



## MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

April 2, 2023

Pastor Randy Ott

6<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent—Palm Sunday—Confirmation

First Lesson: [Zechariah 9:9-10](#)

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 24

Second Lesson/Sermon Text: [Philippians 2:5-11](#)

Gospel Lesson: [Matthew 21:1-11](#)

### **Islands in the Son: Have the Mindset of Christ**

Welcome to worship today at Morrison Zion Lutheran Church. We exist to glorify God. We have set out to do this by gathering around the Gospel so that we may grow in the Gospel and go to others with this Gospel.

Grace, mercy and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus:  
Amen.

In Christ, dear fellow redeemed:

In different situations in life, different places in life, different times in life, did you ever notice how your mindset is different? My mindset, when I was at the seminary and I worked overnight stripping grocery store floors and then came back and had to go to class, was probably like the mindset of some of you here this morning. "Lord, help me stay awake." It didn't always work. My mindset, while I've been a pastor and I'm talking with people that are maybe less than happy with me, is "Lord, help me be patient and loving." My mindset, when I was 15-years-old, a junior in high school playing football and you wore the other team's color, I might as well have been a bull and you might as well have been waving a red cape in front of me. My mindset was "anything I could do to destroy you, hurt you, stop you," whatever it was, is what I wanted to do. Mindsets shape our actions. If any of you people here are of the age that you're going to be playing football, please don't play football the way I did. I did not glorify God in my actions. So have a different mindset than mine.

But as I've grown in my life and grown in my faith, I think I've worked harder and harder, and I still often fail (I'm sure you do too) at having the mindset of Christ, like we're encouraged to have here. Paul is writing to the Philippians and it seems like there were some problems within the congregation. Two people that had faithfully served the Gospel of Christ were now kind of at odds with each other. In his greetings at the end, he even mentions it in a public letter to the whole congregation. At the end of the book, he says "I urge these two people to be at peace with one another, to get along in unity." So it seems as though there was a problem that the mindset was "You are my

enemy” rather than “Satan is my enemy.” That doesn’t sound at all familiar to our culture today, does it?

In preparing to give that encouragement at the end, I think this whole section (if you read at the start of [Chapter 2](#))—*Each one of you should look not only to your own interests but to the interests of others. Do not think of yourself more highly than you are*—all these things are said in the verses right before what I read to you. Then the motivation for doing it and the reason for doing it is Jesus. **...have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!** That’s how he describes the mindset of Christ.

What does that mean? It means Jesus, from all eternity, He has always been God. There has never been a time when He has not been God. He has always existed. He is eternal in each direction, going back and going forward. He’s divine. He lived in the full glory and perfection that was His as Divine God. It was His right to be honored, worshiped and glorified by the people He had created. And they decided a snake knew better.

They disobeyed Him and rejected Him. They continually turned their backs on Him through the course of human history. And yet, this full divinity was not something He was going to stomp His feet and say “This is my right.” He set it aside and entered Jerusalem to do nothing other than die on a cross to complete His mission of living perfectly in the place of everyone that ever has lived or ever will live; to die as the punishment for everyone that ever has lived or ever will live. He set it aside for the benefit of someone else: you, me, the whole world. Have that mindset. Because Christ loved you that way, love others that way. That’s what your God is calling you to do today.

He doesn’t want to hear the “Yeah, but the person was a jerk. They were annoying. They were rude. They were...” whatever. His mindset was that He died for every last person, even those that would completely reject Him and spend all of eternity in hell. He still lived and died for them.

Now He calls us to have this mindset of putting everyone else’s interests ahead of our own. How does that play out? I talked before about how as a pastor sometimes people are less than happy with me. It means during those times I really don’t want to (sometimes I do), I really don’t want to get my back up and attack and defend and all that stuff. I’m willing to be wronged if it is going to serve the Gospel. I don’t have to answer and defend it because Christ is my defense. I don’t have to stick up for myself when I’m being attacked at times because the best thing I can do is let someone vent and then keep loving them and be patient with them. I really believe sometimes people

don't have any other place to vent except to come to the pastor and vent on them, and that's okay. Even if that's not what they are doing, I still need to be loving and patient.

Have you got anything like that in your life? Co-workers, family members, neighbors, spouses that at times you have to be loving and patient with because they're sinners, and sinners sin. Jesus put our interests (the sinners' interests) ahead of His own, left heaven, lived and died. Now He asks us to have that mindset not to just let them walk all over you as though you are earning something from God but to do it with the purpose of being loving and patient so you can share Jesus with people that are hurting. That's what He has called us to do. That's what we're here for. Have that mindset.

Look at who Jesus is. He's true God from all eternity. He humbled Himself and became obedient to death. But He is also the Exalted One. As the Exalted One, He pours out His Spirit on us day after day so that we can have the mindset of Christ. We are to have and keep on having that mindset. It's a present imperative. It's keep on doing, keep on having the mindset of Christ. I'm tempted when I do it once in a great while to pat myself on the back and say "God, aren't you lucky you have me? Look at what I did. I didn't answer them the way I really, really wanted to." Then the next 20 times I answer them the way I really, really want to. No, have it and keep on having that mindset. That's what God has called us to do.

You and I are going to fail! We are NOT Jesus. We aren't going to be perfect. But we want to get better because although we know we aren't perfect, we know we're forgiven because Christ humbled Himself and did all of this for us.

So now we want to grow in this mindset and keep on growing to have this mindset and seek to put it into practice more and more; to love as Christ loved us and others. It's a challenge and sometimes it's inconvenient, but it's the way that you and I can thank the God who loved and saved us. When it comes down to it, there is nothing more important than the fact at Jesus loved and saved us. So it's something where you and I are looking for ways to say "Thank you, Jesus," and today He tells us one of them. Amen.

***And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*** [\(Philippians 4:7\)](#) Amen.