

MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.mzluth.org

November 24, 2024

Pastor James Enderle

Christ the King

First Lesson: [Daniel 7:13-14](#)

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 95C Psalter

Second Lesson: [Revelation 1:4b-8](#)

Gospel Lesson/ Sermon Text: [John 18:33-37](#)

Live Like You'll Live Forever **Live with Your Eyes on the Skies** **NOT YOUR ORDINARY KING**

1. **A King who despite _____ is in _____.**
2. **A King who is _____.**
3. **A King with a unique _____ and _____.**

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:

When you think about kings, what names come to mind? Can you think of any really good kings? I think actually when I think of kings, this guy comes to mind. I think this is the most famous king that you think of today—the Burger King guy. I know for some people, he might be a little shocking and scary. It's kind of a weird guy who pops up, but when you look at history and things, we don't have any kings today. People watch the kings and the monarchy of Great Britain, but the list of great kings around the world is pretty short. Some talk about Henry VI and some of the French kings, but it's actually kind of easy to find terrible kings. If you go back to the Roman world and the Caesars, like Caligula and Nero. There was one in Russia with the name of Ivan the Terrible. I think he was probably a bad king.



If you think of the most famous kings that you might know, they are probably fictional kings. In fact, there is history of King Arthur, who is a fictional king. And some say there are kings that he is based off of, but King Arthur is very famous but he wasn't real. Or maybe you like [Lord of the Rings](#), [Eragon](#), or [Mufasa](#) (a new movie that is going to come

out with the great lion king). There is Jon Snow and all these different kings, but they are all fictional. I think it's hard to find good kings because so often kings are very selfish. People in that place, with all that power, tend to corrupt. They often say "Absolute power corrupts absolutely."

But when we come to look at our King Jesus today, on Christ the King Sunday, we find that He is no ordinary king. Jesus is **not your ordinary king** at all. What does that mean for you in your life today? We'll look at what that means and why He was such an unordinary king in those days. How did the people treat Him because of this? I think that's one of the most fascinating things. When we look at Jesus as King, He never really appeared to be a king in this life. We might say that actually confused the people because we see what happened leading up to our text in John 18.

What we read began in Verse 33, but we are going to read leading up to that, starting in [Verse 28](#). It says: ²⁸***Then the Jewish leaders took Jesus from Caiaphas to the palace of the Roman governor. By now it was early morning...*** So this is as Jesus has been betrayed and arrested and He has now gone from the High Priest, but they are now going to do something else. Now it's early morning ***...and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness they did not enter the palace, because they wanted to be able to eat the Passover.*** ²⁹***So Pilate came out to them and asked, "What charges are you bringing against this man?"*** He had gone before the High Priests and the religious leaders and now they have to bring Him before their earthly rulers, Pilate, the Governor. "What charges?" Pilate asked. ³⁰***"If he were not a criminal," they replied, "we would not have handed him over to you."*** ³¹***Pilate said, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law." "But we have no right to execute anyone," they objected.*** ³²***This took place to fulfill what Jesus had said about the kind of death he was going to die.*** ³³***Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"*** ³⁴***"Is that your own idea," Jesus asked, "or did others talk to you about me?"***

What is fascinating is we see Jesus being brought before Pilate and we see the accusation. Is the accusation the same as it was when He was on trial before the Jewish people? Do you remember what the accusations were, why the High Priests tore their robes? It was blasphemy. He was calling Himself God. Now what is He on trial for? What they are accusing Him of before Pilate is "Are you the king of the Jews?" What this is saying is the Jewish people are now saying "Caesar is our king," which, if you know the Jewish people, they did not think this was a good thing. They did not think he was their rightful king. They didn't look to Pilate as their rightful governor. But now they are putting Jesus on trial before Pilate and they are saying "He calls Himself a king!" Notice that the accusation has changed from "He calls Himself the Son of God" to "King" because before the Romans, it didn't matter about their religious lives. But notice what it says. ³²***This took place to fulfill what Jesus had said about the kind of death he was going to die.***

He goes on trial before the High Priests and the religious leaders, and now He is on trial before Pilate in order to be executed and in order for what? It is in order for the prophecies to be fulfilled. What does that mean then? Why did He need to be on trial before both and to go through all these difficult things? It was because Jesus is *a king who despite looks is in control*. If anyone would look at Him, would you say this man is in control? As He is being beaten and mocked before the High Priests, as He goes on trial before Pilate, and now is humiliated, and soon after a crown of thorns will be placed on Him, does He look in control? Does He look powerful?

