



MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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March 1, 2023
Lenten Midweek 1
Sermon Text: [Proverbs 8:13](#)

Pastor James Enderle

“Acceptable Sins” – Pride/Judgmental

To fear the Lord is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech.

1. Pride makes you a _____
So you _____
Pride is in _____
2. Pride destroys _____ and _____
3. Pride destroys _____
4. Jesus _____ you _____

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 look at Jesus and His life and think about whom His enemies were, whom would you think about? If you are thinking about Jesus and God, of course the enemy you think of/the first thing that is against Him so often is the devil. Jesus came to destroy the work of Satan, sin, and the devil and death. But if you think about as Jesus is teaching and preaching and going out throughout the world, who so often opposed Him? Who were the people who were always trying to get Him arrested and speaking against what He was saying? They didn't like what He said when Jesus taught, so who was He teaching to? Of course He talked to everyone but there are many times where He tells a parable or a story, and in the Bible it actually says that He told it to "these" people. Can you think of who I'm talking about? It's those Pharisees, who were the religious leaders of that time and were so much opposed to what Jesus had to say and teach. They didn't like anything He said and especially as Jesus continued to teach and preach about the true faith, they didn't like it. When we think about the Pharisees and what our "acceptable sin" is today, we see that they match up pretty well.

We see the word "Pharisee" isn't used very much in the world today but when is it used? When we are talking about someone who is being **judgmental**; someone who is proud and self-righteous. It's easy to talk about the Pharisees, those people, but that's not the point. The point of this whole series is not to look at those "big sins out there." We so

often can decry about how the world is falling apart and look at how evil it is. You can probably see post after post on social media saying "Look what happened here! Look what those people are doing!" But do we get distracted by the sins of others and forget the sins that we are committing? The sins that we kind of sweep over and are so common in our life that they just grow and grow and we think maybe they are just **acceptable**.

So how does **pride** and Pharisees play a part in all of this? In our text for today (from Proverbs), God says this: ***To fear the Lord is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech.*** God hates pride. He hates pride and the problem is pride is not just "out there." It's inside each of us. The truth is *pride makes you a Pharisee*. It makes me a Pharisee too. When we are filled with pride, we don't understand and listen to God's Word in the way that we need to and it affects so many things. Pride affects our relationships with each other, with our kids, with our God, with our work. When we are filled with pride, it affects everything.

One of the biggest things that pride does is it affects how we see. Pride makes us blind. Pride makes it *so you cannot see*. How is that? Kids, do you ever go to school and you're eating and you get a little something on your shirt but no one says anything? You get home and you look in the mirror. "I had this thing on my shirt?!" Or your hair—you're playing and all of a sudden your hair is all crazy and no one tells you. We can easily see when that happens to someone else. We get frustrated when something is off on ourselves but we can't see it. That's what pride does. What do we do? We can point out all the problems of everyone else. We can easily see where they fall short, where they have problems, but pride makes ourselves blind to our own problems. We cannot see clearly. It's like that little smudge on your shirt. I can point out all the sins of others, but we can't see our own. What does God say about that? When He is talking about judging—before you try to remove the speck out of your neighbor's eye, remove the plank out of your own eye. ([Matthew 7:3-5](#)) Pride causes us to be judgmental and to ignore the sins that we struggle with.

The truth is that *pride is in every sin*. Why? Pride says it's all about "me." "I don't want anything to do with what God says is right and wrong. It's about me and what I think is right. It's about me getting more and me getting my way." Think of just kids—we don't have to teach them to be selfish. Pride says "I deserve this. It's mine! It should be my way. I should be able to do things my way." This is what sin is. When God says "Do this or do that" and I say "You don't know what you're talking about. I know what is best. I know what is better for me. I know what is good for me. I know what will and will not hurt me." Kids, are you ever that way with your parents when they tell you, "Don't do that?" "Don't do this." "That's not really safe." "That's not good for you." In pride, what do you do? "You don't know what you're talking about." But don't worry kids, you're

not alone! We adults struggle with that as well. We struggle with God and what He has to say to us, especially in all of our relationships because we are so prideful about getting things our way.

So what does pride do? As we look at what we have in our relationships, we see that pride destroys things. One of the most famous passages read at weddings is this passage about love. In [1 Corinthians 13](#) it talks about love and here are just a few verses. ***Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.*** When you are proud, are you patient, are you kind, are you boastful, do you dishonor others because you think you're right, do you seek your own ways, do you think what you know is best? How easily angered are you when you're proud and you think "I know the right way," or "What they are doing is just silly and foolish"? All of these things are what pride does to us. We see *pride destroys love and compassion*. It destroys how we interact with one another. We don't love God because we don't want to do what He says. We don't think He knows what He is talking about.

Pride affects all of our relationships. Think about marriage. If I'm proud, it's so easy to think "Our marriage maybe has some problems," but whose fault is that? "It's not my fault. Our marriage struggles because of that person." It happens sometimes where people come into marriage counseling and they can't admit one thing that they are doing to cause their marriage to have problems. It's the other person's fault. You are blinded from your sins. At work, where you are proud and you think you're always right and those people are doing it wrong; or in school, where "That teacher doesn't know what he's talking about." Or your parents—of course they don't know what they're talking about. What about being a parent? Are we too proud to admit when we sin and ask for forgiveness from our kids? Are we too proud and expect our kids to be perfect when we know that they are sinful and that they fall short in just the same ways that we do?

