



MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.mzluth.org

December 6, 2023

Pastor James Enderle

Midweek Advent Week 2

Reading: [Colossians 3:12-17](#)

Devotion: [Genesis 37:1-4](#)

The Clothing of the King An Enviably Style

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 and peace to you from God our Father and from Jesus Christ, our Lord:

How many of you kids, when you got up this morning, had your parents check what you were wearing? Do you just go out the door and your parents don't care what you wear or is it kind of within reason? Or sometimes you're running out the door and do you hear your parents say, "Are you really going to wear that?!" Has that ever happened, maybe once? No? Think about if you were going to go to a fancy dinner or a wedding, would you be wearing the clothes that you are wearing now? Some of you may be dressed up, but others maybe would dress a little fancier.

Sometimes the clothes that we wear says a lot about us and who we are and even if your parents didn't say anything to you, I think your parents care a little bit about how you look. They don't want you to have torn clothes or, I've seen this before on my kids, with your pants on backwards. You want to be showing yourself in a good way. The clothes we wear say something about us. And, how nice is it when someone says "Oh that looks really nice on you." If you've ever heard that before, it's encouraging to hear that; to hear that these clothes represent you in a good way and maybe for your family. When you're all dressed up again, maybe for that Christmas service coming up... "Oh, you all look very nice together."

For Joseph, we saw that in his life he gets robed in this special robe from his father, this coat which some say is a coat of many colors. It's hard to translate exactly what it was, but no matter what it was, if it was this long, colorful coat, it was a special coat. It was especially given to him to make him stand out; to make him stand out especially in front of his brothers, and his brothers knew that well. He was already loved and like more than the others and this just made it worse. We know this colorful coat showed that Joseph was the prized son, the one loved more than his other siblings. It was made clear by what he wore. And we know that this caused his brothers to hate him.

Because his brothers hated him, they took that coat and they took Joseph and they threw him into a pit. They put blood on the coat and made it seem like he had been eaten by an animal. But they actually sold him into slavery. Now he is wearing clothes of a slave but he is working faithfully. He was put in charge of everything at Potiphar's house. While he is there, what happens? Potiphar's wife wants him to commit sin; to lay with her. He said he wouldn't do that. He wouldn't sin against God and do such a thing to hurt Potiphar and to hurt God. So what happens? Here he has another coat. Potiphar's wife takes that coat and as he runs away, she grabs that coat and takes it to falsely accuse him. "Joseph was in the room and he tried to sleep with me and I didn't want him to," so he is falsely accused and stripped of his clothing. Then he was sent to prison. As he is sent to prison, even though he is stripped of his coat, his character, his reputation remains intact.

In prison, he starts to interpret dreams. As he does, we see he predicts the truth about some of Pharaoh's leaders, some of the men that would be called back up to service. Even though they forgot about him, years later he is called up to interpret some of Pharaoh's dreams. As he is given this chance of redemption, we see again it focuses on his clothing. It says that he was given a shave, a haircut, and a fresh set of clothes. He is given this chance of redemption. Instead of being in prison, now he is before Pharaoh and cleaned up and standing before the king (Pharaoh).

As he interprets the dreams and helps to save Egypt, do you know what Pharaoh does? After Joseph does all these things by the power of God, Pharaoh places a ring on his finger and then puts the finest linen on Joseph. Notice that he again is given honor and glory by what he is wearing, standing in front of the nation of Egypt as one set up by Pharaoh to lead the people. It's shown by what he is wearing.

You can kind of track his life by his clothing. He was exalted and made to stand out by his father with the special coat. Then he becomes a slave, a servant, and he is stripped of that clothing and is falsely accused and sent to prison. He is finally cleaned up and then raised back up into glory.

When he is raised up into glory and becomes a leader, there is more. The heart of the story of Joseph comes when his brothers come down to Egypt. What could Joseph have done? He could have held a grudge and punished his siblings, but instead, it says that he fed them over and over again. He fed them and forgave them. Then finally it says that he gave them a new set of clothing. He does this and shows this love to them. Instead of rejecting them, instead of sending them on their way and saying "Look what you did to me. Even though you did this, you hated me, I've become this, and now I have this power," he could have sought revenge. But he showed love and forgiveness and clothed them and fed them—new clothing; a new beginning for his brothers.

One of the neatest things about Joseph is that he is a picture of something else. We call him a type of Christ. There are many things about Joseph's life that represent things and are pictures of Christ. When you think about Jesus, we think about God's Son, who came down to earth. At His baptism, what did God do? He said "This is my Son, whom I love, listen to Him." He pointed it out and put respect and love onto Jesus and told everyone to look at Him. He is different. He is special.

Then as Jesus went about His life, even though God said that He was loved and God was pleased with Him, what did people do? They rejected Him. They falsely accused Him. They said that He was blaspheming against God. Finally, as He is arrested, what is done to Him? He is stripped of His clothing. He is beaten and sent to a cross. Though He is stripped of His clothes and mocked and made to look like the worst of criminals, we know that He still had His perfection, His integrity, and He was doing this all for us. He still had His perfect righteousness because He was God and He had not sinned.

So we see that similarity between Joseph and Jesus as the depths. But in the depths, what happens next? As He rises from the pit, from the darkest place of death and He went to hell, He rises and it says that God will exalt Him above every name. As we wait for His coming again, we wait for His coming on Christmas, but we also wait for His return to come with the angels, in a picture that we can barely imagine what the glory is going to be like. We will see Him covered with more beauty than ever. And in this place of beauty and all of His work, what does He do? Is it all about Himself? No, it's about a similar thing that Joseph did.

In Joseph's power, what did he do? He saw those who accused him, those who hurt him, and he clothed them. We know that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. We are His enemies by nature and because of our sinful nature, we want nothing to do with God, but yet, what does He do? He clothes us. He clothes us with His righteousness and gives us a new beginning, a new life, a new life in His name. Even though we want nothing to do with Him by nature, He loves us and forgives us. What grace and mercy we have that He has clothed us in this beautiful clothing.

When we look at these two stories, we see beautiful clothing, and then clothing taken away, but finally, clothing of beauty and glory and honor, and in that position of glory and honor, that person giving someone who doesn't deserve it, a new start, new clothing; something that looks good on us; something that says so much about us, not because we earned it or deserved it but because of His love for us. God has loved you and forgiven you. And even though we struggle to find our identity and want to make it all about ourselves and we sometimes want to push off that clothing and be proud, God gives us this clothing through Christ.

What is the joy that we get to do? As we are given this honor and clothing of forgiveness and righteousness, we get to be just like Joseph and Jesus, too. We can give

that new clothing and that forgiveness to others. Even though some will say "It's so hard to forgive! It's so hard to do those things. God can do that, but I can't forgive. That's so hard," we look at those words from Colossians and remind ourselves to be clothed with the fruits of the Spirit; with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. He says to put on the love of Christ. Let that peace rule in our hearts and know that yes, sometimes we don't feel like doing it, but God is giving us that clothing and that Spirit, and that Spirit works in us. He forgives us, so we can forgive like God has forgiven us.

Joseph is such an amazing lesson for us that life is not easy. Joseph had such a difficult life, but what did he say over and over again? God knew what was best and God was with him and God used it for his good. We know that is true for us also, that God is working for our good. He loves you and forgives you and what a joy it is that we get to share that grace and mercy with others. So clothe yourselves with Christ. Clothe yourselves with that forgiveness and know that it looks good on you and it says so much about you who are redeemed and forgiven in Christ. Amen.

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