame gives us these two different things at the same time. Incredible truths in what we sang in those two opening hymns this morning. I hope you took the time to think about what we were singing and the mystery of the paradox that is Christ because that’s exactly what we see in our sermon text this morning on Christ the King Sunday.

We see a king who conquers by apparently being defeated, right? It’s a paradox. We see a king who is mocked and ridiculed. He’s given a crown, but it’s made of thorns. He’s given a scarlet robe and a staff as a scepter. He’s given all the trappings of a king, but the scepter is used to beat him. This paradox that is our Savior, it’s an amazing thing to consider.

It’s an amazing thing to consider too as we go through life because so often we want to say to ourselves, “How can this be, Lord?” We have to remember that the King who is our Savior is a king who doesn’t always rule with appearances that we would even see his purposes. That comes out so clear in the Gospel that we read from Matthew 27.

“Hail, King of the Jews” ...words that are spoken in ridicule and mockery. Words that were spoken to belittle and humiliate are also the words that you and I speak in

reverence and awe. They are words that you and I speak that comfort us and encourage us. The same words, insults and comfort. That's the nature of our God and the paradoxes he brings.

We don't see Jesus in Scripture looking like a king a lot. He is foretold throughout all of Scripture as being the Shepherd who would gather the sheep (like we heard from Ezekiel) and rule over them; called "my servant David," Christ himself would rule over all the people. Yet he doesn't rule like any earthly king. He's not holding out his ring and having people come and kiss it or extending his scepter to have them grab it and live like some of the kings of old. He rules in a completely different way than what we would expect. He rules by allowing himself to take all of our sins upon him. The One who never sinned, the sinless Son of God, takes all of our sins on himself and endures all of the wrath that God has about sin. God, who absolutely abhors and hates sin, pours out all of his wrath and all the punishment sin deserves on Jesus. Jesus himself knew it was coming. He prayed in the Garden the night before, "Father, if it's possible, take this cup from me, but not my will but your will be done." It is the model of prayer for believers. "Lord, if it's your will, take this away from me, but not my will, but your will be done."

When they did come later that night after he prayed that, it wasn't like he was surprised by them and they captured him and took him away against his will. What did Jesus do when that mob came out in the Garden? Do you remember? Do you remember when he asked "Who are you looking for?" and they said "Jesus of Nazareth" and he said "I am he"? Do you remember what happened to all of them? After he said "I am he," didn't they all fall down? It wasn't because of halitosis. It was his divine power that knocked them all to the ground. They got up and came to him again. He knocked them all down again. One more time and he had a turkey, right? His divine power demonstrated that "You aren't taking me because I am unaware or I'm surprised." His divined power showed you and me that he was doing this willingly for us. He was doing this willingly for the world. Think about that. He went through all of this because of the depth of his love for us. He knew what was coming. According to his divine nature, he knew what was coming.

And he endured it. "As a lamb is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth." He took all of their ridicule. He took all of their insults. It says that they took him into the Praetorium and the whole company of soldiers gathered around him. A whole company of soldiers was a sixth of a cohort, and a cohort was thousands. So we are talking about a lot of people here. This isn't a couple of wack jobs just getting off on being violent. There were a lot of people there.

When it says they took his scepter and struck him on the head over and over, that's what it is saying. It was a continual action. It wasn't just a one-time swing and a hit. It was again and again. He sat there and the One who had never sinned quietly took the feeling of their spittle running down his face. He could have knocked all of them down too. He could have called on his angels in his righteous anger and destroyed them right then and there, and you and I couldn't have said that he would have been wrong in

doing so. The wages of sin is death and they were sinning against a Holy God. He could have struck them down right there and right then. But because he loved them and because he loved us, he didn't.

Can you understand the depth of that kind of love? He loved the people that were crucifying him so much that he endured all of these attacks and all of these insults. You know how we are. We aren't going to take anything from anyone. "You say that to me, I'm going to say something worse back to you. You do something to me, I'm going to do something worse to you"...isn't that how we are? "I'll show you. Who are you to mess with me?" That's the sin where you and I live at times, isn't it?

Christ doesn't give as good as he got. He takes it. He endures it all because he knows he needs to do this to be the King who wins the victory, who defeats Satan and conquers death. He does it because he loves the world that much. I can't begin to understand the depths of that kind of love, because I'm not taking all that. I know you aren't either. That's why he had to do it in our place, because we couldn't, and we can't, and we don't.

We continue to sin against him when we fail to love as we've been loved, as we fail to forgive as we've been forgiven, as we seek to get revenge instead of believing God when he says "'it's mine to avenge,' says the Lord." As you and I do that, we sin against our God. That's why it's so important to you and me that he endured these insults, that he endured it in our place so that his perfection becomes our perfection and his forgiveness becomes our forgiveness.

The love of Christ is what changes us, it's what shapes us, it's what makes us who we are...someone who rises above our own sinful nature that has a part of us that loves God and that trusts God and says "Truly Lord, you do all things well even when I can't see how or why or when it's going to be well. I believe you Lord." We say "Hail, King of the Jews," and we offer him our praise and our trust and we look to him for our comfort and our encouragement because we know that he does all things well. The One who endured these kinds of insults, his love will not be withdrawn from us. His love does not sneak away from us just because we have failed him time and time again. He loves us perfectly and forgives us perfectly and he continues to do it again and again and again. Because of that, we praise him. We say "Hail, King of the Jews." We sing "Praise the Lord." We sing our hallelujahs and we live our hallelujahs in our daily life as we grow closer to him and put our trust in him and his work for us and not what seems best to us.

That's the privilege we have. We can enter into the court of our King every day of the week, sit at his feet and listen to his words of wisdom and love and listen to his words of forgiveness and peace. We do that each and every time we climb inside of the Bible. That's his throne room. We can approach it directly. You don't have to call ahead and set up an appointment. We can walk right in and sit down and have him strengthen and encourage us and shepherd us. That's why we say "Hail, King of the Jews," because this King that loves us gives us full access to him. His love covers our sins and his love

leads us into his presence. His love leads us out of his presence and into the world so that we can share his presence and be his presence to others around us so we can comfort and encourage one another.

That's the privilege God has given us. He's given us the privilege of building up one another with the Gospel. What a thrill that is to get to do what he has called us to do, to do what he has done for us, to be that little Christ to one another. What a glorious truth that our King bestows upon us.