



**MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**AND**  
**IMMANUEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
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June 1, 2025

Pastor James Enderle

Ascension

First Lesson: [Acts 1:1-11](#)

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 47

Second Lesson/Sermon Text: [Revelation 19:11-16](#)

Gospel Lesson: [Luke 24:44-53](#)

**BECAUSE HE LIVES**  
**He Reigns Over Everything for the Benefit of His Church**  
**THE ASCENDED LORD IS VICTORIOUS**

1. ...with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
2. ...by a perfect \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ...as the \_\_\_\_\_ of God.
4. ... as \_\_\_\_\_.

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.

**Children's Devotion**

Does anyone know what this is? (*Pastor is holding a baton.*) "A scroll?" That's not a bad guess, it kind of looks like a scroll. "A roller?" A roller, kind of like when you roll out cookies. That's another great guess. I know there are a few track stars in the back, maybe some people going to State that might know what this is, but this is a baton. This is what runners use when they are running a relay race and they are running, running, running, and then they will hand it to the person in front of them. That person will run, run, run, run and then they will hand it to the next person. When you have a baton in a relay race, you pass it to the next person who is going to keep on running that race until it is finished. It's your teammate, the person who is going to help you out.

During the Ascension, Jesus goes away and you know what He tells His disciples? They are going to continue and be His witnesses. The Ascension is kind of weird. Jesus goes up and He goes away and we are kind of like "Why does He do that?" But one of the reasons is that He is kind of handing the baton to God's people—to the disciples and to you and to me and all of us so that we go out and we share God's message that Jesus is the Savior, that He died for you, that He rose again, and He is still ruling.

The other part of this that makes it a little bit different than a baton is if you get passed the baton, you have to finish the race. You have to try really hard and finish the race. What the Ascension means, and what we are going to talk about in our Sermon, is that Jesus has already won the race. We get to be a part of the race but Jesus is already victorious. He beat sin and death and He rose again, so we don't have anything to fear.

Have you ever done a project with your dad, maybe in the yard or in the garage? Maybe he'll say "Hey, can you keep on doing this? Can you work on the yard for a little bit or hammer a little bit?" Even though he asks you to do that a little bit, he is going to come back and he is going to finish the work. That's kind of what we're going to hear. Jesus gives believers (Christians) the baton to go and share His message, but at the Ascension, He tells us He is going to come back. He is reigning. He has won the race for us. And one day, He is going to come back and bring us all to be with Him in heaven.

It's pretty cool to see that even though Jesus has ascended into heaven, we know He is victorious and He has also given us a mission. He has given us the baton to go share about Jesus and the Gospel. Let's say a prayer about that.

*Heavenly Father, we thank you for sending Jesus to be our Savior. As you ascended into heaven, you gave us the baton, to be your messengers, to share about the love of Jesus—that Jesus loves the whole world. We can carry that baton, but we also know that you have finished the race. You have forgiven our sins and one day, you will come back to show that you are King of Kings and to take us back into heaven. We thank you for this and we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.*

### **Sermon**

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

If you talk to people who are struggling with Christianity and understanding God, or people who have gone away from believing in a god, a lot of the things they might say are "My Jesus does this..." "My Jesus would act like this..." Or "A god I would believe in would do things this way..." People like to craft their own god, their own savior, their own Jesus and they struggle to see the Bible as faithful and true, and I think they struggle with this picture of Jesus. I think even as WE look at Jesus, sometimes we question and say "Why would you ascend into heaven?" People wonder and say "If God really wants us to believe in Jesus, why doesn't He just show us Jesus?" We are going to see here that Jesus ascends for a reason. We heard that a little bit in our Children's Sermon, but we are going to especially see in our text that the **Ascended Lord is victorious**. He has His purpose for doing this.

But I think one of the good examples of why when people say "If Jesus would just show Himself, and then we would believe," how did that work out when Jesus was alive? As

He was teaching and preaching, as He was going about and as He was doing miracles, what happened? He raised Lazarus from the dead. This was a miracle that people could not deny. Here a man was dead and now He is alive and Jesus did it and people knew it and what did the chief priests/teachers of the Law want to do? "Now we have to kill Him." So we wonder and say "If He would just do it this way...", but then we understand God has His ways. We struggle. Even the people who saw Jesus struggled.

So as we see John here with the vision in Revelation, we see a lot of things about the end times, and he explains a little bit about what Jesus is doing as He is ascended into heaven and what He is going to do as He comes back.

The Book of Revelation is not always an easy book to read and understand. There are letters to different churches talking about things that are going to happen that have now happened since it was written, but then there is discussion about the end times, that things get worse, and then especially the Judgment Day, the end, and pictures of heaven. Today we get a little picture of that end, of Jesus returning. And as the angels speak to the disciples and say "Jesus will return in the same way," we see a little picture of what He is going to look like as well. We see here that He is on ***a white horse! Its rider is called Faithful and True, and he judges and makes war in righteousness.***

One of the important things that we see about Jesus and our God is that He is a victorious Lord, and He is victorious **with faithfulness and truth**. This is how He conquers. This is how He comes to us. He is not coming to deceive. He never came to this world to deceive or to get anything for Himself. He always spoke the truth. He was faithful in His mission. He didn't waiver and say "I just want this for my own things." He knew His mission. He spoke God's Word in truth. It's so important to see that this is what He came to do and we can have confidence in who Jesus is. So many people want to devise who God is and "This is my truth. If God was really this way, He would do it this way," but when we look at God, even if we struggle to understand all the things that Jesus did, what God does in the Bible, we know at the heart of it, it is the truth. It's the truth of God and His love for us. He created us and He wants us to be with Him.

