



MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.mzluth.org

August 22, 2021

Pastor James Enderle

13th Sunday after Pentecost

First Lesson: [Proverbs 9:1-6](#)

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 1

Second Lesson/Sermon Text: [Ephesians 5:15-20](#)

Gospel Lesson: [John 6:51-58](#)

Faith Responds by Clinging to God's Wisdom

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:

Last week I stopped in at one of our members and walked onto a farm. I realized how much I don't know about farming. I'm not anywhere close to an expert in farming. But I know there are a lot of people here that are experts at farming, of all the things it takes to plant the right corn and all the things to do with the machinery. There are so many things that you have to do to become an expert at farming. If you look at my garden, you can certainly tell that I'm not an expert at farming or gardening. I know many of you are experts in things like farming or gardening. Maybe woodworking—there are some people here that are experts at woodworking. They can take a piece of wood and make something very beautiful and meaningful. I got a cross recently, a beautiful Jesus cross, that I could never have made. Maybe some of you are experts in computers. You know the ins and outs and things that your mom or dad or grandma or someone else could take years to figure out but you sit down and click, click, click and you've got it. I think each of us probably have different expertise in different things. I hope you can think of yourself as an expert in something. There are people who just love sports and they know all the players for the team and all the numbers, and they are so passionate that they are pretty much experts about their favorite teams.

The question though is how do you become an expert in something? I have a car. I maybe want to fix it if something goes wrong but can I just walk up and become an expert? It takes time. Time is one of the most important things to becoming an expert, but time and wisdom are both important; wisdom in that subject, not just knowledge but how to use that knowledge in the right way. I can know things but if I don't know how to use it in the right way or how those things really go together then I wouldn't really be an expert. You know that you're an expert when people start to ask you questions about that thing. If people have a problem with their car and people know

that you're the person to go to for cars and you share that wisdom. When you have wisdom, you become an expert.

As we look at our text today and God's Word as he speaks about wisdom, we see that it's important where we find wisdom and what we become experts in. Notice the first words of the text: ***Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.*** He gives a warning right away, be careful. What is the warning? To be wise, to live as wise people and not as foolish, not be unwise. But what type of wisdom? Again, we talked about how there are all sorts of wisdom in the world. So what wisdom is Paul encouraging us to have?

Notice as he continues he says, ***Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit.*** I think he clearly says what type of wisdom we should be having in these words, to learn God's will. If you want to learn God's will, what do you need to be in? You need to be in God's Word. You can't know what God wants or what God thinks or who God is if you don't study God's Word.

There are a lot of people who have ideas of who God is, but they really haven't looked at what God really says. There are a lot of people who say, "This is the God I want." Or "God should be this way." But we actually have the Bible where God reveals who He is and what His will is. So we gain wisdom, the right wisdom, by being in God's Word.

But he also says something else. ***...be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit.*** When do we do that? When do you sing psalms, hymns, spiritual songs: of course, in worship. Do you think of that when you are in church? How important it is to be singing these songs to each other and you actually gain wisdom? Think about those lyrics and how some of God's greatest words grow deep in your heart because of words that are in music. Kids learn songs early from their childhood, songs that are so important, that Jesus loves them, this they know. But they are songs that we sing and hold so dear. It's not just an accident that God gave us music. There is so much science that goes behind music and how it helps us remember and how it connects with our emotions. So we sing, but notice what it says. We don't just sing but we sing to one another. As we gather in worship, we get to proclaim God's Word to one another. This is the time where the pastor speaks. But think about that. As you sing the psalms and the hymns, you get to proclaim God's Word to one another and encourage each other in God's wisdom growing in the Spirit. God works through that. God works through you as you worship and as you gather together with one another. What a blessing it is. It's not just the pastor up here. It's not just the organist, but you. You take part and you actually are encouraging and strengthening others with your voice.

Notice again how we gain wisdom and how we become experts. It can't just be once in a while. If I only practice something once, twice a year, am I an expert in that? I'm probably not. We gain that wisdom by spending time in that. That can be in worship but also at home, in your personal devotions, in your family devotions as you study through whatever means of God's Word. That is an important thing that he talks about. He says to make ***the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit...*** Why do you think he lists drinking wine and debauchery? Is that the only thing he is worried about? I don't think so. I think that's one example of another way to spend our time and another thing to be filled up with. He's kind of using a picture here. He says ***Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit...*** If you're drunk on wine, you are filled with wine. ***Instead, be filled with the Spirit...*** This is really what the Gospel lesson focuses on.

As Jesus is talking about the bread that He gave before but then also believing in eating His flesh, believing in Him; there is the bread that we need to eat every day, but there are also the spiritual things we need to focus on. There are so many things to focus on in our world. There are studies about how much information we take in now compared to years ago. We take in so much information! We take in information in about one day that someone 120 years ago would take in a lifetime! What does that mean? We need to be focused and spend our times on the right things and to become experts in the right things.

So what should we be an expert in? I think we need to be an expert in eternity because there are all these different things that are coming at us. Jesus speaks about how the ***days are evil***. Time is going on. It's easy for us to get distracted in the things that may seem really, really important. At times they might be but there are things that consume us and we get clouded by those things and forget what really, really matters. We gain wisdom in these things that are temporary. I'm not saying it's bad to be wise in other things. God gives us gifts and talents to be experts in those things. If I'm not seeking to be an expert in eternity, in learning who Jesus is and what He has done for us (that He has loved us and forgiven us and that means that no matter what we face, we have heaven in store; no matter what difficulties, what new thing this world is going to bring to us), we can look at the world and say "It's just getting worse and worse." People years ago probably said that too. "It's so bad!" People of the generation before that probably did too. There is always going to be something new. But God and His love remains and it is unchanging. His love for you that redeems you and forgives you, as He says "You are my child," that doesn't change depending on what is going on or how I'm even feeling. I might be overwhelmed with things in the news or different issues or even my own sins. When we cling to Christ, we can look and see what Paul says and do this. He says, ***Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to***

God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. If I'm an expert in eternity and take a step back, I think we can really give thanks for all things.

There are some things in our life that there is no way that I would probably give thanks for. I'm sure in your life there are things where you think, "*How can I give thanks for this?*" But we do know that God can use all things for His good, for the good of eternity. We might not always see the good in short term, and honestly, we may never see the good in short term. We're not God. But we know God and His promises, that He does love us and He has our eternity in mind.

So think of how you can become an expert in eternity. What would that mean? That people come to you for questions? That doesn't mean you have to be some huge expert about the Bible. You don't have to feel that you've mastered everything. Every time we open the Bible, it feels like we learn something new, right? But share this simple message of Christ crucified, that we're sinners and we can't do it on our own. The days are evil, but God redeemed us. Christ loved us and that means that we are forgiven. That means no matter what we face, we can have joy and thanksgiving knowing He has loved us and redeemed us and has eternity in mind. Amen.

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