



## MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

April 2, 2014  
Midweek Lenten Worship  
Sermon Text: [John 17:1-5](#)

Pastor Randy Ott

### Glory Be To Jesus!

In Christ, dear fellow redeemed:

Courage is an interesting thing. They give out medals for it, right? If you're in the armed forces and you serve in a courageous way, they'll give you a medal. The highest medal is the Medal of Honor. People that win medals like that displayed courage, sometimes the ultimate courage and even lost their life in defending their comrades in arms. Courage is something that is looked up to, something that we admire. Sometimes it's interesting how we only find the courage to do something when we think nobody is looking. But courage is a trait to be admired.

Tonight as we look at these words from Jesus from the history of the suffering and death, they are surprising, but they are also very courageous. Jesus speaks of glory. What might surprise you is that he is speaking this when he knows a mob is on its way to arrest him. He knows he is going to let himself be arrested. He knows that he is going to be beaten, he is going to be mocked, he is going to be humiliated (humanly speaking) by the soldiers, by the passers-by the next day, and yet he prays to his heavenly Father, "The time has come. Glorify your Son." We know what time it was for Jesus, but he doesn't look real glorious over the next 24 hours, does he? He looks like the victim, not the courageous, glorious conqueror, right? But he spells it out for us pretty clearly why he is talking about glory.

He tells us he has brought glory on earth to the Father by "finishing the work he gave me to do." The work God had given him to do was no surprise. At least it shouldn't have been. The night he was born, angels talked about and sang about it, right? "Today in the Town of David a Savior is born to you. He is Christ the Lord." Joseph and Mary, when they gave him the name Jesus, they were doing what the angel had told them to do. "Give him the name Jesus because he will save his people from their sins." From the time Moses had come down from the mountain with all those laws and regulations that you find so hard to read, it was pretty clear that the Savior was going to save people from their sins by shedding blood. Every one of those sacrifices, those whole burnt offerings, those sin offerings that involved the shedding of blood told you that to be right with God, blood has to be shed. To pay for sin, blood has to be shed. It shouldn't surprise us that the Savior's time of glory is going to involve him being beaten and bloody, because that's the picture God had painted for 1,500 years.

You and I might not think it was glorious. But if you and I think of what it has done, there is nothing more glorious. There's nothing that you and I could do so that we could

have the glory that God demands of us to stand in his presence. You and I couldn't offer up to God anything of ourselves. You and I are probably more often like the elders and the leaders of the Jews that we heard about in Matthew 26 tonight. Did you hear them when they were talking with Judas? They got Judas to betray Jesus for the price of a slave, 30 pieces of silver. Then Judas is grief stricken. He's full of remorse. He's torn up because he knows he has betrayed innocent blood. He takes it back and says, "Take it back! I can't have this!" They had to see that he was all torn up. Did you hear the comfort and the consolation they offered him? What does that tell us? "That's your problem. That's your responsibility." Here was a guy that needed something more from people who knew God's Word well, and he didn't get it. So he went out and hung himself.

That sounds kind of harsh if I say that's more often what you and I are like. But honestly, do you ever see people go through suffering and think to yourself, "Yeah, they had it coming. They brought it on themselves. Those choices they made, that's what made their life take a left turn toward hell in a hand basket. So now if they have to be in it, that's their problem. Why should I help them? Why should I offer them comfort or hope? Why should I offer them encouragement? They brought it on themselves. Let them deal with it themselves." You kind of feel a little bit smug because you didn't make those choices and your life doesn't fall apart the way theirs has. Do you ever feel that way? Do you ever think those people had it coming?

Did you ever think that from a distance looking at things like Katrina? "Those people in New Orleans, they're terrible. They had it coming." Are we that different? Do we love as God has told us to love and glorify God by having the compassion of God and the love of God and the love that Christ had? No, we don't. We can look down our noses at other people pretty quickly and pretty well because we've practiced it enough, haven't we? We aren't that different from those guys.

That just shows you, that propensity that we have to do that shows you there is no way we could meet the requirements that God demands. That's why we need Jesus to do the work the Father had sent him to do. Which was to love perfectly in our place. To love the mob that arrested him. To love the people that told the lies in the sham trial that were told about him. To love the people that drove the nails through his hands. To love them perfectly so that he even prayed for them as they were doing it. He had to do it because you and I don't. He brought glory to the Father because he carried to the end perfectly the task the Father had given him. He was perfect in your place and in my place, and he took all of our sins and paid for every last one of them on the cross. That's glory.

The cross looks like an instrument of torture. But for you and I now it has to mean something different, doesn't it? The glory of the cross is hidden in this sense. Anyone that saw the cross in 1<sup>st</sup> Century Jerusalem probably had shudders run down their spine to think of having to endure that. It was an instrument of torture, an instrument of agony. But now when you and I look at it, because the Holy Spirit has given us the gift of faith, we see the glory that is the cross. We see what our Savior did for us. We see

the depth of his love for us. And it shouldn't surprise us (also from what we read tonight) that God's glory is at times hidden.

That's the other thing that Jesus prays that is kind of surprising. "Now Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you since before the world began." He had all this glory, yet he hid it for a time. He didn't use it constantly. Yes, he used it from time to time. Yes, it shone through on the Mount of Transfiguration. Yes, you could see his glorious power when he performed miracles, but he didn't use it constantly. He was one of us. It was hidden.

Now he tells us that our life with him in God is hidden with God in heaven. "This is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent." When we know God, we have eternal life right now, but it's hidden with God in heaven. Right now you and I still endure the agony that is living in a sinful world. We endure the pain that comes from living in a sinful world. We endure the heartache. We endure the worry. We endure the trauma and the drama that comes from living in a sinful world.

But now when we look at the cross, we also are reminded not only was Jesus' glory hidden, but our true glory is now hidden with God, in Christ, in heaven. It's ours as certain as can be because God has told us it's ours. We are just away from it now for a time. God will bring us to that glory of heaven. That's our confidence and that's what sustains us. That's what then moves us to want to love better and love more fully and love one another and build one another up and share the gospel with those who don't know it, not because someone tells us we have to but because I want someone else to know the glory that I have. It's mine. It might be in heaven, but it's mine, and I want them to have it too.

That's why you and I sing praises to our God. And that's why we give glory to Jesus. That's why we honor his name, because our salvation is a certainty. It's dependent on him, not on us. Amen.