That leads to compassion and destroying the compassion that we have for others because we think we are so much better. "I don't do that!" "How could they fall into that?" With their kids—"They're doing that again?!" Or you just think, "Man, do they get up in the morning and just try to cause problems? Are they trying to find any way to get at me?" That's prideful because we're making it all about us. Our kids have their struggles and their pains and they aren't always trying to get on your nerves. As parents, we know that we aren't perfect and we don't parent perfectly, but we sometimes lack compassion on our kids or on those around us.

Again, this is what Jesus did with those Pharisees so often. Those Pharisees lacked compassion. They didn't think that they had any sins. We just recently heard in the Gospel last week, the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector. ([Luke 18:9-14](#)) What does

the Pharisee do? "Thank God I'm not like that tax collector." He has no compassion for who he is and what he maybe has gone through and this man who is coming before God, repenting.

One of the most beautiful sections of Luke's Gospel, [Luke 15](#), is what we call the "Chapter of the Lost." Why? God talks about those who are lost and the lost coin and the lost sheep and how God goes and searches after them. Finally, the prodigal son, that son who goes away and how God welcomes him back with open arms and says "You're forgiven." Why are these parables told? It says this: ***Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."*** So then Jesus told them those parables. In [Luke 18](#), when we talk about the Pharisee in the tax collector: ***To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable...*** When we are prideful, we are self-righteous and we lack compassion for others.

On the back of the Sermon sheet, there is a list of a few sins that pride and being judgmental leads to. A few of them are listed: moral self-righteousness, correct doctrine, the pride of achievement, "being right," and a critical spirit. When we think we have it all and everyone else, they are the miserable people and they don't deserve God's love, that's what the Pharisees did. Are we looking at the world around us and saying, "God, have mercy on them. Give them the Gospel. Give them peace"? Or are we saying, "They are getting what they deserve"?

Could this ever happen in the WELS? I just heard this again recently where someone said they heard about this WELS church and they said "They think they're the only ones going to heaven." We know that's not true, but do we give the impression that we are the only ones who can know God? Our doctrine, while it's good to be looking after doctrine and holding to doctrine, does it make us proud and self-righteous? What about just "being right," where we lose the love for others because "I have to be right"? When we think about this, think about this in the church where we begin to make laws or say "This is the way it must be done" when it's not in the Bible. So we say "Our way is the ONLY way. It's the right way," but it's not doctrine. We can do that at times. The painful thing is that we don't just do that with people outside the church. We do that with brothers and sisters, where we're prideful about the way we do it and "It's the ONLY way and if you're doing it wrong, then you're wrong if you do it another way." Or just that critical spirit, where we're so proud in our thoughts that everything is wrong if it's not the way "I" do it.

Look at those different sins and the way that pride shows itself and think about all your different relationships. How does pride affect those? How does it make you blind to ways you are those things? How does it hurt your relationships, especially with God?

But more than this love and compassion, there is another thing that pride destroys. The Pharisees were so self-righteous that they didn't hear Jesus and His love and mercy. They were proud of who they were. I'm going to use an example for us to think of what this then destroys.

One of the things many of us are very proud of is to be an American. There are songs about it, proud to be an American, which is true and good. But what did you do to become an American? I thought of this because I saw a younger kid wearing a shirt that was maybe a little crass about being patriotic. I thought, "What did that kid do to become an American? They were born here?" I know some go and fight and serve and do things to really protect our freedom, which we are very thankful for. We're so proud of being American, but what did you do to become an American?—nothing.

How does that relate to the Pharisees? They were so proud of themselves that they had really fallen short. So *pride destroys grace*. When we are proud of who we are and what we've accomplished, we ignore the grace that God has given us. We of course know that if you want to work hard and achieve something, you do have to work hard. It's not just free. What about our standing with God? It's like being an American. We didn't deserve it. We didn't do anything to get it. We were born into it. God washes us clean through Baptism and gives us faith. When we're so proud of who we are and as a Christian, if I'm thankful and going to church and I don't do "those" sins, sometimes it can destroy the love that God has for us in grace.

But we don't have to fear because Jesus loves you. *Jesus loves you perfectly*. That then destroys that sin of pride in us and forgives it. We need to hear that over and over again, how Jesus was perfect in our place and loved you perfectly. He had every reason to be prideful. He was God. He had all power and might. But He humbled Himself and then loved you. He went to the cross to love YOU.

Where pride is all about self and loving self and not God and not others, Jesus served His Father and loves YOU. What does that mean? It means our sins are forgiven. Our sins of pride, our sins of putting ourselves first and being self-righteous, and thinking we're so much greater are forgiven.

As we go forward in this series ("Acceptable" Sins), all these "acceptable" sins in some way deal with pride because we ignore them since we are so proud. But remember that Jesus was not proud in how He came to serve and love you, to wash you clean. As He loves us, we can go out and get rid of our pride, to love and serve Him and others, not out of our own work and not to earn anything from ourselves, but because we are washed and clean and loved.

As you hear these words of [1 Corinthians 13](#) where it talks about ***Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor***

others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs,
we can be conflicted but then understand, it's not us—that's God and how God loves you. So while God hates pride and hates that part of us that we so much need to fight, know that Jesus loves you and forgives your sins because HE has loved you perfectly.
Amen.

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