



MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.mzluth.org

April 13, 2025

Pastor James Enderle

Palm Sunday

First Lesson: [Isaiah 42:1-4](#)

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 24b CW Psalter

Second Lesson/Sermon Text: [Philippians 2:3-11](#)

Gospel Lesson: [Luke 19:28-40](#)

DEAD AND BURIED Surrender Buries Seizure **WHY ARE YOU HERE?**

1. Jesus arrived as a _____, _____ then _____
2. We struggle daily, _____ and _____
3. Here you see your _____ and the _____
4. Go, _____ and _____ focused, other _____

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:

About a month and a half ago, my wife and I journeyed out to Minnesota. We were there for a special event. My brother turned 50 and my sister-in-law took a lot of effort to plan this really great surprise party. She was able to get this really awesome Air B&B. It was this huge place in the country, not too far from where they live. Some friends from Wisconsin that my brother knew and then a bunch of local friends went there. The way to get him to the surprise party was by his wife saying, "I bought something off of Facebook Marketplace. You need to pick it up. If you pick it up today, we can get it really cheap." So we are all there waiting and she was kind of tracking where he was. We tried to hide our cars as best we could and then we said, "How should we do this? How do we open the door? Who is the person he hasn't seen in the longest amount of time?" So one of his good friends, a man who was in his wedding, was there and we said, "Why don't you open the door?"

So, as my brother was coming from working out and expecting to pick up a rug, his friend opens the door and sees this guy is standing there. At first he doesn't really even recognize him. Then the thought of *what are you doing here* comes up. *What? This isn't right.* When we see someone, just the fact that they are there can give you so much joy because that person is there. His friend opened the door. My brother saw him and a bunch of his family and friends and said "What are you doing here?"

Maybe if you've had a surprise party you've had a similar feeling or the joy of seeing someone that you've missed or was gone for a long time and you say, "What are you doing here," and there is that joy that you get.

There is also the "What are you doing here" that comes up when someone is somewhere they are not supposed to be or someone comes to your door and you say **"Why are you here,"** that question relates a lot to who someone is. If you get a knock on the door and it's a mailman or a delivery person or a friend, you don't have to question too much why they are here. Maybe you knew why they were coming here. But if it's a policeman or a firefighter and they are knocking at your door, you might say **"Why are you here,"** because who they are makes a big difference.

As we look at our text today, the big question that we are going to look at is **why are you here?** It's a question we are going to ask about Jesus. Why is He here? Why did He come on Palm Sunday? Why did He enter into Jerusalem? Also, why did He come to this world? That's really what [Philippians 2](#) is all about. Why He is here has a lot to do with who He is. The second question I want you to think about is **why are you here?**

In a couple hours we are going to have confirmation and the kids will be sitting nervously up front and will be asked the question **"Why are you here?"** Why did they come to study the Bible? Some of them, from public school, came on Wednesday nights. But why are they here now? This is even something for you to think about, those sitting in the other seats. **Why are you here?** Your kids sang today? Maybe there are other reasons, but **why are you here?** It's a question that we're going to explore as we look at who Jesus is and why He came and what it means about why we are here and who we are.

As we get into our text, we see that Paul is really writing about relationships and understanding how we work together and how we struggle with that. As we are here, we have to deal with other people. One of the big things we have to deal with is ourselves, so he encourages how to deal with yourself and valuing yourself, but he uses as the example for all of this, Jesus. ***In your relationship with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus...*** Why do we want to have the mindset of Christ Jesus? Who is He and why did He come? Why did He enter in on Palm Sunday? Why did He come as the King, not with military might, not with an army behind Him, not coming to be political, but instead riding on a donkey? What is that? He comes in with shouts as a king, yet He is going to be arrested and tried as a criminal. Do you think that's a question that the people in Jerusalem were considering that week? It's a question that we know the disciples were considering, but now there are all the people in Jerusalem, the disciples, the Pharisees, the teachers of the Law, the Romans—"Why are you here, Jesus?" It must have been fairly confusing as He comes in with power but then also humility.

Paul explains why He came. He says: *...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! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place...* It's always fascinating to think about Jesus, who we say is the Trinity, He is God and He has existed from the beginning of time. When God spoke, He used the Word, and [John](#) tells us that Jesus is the Word and through Him all things were made. So here, Jesus is God, with all power and might, but He becomes man. He made Himself NOTHING! Consider that. Like ash—something that can die.

Why did He arrive in this world? Why did He arrive on Palm Sunday? **Jesus arrived as a servant, humbled then exalted.** He came to serve all of us, to empty Himself. He had all divinity and even when He walked on this earth, He was 100% God and 100% man. How is that possible? We still struggle to understand, but God says it's true and necessary for Him to be that perfect Servant, that perfect Substitute for us; to humble Himself under the Law; to be in your place. He then suffers in the worst way, on the cross, with criminals, to die a crucifixion—a horrible death—to rise again and to be King of Kings and be exalted. This is who Jesus is. That is why He is here.

When we know why He is here, then we want to look back and wonder why we are here. **Why are you here** today? It's also one of my favorite questions I ask the confirmation students. It's the question that we ask as one of the first examination questions. What does it mean that God created you? **Why are you here?** God created you with a purpose. We have a Creator. You are here because God loves you. God created you. That's a super important thing to understand, that you are here because you have a purpose. Over and over again, why you are here is tied to your identity. God created you. You are loved.

