



MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
AND
IMMANUEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
www.mzluth.org and immanuelshirley.com

June 22, 2025

Pastor James Enderle

2nd Sunday after Pentecost

First Lesson: [Isaiah 43:8-13](#)

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 66 CW⁹³

Second Lesson/Sermon Text: [2 Timothy 1:3-10](#)

Gospel Lesson: [Luke 8:26-39](#)

UNDIVIDED ATTENTION
On The Mission Right Before Us
DON'T FORGET YOUR MISSION

1. Don't _____ those who brought _____.
2. A mission of _____ in the face of _____.
3. Your mission field is _____.
4. The mission _____ through _____.

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:

I don't know how many of you can relate to this when you're in the house and you walk to another room and you completely forget why you walked into that room. Maybe that is happening to you more and more. Or just even the simple thing where you open the fridge and you're like "What was I looking for? What am I doing?" I think it's more of a struggle in our day to have focus on what we're doing.

My wife and I, while we were on our trip to the Upper Peninsula, we listened to this book called Anxious Generation. It talks about the effects of being raised on screens and tablets and social media. Just think about how many pings and notifications, if you have a phone in your pocket, and how much you get distracted, and you we can get distracted from what you are trying to do. It's easy to forget what you want to be doing. Maybe working at the desk, you start to scroll and look on social media, or you get distracted by a friend at work. We don't want to forget our mission and our goal. You can think about all sorts of ways that this is in life.

If you're at a work place, if you don't know the goals and mission of the organization, "What am I doing here," it's kind of hard to be passionate about that work. You can

think about militarily—now we have all the electronics where you can share messages and things, but think about years ago when people would go into battle and you had a mission and a goal for that time. You don't want to forget that. If you were out there and you forgot the goals of that mission for that short time, what is going to happen? We need to know our purpose and our mission. That's the same thing for the church, for you and for me, to know our mission.

Here at Morrison, we have a Mission Statement, and we want you all to understand how you fit into that. If you don't understand, then there is a struggle. "How do I fit in? What is my mission as a Christian?" That's really what we're going to talk about today—to not forget your mission.

When we talk about mission, it's helpful to understand what we mean by that. We're going to really get into that because even as we started this Unifying for Ministry program, you may remember what synod used to call it but now synod has changed the name. They called it Merge for Missions. People originally were like, "Merge for Missions, are you talking about home mission, world missions? How do we fit into that? What are you talking about here?" So we want to help to understand our mission and that we have a mission. It helps us understand what our goals are as Christians, and how we fit in and that you always have a purpose.

Today as we are encouraging you, **don't forget your mission**, we are going to look at Paul's words to Timothy in 2 Timothy. This letter is very personal. In Verse 2, just before this, he says ***To Timothy, my dear son.*** Paul is writing this from prison. This is not the same time in prison when he was writing Philippians and was writing that he was very joyous. This letter is very different. He is kind of pouring his heart out to Timothy, whom he considers his spiritual son. He knows that, unlike the last time, death is probably near. So in some ways, this is kind of Paul's parting letter. It's very personal and it's a strong encouragement to Timothy, this leader in the church. So we can take this encouragement and learn a lot about our mission as Paul, a great evangelist, writes to another person about his mission.

We see how it starts with Verse 3. ***I thank God, whom I serve with a clean conscience as my ancestors did, as I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day. When I remember your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. I remember your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am convinced that it also lives in you.*** Notice all the things he talks about here in encouraging Timothy about his faith, but he really connects it to those who have gone before. As we think about our mission, it's sometimes important to think about those who displayed the mission in front of us, that we've learned from and to not forget about them and to be thankful for them. So the first thing is, **don't forget those who brought you to Jesus.**

There is probably someone in your life that has had a huge impact on you. Many of you maybe were born into a Christian family, so you don't think much of it. Your parents are Christian. Your grandparents are Christian. But just like Timothy, you could be thankful for a grandmother, a mother who was strong in the faith. As Paul says, their sincere faith is shown in them. What is interesting is we often say how important it is and how beneficial it is to have a father who is strong in the faith, and I think that is true, but here, even for Timothy, we see that a mother, a grandmother, other people, and here Paul, was such a strong influence. There are so many people in the Christian faith that can influence and be a great mentor to us.

