



MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.mzluth.org

April 27, 2025

Pastor James Enderle

2nd Sunday of Easter

First Lesson/ Sermon Text: [Acts 5:12, 17-32](#)

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 150b CW

Second Lesson: [Revelation 1:4-18](#)

Gospel Lesson: [John 20:19-31](#)

BECAUSE HE LIVES We Have a Meaningful Mission **A MEANINGFUL MISSION**

1. An _____ Mission
2. With _____ and _____ Enemies
3. A _____ Mission
4. A Mission _____ in _____

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:

If you have been part of any businesses, one of the things they talk about is that you need to have a good mission and goal in mind. If you don't have a clear mission, then you don't really know how to get all your people in line and get them to understand how they can help. You can really get divided in what you're doing. It helps people to get passionate if they understand what the mission and goal of the business are. They can really get behind things. It really answers the why. "Why are we doing this?" "This matches our mission. This is what we are trying to do in serving people or helping or making the best type of 'this.'"

Here at Morrison, we have a Mission Statement to "Glorify God as we Gather around the Gospel to help people Grow in the Gospel and Go with the Gospel." This guides what we are doing. It helps us to know what to say "yes" to and what to say "no" to in different ideas.

When it comes to missions and having **a meaningful mission**, it's so important that we see that we have that, **a meaningful mission**, because if you don't see your mission, if you don't see your goal, then it can be kind of hard in life. I mentioned this before. If someone loses a job or if they are retired after working for so many years, and then all of a sudden on Monday they no longer have that same mission, they aren't looked up to

in the same way, and unless they can find other good hobbies or work, they feel like they don't have a purpose or a mission.

In today's text we are going to see that we all have **a meaningful mission** in all parts of our life, because we're Christian. What does that mean? We are going to look at the different parts of this meaningful mission even though it's not an easy one.

That's what we really see right away with our text as the apostles/disciples, those who had witnessed Jesus' death and resurrection, we saw that in our Gospel Lesson that they had seen and had been with Jesus' for three years. They saw Him arrested and crucified. They witnessed Him alive again. Now they have been sent out to go and teach and preach. It says, ***"The apostles performed many signs and wonders among the people."*** So they had this great mission but even though they were sharing it and people were following it, was it the most popular mission? Was it the most popular thing? We see what happens in Verse 17. ***Then the high priest and all his associates, who were members of the party of the Sadducees, were filled with jealousy. They arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail.*** The truth is that their message was **an unpopular mission**. It's the same as ours.

As we go out and share the Gospel, as we share about Jesus, it's **an unpopular mission**. There are many people that don't want to hear about Jesus. They don't want to hear about the Gospel. They don't want to hear about sin and that we fall short and we need a Savior. People don't like it. I think we live in this country that has been predominantly supportive of Christianity. Some might even call it a Christian nation, but what we see is we are shocked when anyone opposes Christianity. We almost become a victim and think *how dare someone say something against Christianity* when Christianity has been hated for thousands of years. If you look around the world, there are countries where people are persecuted all the time. So for us to understand that this message is not one that is very popular, that our mission of sharing about the forgiveness of sins, about salvation in Jesus alone, it's not a popular one. We are going to meet opposition. We are going to meet people that want nothing to do with it and say that it's foolish to be here on Sunday morning and to read the Bible, so it certainly is **an unpopular mission**.

Then we look a little bit at where the opposition comes from. We see that there were people in the church that were opposing it. But then as they are arrested, they are sent to jail, and all of a sudden an angel gets them out of jail. Usually when someone escapes jail, what do they do? They run. But here we see them go and preach. So the leaders bring them back in and say "We told you not to teach in His name." ***Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than human beings!"*** The truth is that this mission has many enemies. What we could say is it's **with internal and external enemies**. What do we mean by that? We certainly see how the apostles faced the opposition of the church leaders and the government. They didn't want them going out and sharing that message. But it was part of the church. It was an internal enemy through the religious people that didn't like this. So we see some external enemies

through the government, but also that they were part of what should be the religion, we can see that they are internal as well.

But another issue here is when we look back at our Gospel Lesson, [John 20:19–31](#), where the apostles had been with Jesus. Jesus had told them over and over again that He was going to die and rise again. They hear reports that He has risen and what are the disciples doing? They are locked up in a room, afraid. They are fearful. It says a week later they are doing the same thing. Not only are there external enemies, but when we hear these words, “We must obey God rather than human beings! We must obey God rather than men,” so often we hear it in the context of the government or someone out there telling us we can’t do something. It’s usually not everything about the Gospel but it may be something “I” don’t want to do.

But think about this. “We must obey God rather than men” also has to do with our sinful nature and our fear. The enemies aren’t always external. They are also internal through people that are fearful or selfish and just want it all about them and aren’t thinking about the mission. So instead of being about Jesus, being about this mission, they are about themselves. Sometimes we have to tell ourselves, “We have to obey God rather than men and not what my heart desires or what my heart thinks it best.”

Even within the church, when people are saying “We have to do it this way” or “We can’t do it that way,” do we? Is that really how it must be done? What can we do for the mission? How can we further spread the Gospel? How can we go forward? If the enemy, if what is causing people to be afraid (just like the disciples who locked themselves up), is fear or a lack of understanding, then we have to say “We must obey God and pursue the mission that we are called to do.” What type of mission is it? We see what happens. We see that God helps release the apostles from prison. Then, as we said, they don’t run away. Instead they go out and preach. It’s **a relentless mission**. God is going to continue to push and then once we know of the truth, how can we not share? How can we not go in the face of opposition and push forward that mission of sharing Jesus and the truth?

Share the truth of what? What the apostles say is: ***“We are witnesses of these things...”*** They really saw what had happened. What had happened was—***The God of our ancestors raised Jesus from the dead—whom you killed by hanging him on a cross. God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might bring Israel to repentance and forgive their sins.*** They are witnesses of this truth. It’s true, so it’s **a mission rooted in reality**. As we go and share, this is not a myth, it’s not a just a great story. It’s something that really happened and it changes things for everyone. It means repentance and salvation, repentance and peace.

When there is repentance and forgiveness of sins, we see what this does. We see it today in Baptism, that another child is welcomed into God’s family. We see it in our lives because it gives us true peace and forgiveness. It gives us a true foundation to see

everything in the world. When the world is trying to push you this way and that, to get you to believe this or that, or to put all your hope in yourself, we can put our faith and trust in something that is real. Jesus died for you. He lived for you. He rose for you.

When we talk about repentance and forgiveness, we want to go to that repentance to be filled with that forgiveness; not to be afraid of what God will do or say but to know that Jesus has paid for our sins. So we go and repent of our sins to be renewed, to be given that forgiveness and peace that nothing else can give. That's what the Lord's Supper is and that's what our daily life of being in Devotions and reading God's Word and confessing our sins does. It gives us a peace that nothing else can give.

So we go forth because as much as we have this, we want others around us to have it as well. You might say "I can't share this message because they're not going to believe me" or "I don't know enough" or "It might hurt my friendship." But we see people in so many other places in the world that face persecution. They know they could be arrested for their faith and they go boldly. Yet, are we afraid to share with a friend or a family member? God will be with you. God will give you the words and maybe the patience to listen and to share the truth. We know it's an unpopular mission, but we know it is relentless because God is working through it. The Holy Spirit is working through it, to give you the words, to give you the boldness.

We see the change that the disciples had from that time in John, locked in a room to now boldly going from prison out to preach again, saying "We must obey God rather than men." This is the boldness I pray that we have as we go and share this meaningful mission that you have all the days of your 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.