But then something happened. We know that there was this fall into sin and Adam and Eve became not perfect. That means if you have lived any minutes or hours in this life, you know that you, yourself, are not perfect as well. Those around you—your children, your friends, your parents, grandparents, all the people that you know and love, they are not perfect either. The same sin that afflicted Adam and Eve, that thing that actually tempted Eve in the greatest way, not just to eat fruit but to make herself god, that's what the devil said. "God knows that if you eat of the fruit, you will be like Him." ([Genesis 3:1-5](#)) What is that? That's pride and self-centeredness. Eve thought she knew better and God didn't love her and was keeping something from her. So Adam and Eve struggled with this pride and self-centeredness and now that is passed onto you and to me. And if you know yourself, you know that you struggle with that pride and self-centeredness. We love to make it all about us. If you know it in your kids, what is focused on the most is "me." "I don't want to share this." "They hurt me." It's not something you have to teach. It's in each and every one of us. Does it get any better as you get older? It's all about "me." This is how we live and we struggle day in and day

out with this. **We struggle daily with being prideful and self-centered.** We need to bury that but it's so hard because the pride and our view of ourselves can go both ways. When you think about who you are, you could become very prideful. Your ego is like this thing that can be blown up like a big balloon. It can be overextended and everyone can see it, that you make it all about yourself. You can never admit you're wrong. You always have to be right. It always has to go your way. Or, it could be deflated and it's still all about you. Nothing goes right. No one loves you. You don't have a purpose. And you're afraid and fearful and have anxiety because you don't see God in your true identity. That pride can go both ways and you can make it all about yourself by showing everyone or by thinking you're worthless and nothing.

So then we ask again, **why are you here?** Why does this matter with being here in church on Sunday? You can be in all sorts of different places next week on Easter Sunday. You can be wherever, and I'd say even more importantly, the week after Easter you can be anywhere as well, so why do you come here? Why do you open the Bible and look at God's Word? Here we see the truth. Out in the world, the world says "Follow your desires. Strive and do your best and that's great. That's all that anyone can be asked of, to just work hard," but we see that Christ doesn't say that. Christ didn't do that. Christ was perfect and humbled Himself and was a Servant always.

As Paul writes in those verses leading up to this: ³***Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,*** ⁴***not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.*** (Philippians 2:3-4) Do you ever do anything out of selfish ambition? God says do nothing out of selfish ambition. What we hear about here, in church, in God's Word, is that you can never do enough. All the striving falls short. So what do we need and what do we hear? **Here you see your sin and the Sin-Bearer.** Here you are going to hear Law and Gospel. You are going to hear that you have fallen short and you can't do it, but there is good news. There is hope and forgiveness. Jesus came. Why is He here? Why did Jesus come down from heaven? It was to redeem you. God didn't give us those Ten Commandments to say "This is how you become perfect and get to heaven." He gave them to us to show us we fall short and Jesus came and did it all perfectly for us. He poured our sins on the cross, every one of them.

The disciples were probably looking up at Jesus and saying "Why are you here, Jesus? You did all these miracles. You saved others." That's what the people mocked and said "Jesus, why are you here? If you're the Son of God, save yourself! Show us you're really the Son of God." But why was He there? To redeem you and me, to make sure that our sins were paid in full, covered. So we come here to see how to live but most of all, to see we can't do it. But we have one who has done it—your Sin-Bearer. You are forgiven and redeemed.

What does that mean? What does it mean to be a Christian, a disciple? It means you are a follower of Jesus. Notice it says to ***have the same mindset as Christ Jesus...*** We

want to BE like Him, but that's not enough. We need one who is perfect. But because of that, we can go forward. The verses after what we read say **...work out your salvation with fear and trembling...** ^(Philippians 2:12-13) Often people will quote that and say "Okay, you believe, but now you have to **work** out your salvation. You have to **work** hard." But the next part of that says ¹³**...for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.** It's still **God** who has done it and it's that love and that forgiveness IN CHRIST that motivates us. So we can go and be humble. Go because we know that we are redeemed and forgiven, so I say **go, cross and sky focused**, and **other serving**. We see the cross and we see Jesus paid our sins, but it's also empty. Jesus was exalted. He went on to heaven and He paid for our sins. We don't have to work it out. It's done! That's what the resurrection means—that you have hope now and forever, so we can serve God and serve others.

I think of two other pictures of **why are you here**. Think about the empty tomb that we're going to hear about in a week. The angels spoke to those who were looking for Jesus and said **"Why are you here?** Jesus rose, just like He said He was going to do, so He's not here." Then we'll see shortly after that the Ascension, and the disciples are looking up to heaven and they are kind of waiting and thinking *Jesus, are you coming back?* The angels again say **"Why are you here?** Go and share that good news." The tomb is empty and we have that hope and forgiveness. You, as a Christian, have a purpose now, a hope, and you can empty yourself to serve others.

As we come together in Christ in this church, it's not about what is best for "me," but it's about how we can serve others. How can we do the best for the most? How can we get more Jesus to more people? How can this love of God go to others? That's why we're here, not to see you're such a good person but that you're forgiven. You're a disciple of Jesus and that means you have this hope and peace now and you have a purpose—to show that love and to let others know of that love. So **why are you here?**

Those confirmation students confessed their faith. They are becoming members. But you, as members, **why are you here?** Why are you in this world? It is to serve and love Him but know most of all, that you have peace. That cross means forgiveness and the sky means that you have eternal life. Amen.

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