We think about Baptism. One of the reasons we try to have baptisms in worship services (I know it makes some services a little bit longer) instead of in private is you notice at the end of the Baptism Service, there is a prayer and words to not just the sponsors and the parents but to the whole congregation. The whole congregation makes a promise to help the child grow up in the faith. So there are all sorts of people in your life who can be a benefit to you.

Today we are celebrating 10 years in the ministry of Jake and Hillary Geidel. Think about all the pastors and teachers in your life that maybe had influence on you. At the end of the church year, we have the Saints Triumphant where we read the names of people who were called to heaven that year. Maybe as you're thinking about people who had such an influence on your life, you're thinking about someone who has been called to heaven. They get to be with Jesus now, but you're also so thankful for the legacy that they left and the influence that they had on you to make Jesus so important.

So as you think about those things, as they have modeled what it means to be a Christian and brought you closer to Jesus, think about if that person still is alive and maybe thank them. Maybe you haven't done that or haven't done it in a long time, and just say "You've really helped me with my faith. You've strengthened me. You've helped me get closer to Jesus. Thank you for that." Then as you see how they have done it, maybe you can learn how to do that for others.

We're going to talk about how that is not always easy because we see here that Paul writes to Timothy what happens with our faith and sharing. Paul writes: ***For this reason I am reminding you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a timid spirit, but a spirit of power and love and sound judgment. So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Instead, join with me in suffering for the gospel while relying on the power of God.*** Notice here, Paul is really encouraging Timothy to be bold, to not be timid, and to rely on the spirit of power and love and sound judgment. Why he needs to encourage that is because it's not easy. Witnessing or just being a Christian, we carry a cross and there is suffering, so the encouragement, as we don't

forget our mission, is to understand that our **mission is one of bold love in the face of suffering**. We need to be bold. We need to not have this timid spirit when there is difficulty.

What those difficulties might mean, as we said, just for being a Christian, the world despises us. The world speaks poorly about Christ and about the Bible. "Why do you want to go to church on a Sunday morning? You could be out camping. You could do all these other things—playing sports, etc. It's foolish!" But we understand how important it is to know Christ and to know His love and forgiveness, so in the midst of suffering, we speak bold love.

That could be that cross you carry for being a Christian, or it could be just the difficulties of this life. The things that you pray for and you hope for and wish for and it just seems that God isn't giving them to you. That God hasn't taken this sickness away or this difficulty. While others will complain or throw up their hands and get angry, we can still rejoice and show a bold love and a peace and patience, not saying it's easy, but we can rely on God and trust in Him and know that His plans are great even when it's hard for us. That attitude makes a big difference. Our trust in God in the face of suffering influences people. This is really what we talk about when we talk about the mission because when we think about missions, we think, *"Who can I share with? Who am I called to witness to?"* Pastors have a divine call to serve you and to serve the sacraments and to preach, but are we the only ones who are called?

When we talk about the marks of discipleship in our Partnering in the Gospel class, one of the marks of a disciple is that disciples make more disciples. Christians will share the Gospel. It doesn't mean you have to go out on the street with a sign or that you have to go on world missions, that you have to go across the nation, but where is your mission field? We want to understand that **your mission field is all around you**.

Think about this. Who can you influence? Who can you share about Jesus with? Our membership is over 700 people, about 720-730 people. On a good week, we get maybe up to 300 people. Between Thursday and Sunday it may be closer to around 200 people. Do you know any of the people in that 700 number who don't attend church as often as they probably want to? You think, *"What can I say? How can I say anything?"* You know what being in church means for you. You know the blessings it brings and how it is important to be close to Jesus. I'm guessing that you probably have a friend or relative that maybe is drifting from Jesus.