That's what it says here. As it continues, it says ***he judges and makes war in righteousness. His eyes are like blazing flames, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him, which no one knows except he himself. He is also clothed in a garment that had been dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies in heaven, which were clothed with white, clean, fine linen, were following him on white horses.*** As we look at how He is, He is riding on this horse, but it describes His clothing. There are a couple of interpretations of what this means. We'll talk about the first one and then get to the second one.

As we look at this robe of blood, we also know that He goes and He fights the battle **by a perfect sacrifice**. We see that there is no blood on the clothing of the armies of God. There is no blood on the angels, on the followers, on us believers. We see this in other

pictures in Revelation that we are given white robes because of the blood of the Lamb, because of His sacrifice. He is the one who goes and fights the battle for us. He sacrificed everything for you and for me. So when we look at others in the world, we can say "Jesus died for you. Jesus gave His perfect life and went to the cross, for you." In all that we're looking at in the struggles of this world, there is going to be an end. To know that Jesus fought the battle, He sacrificed everything for you, that, as we were talking about in the Children's Sermon, we can't finish that race on our own. We are going to fall short. We are going to stumble. We're not going to carry the baton in a faithful way, in a truthful way, so we know we need that perfect sacrifice of God. That's what He does.

But look at how He does it, as well. It says ***...and his name is the Word of God.*** John is very amazing in how he writes and he links things together in Revelation and the Gospel of John in 1 John, his letters, but as you hear His name being the Word of God, that might ring familiar in the first chapter of John where Jesus is called the Word. ***In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.*** <sup>(John 1)</sup> How is this ascended Lord still victorious? He is victorious **as the Word of God.** As we look at that, we know we have the Word of God, we have the Bible, and Jesus is proclaimed in there so clearly in the New Testament.

Some of my favorite teachers are people who understand the Old Testament and they can say "This is where Jesus is spoken about. This is where Jesus is prophesied about in the Old Testament. He is clear in all those sections of Scripture." If you don't see Jesus in the Bible, you're missing the whole point.

But the other part of that Word of God (there are a couple more things to think about) is we know the Word of God as the Bible but in Greek, the "logos" isn't just the "word" but it's kind of the "essence of knowledge" and the "essence of being." It's similar in Chinese. The way they translated "logos" is "Dao." If you've ever heard of Daoism, it's the "essence" and "everything." When we think about Jesus, He is the representation of God, as we heard in our introduction from Hebrews. When God wants to show us who He is, He shows us Jesus. This is His love for us, that He cares for us, but He is also fighting for us.

He is fighting this war in righteousness. ***Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. He will shepherd them with an iron staff.*** We see Jesus is how God interacts with us, and He interacts with us through that Word of God, and notice this other picture, the sharp sword. What do we say that the Word of God does when we hear that the Word of God is living and active? We say that it cuts to the bone, the marrow and to the soul, because it's Law and Gospel. It strikes us down to say we have fallen short. We want to put ourselves first. We struggle day in and day out with sin and selfishness and not understanding God. That's the Law. He wields that sword, but He also has that Gospel, the double-edged sword, that tells us as much as we

fail and fall short, more than we could ever imagine, the truth is we are more loved and forgiven than we could ever imagine. There is no sin that Jesus didn't die for. So if you are struggling and say "I just don't deserve God's love. I'm not worthy. This thing is too big. I'm struggling with this sin," know that God loves you. You are redeemed. You are forgiven. That's how Jesus is waging this war, with Law and Gospel.

I think it's important to see that sometimes we like to wage the war with other things in the world. *We have to make all the laws in the world. Christianity is under attack so we have to really go out and establish a Christian nation or these other things.* Are we doing it with the Word of God? Or are we letting Jesus go and fight the battle? Are we just letting God speak, knowing He is victorious? Even though He's not here, He is still fighting the battle for us. He is in charge. That's really what we hear at the end here. ***He himself is going to trample the winepress of the fierce anger of the Almighty God. On his garment and on his thigh this name is written: King of Kings and Lord of Lords.*** It's important that He is the Ascended Lord who is victorious also **as the King of Kings.**

The other picture there of that blood-soaked robe is also one that is harder for us to grasp, but it says that He is waging that war of righteousness. We cry out for justice. We cry out "God, things aren't fair!" As it says there, He is going to trample the winepress with fierce anger. At the end of things, there will be justice. The King of Kings is fighting the battles and there is a war raging. I think it's good to see that blood as two things—either His perfect sacrifice or (where many people interpret it) as the blood of the enemies of the Gospel. The enemies of God are those who deny Christ and want nothing to do with Him and oppose Christianity and Christ. We say that's hard for us to see or picture, but then we also know we cry out for justice and we say "God, where is the justice? Evil people get away with this. Things just seem to be getting worse." There are all these questions we have. We continue to pray to God for justice, but the answer is there might not be justice in this world, but we know at the end there will be. The King of Kings IS fighting the battles and He will be victorious. The evil, those who deny Him, those who have done things that are heinous, those that want nothing to do with God will see their punishment. So we see the King of Kings ruling over everything. This should give us this peace and comfort even though we don't see Him, even though He has ascended.

A few weeks ago when we talked about Easter, we said the resurrection changes everything because if Jesus defeated sin, death, and the devil, the things that really plague us, then we have nothing to fear. That means the pain of this world, the suffering of this world, the cancers of this world, the unfairness of this world, all those things will be wiped away because Jesus is victorious.

The ascension tells us the same thing. Jesus is victorious and He is going to come back and rule. So you don't have to fear. Those things that you are struggling with, you pray to God and you know He has them under His control. So we can put our worries in His

hands, knowing He is faithful and true, knowing He has given us the perfect sacrifice. He has given us the Word of God to go out and is still that today. But most of all, He is victorious as King of Kings and gives us life eternal. Amen.

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