Or to think about it in another way, at the end of worship, you are going to get this sheet called FRANS—Friends, Relatives, Acquaintances, Neighbors and Straying Friend. It's got a big circle and you're in the middle and you think about all those people that you know or people that you work with. If you're in the country, you maybe don't have a ton of neighbors, but your neighbors. Your relatives, different acquaintances, and I bet if you went through that list and you thought about people who need Jesus, who

don't know Jesus, who are maybe far from Jesus, I bet you could not only come up with five names, but you could probably come up with 20 names. What if you just prayed for one of those people this week and prayed for an opportunity to talk to them or just to show love to them and connect a little bit more, and then sharing the Gospel isn't just inviting them to church. That's not the whole part of it. It's one thing, but just sharing your faith and sharing about Jesus and the Gospel. Then that's where it takes boldness, to pray boldly and to have this bold love for these people, because it's hard. Speaking Law and Gospel, we really want them to know the Gospel but sometimes we have to share Law, that what they are doing is maybe harmful for their faith, but it's all about love.

The world doesn't really understand love in the right way. Love in the world sense is "Do what you want. Whatever you think is best is good and I'm not going to tell you anything different." But if you're a parent, you know that when you parent, part of love is saying "No" and guiding and protecting and leading them in the right way. So as Paul writes for Timothy to have not a spirit of timidity but of power and love and sound judgment, what are we focusing on but that we want to show love to them. Then what is really the content of that love and how can we go forward and do this is really what Paul writes about next.

As we rely on the power of God, in Verse 9 he writes, ***He saved us and called us with a holy calling, not because of our works, but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, and it has now been revealed through the appearance of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.*** Here we see how this mission is really accomplished. **The mission is accomplished through grace.**

Notice as it starts out that it says he has called us with a holy calling and not because of our works. No one can save themselves, those people who are far from God, the truth is they might be great people, but they are probably not hearing the Gospel. They are not hearing about grace because grace is only found in Scripture. The Gospel is only found in the Word of God and they need it so dearly. They need to know what this Gospel is all about; that this grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began. It's been revealed through the appearance of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life. It's all about the work of Jesus and that Jesus is accomplishing this.

As we talked about in Isaiah and we saw the demon-possessed man, we are witnesses of what God has done. It's not about us or that we have to go out and be the ones who save everyone. We are just witnesses. We get to share this great message of what God has done, what Christ has done, that God sent Jesus to save us. It says here, he abolished death and brought life and immortality through the gospel.

Think again about the context of this letter, where Paul is writing to Timothy and Timothy is that spiritual son of Paul and now Paul is facing death. What do you think

Timothy is afraid of? *"How am I going to do this? You're in jail. You are about to die. Am I going to be able to do this on my own, without you in my life, without the encouragement?"* Notice what Paul focuses on—that Christ has abolished death and brought life and immortality. The thing that we fear the most, the thing that the world has no answer to—death—Christ has abolished it and He has brought life and immortality. He brings us this peace and hope that nothing else can bring. If Jesus has paid for our sins and gives us eternal life, can He not help us with all the other things? This is what the world really needs.

I went to the Park Playdate this week. If you haven't joined that with on Thursdays, it's a great time. Someone made this statement. "Did you know, as parents, most often you know your children as adults longer than you know them as children?" I never actually thought about that before but they are children until they are 18 and then most people know their children past age 36 often. Just think about, *yes, I raised my kids and I want them to know important things, but what do I want them to know most of all? I want them to know Christ and to continue that relationship and to continue to talk about spiritual things and to encourage them in the faith.* And it goes the other way. Because as you become an adult, you can have those spiritual conversations with your parents, your relatives, your brothers, your sisters, your cousins—that this is what matters. There are so many things in life but the truth is you always have a purpose and mission.

Every Sunday as you leave church, there are the words in the back on the beautiful mural, "Planting Gospel seeds in your personal mission field." It's the truth. You all have a purpose and mission. Whenever you are still in this world, no matter your age, God has a purpose for you. You can share and witness about the great things that God has done.

So my encouragement as you go today, as you pick up those sheets about FRANS, the Friends, Relatives, Acquaintances, Neighbors, and Straying Friends, write some names down and then pray about people for this week, for that week, and after you're done, come back and you can start putting up seeds in the back of our church there as opportunities that God has given you to witness and to know that Christ is the one who is really accomplishing the mission, and He has done it all through grace. Amen.

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