I think this is why the people rejected Him. He called Himself God. He said He was the King of the Jews. But did He look that way? Did He come with power and might? When people thought of a king, did they think of this man, Jesus, as we are going to see, talk about Advent and His returning when He enters Jerusalem? He came lowly on a donkey and they praised Him. But then He did not come to do the things that they wanted Him to do. Though He claimed to be the Prophet and claimed to be the Messiah and the Lord, it did not look that way.

Does that happen in your lives? Does it happen where you look at Jesus and the things that are going on and say "He can't be in control. How could these things happen in my life? How could God be in control? How can Jesus say that He is the Alpha and the Omega, He is everything, He is watching over us and is here with us, yet these things happen?" The appearances are deceiving. This is one of the most important lessons we learn from this whole picture—that Jesus doesn't look to be in control. But it says these things happened to fulfill what was promised. He had to do all the things that were promised. He was going to have to suffer and die. And because of this, what did the people do with Jesus?

We mentioned it already, but we see that Jesus is *a king who is rejected*. How is He rejected? The people turn Him over to be crucified. They now are siding with the Romans and saying "Yes Caesar, you are king!" And "Pilate, help us out here!" But then let's look at the things that they do in order to make this happen. Look at their hypocrisy in rejecting their Savior, in rejecting Jesus. It says that they were unwilling to enter the palace, in the verses preceding here. They wanted to be able to eat the Passover meal. They didn't want to be ceremonially unclean. This is the height of hypocrisy and self-righteousness.

When someone rejects Christ, it means they are often self-righteous and full of hypocrisy because they pick at little things and ignore the big things. "We're not going to go in and make ourselves ceremonially unclean," but they are falsely accusing this man. They brought false witnesses and are just fine with killing Him. But "We don't want to enter the governor's palace and become unclean." They are unclean!

If you go on and read what happens after Jesus is before Pilate, do you remember what Pilate tries to do? Pilate finds Him innocent and then is going to try to release Him, but he puts Him up against another man, this horrible criminal who incited revolts, Barabbas. What do the people do? They once again reject Jesus. ***“Give us Barabbas!”*** ^(John 18:38-40) “We don’t want Jesus.” Jesus is rejected because He’s not the king that they wanted. They don’t think He has any power and they were self-righteous. They were selfish, full of pride, full of lust, and wanted their own glory.

That’s what the people of Jesus’ time did in rejecting Jesus, but where in our hearts, where do you reject this King that isn’t the king we often want? What are you willing to sacrifice, what are you willing to unite yourself with? Just like the Jewish people were willing to say “We don’t want to be ceremonially unclean but we’re willing to commit awful sins or willing to partner with the Romans,” what are things in your life that we know God has said “This is the good and right thing to do” but you, out of pride and selfishness, want to make yourself king? You know God’s Word. You know what He says. But it’s too easy to reject that because you think “He doesn’t know what He is talking about” or “He just doesn’t look powerful. That doesn’t look good. The world rejects that. That’s foolishness. I need to follow my heart. I need to do what is right for me, because doing that other thing is really hard. That might bring difficulty to me, to my family, so it’s much better to put myself first.” It’s very easy for us to reject Jesus and Him as King, especially when we don’t think He is in control. We might look around and say “Jesus, what are you doing? Why can’t you just make this easier? Why can’t you do things the way that I need them? This would just make sense!” But we know God’s plans are not our plans and in this broken world, it’s hard for us to see His plan. This is really what He talks about that makes Him very unique and not your ordinary king.

When He is talking to Pilate after Pilate says “Are you a king,” Jesus responds and says, ***“My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place.”*** ³⁷ ***“You are a king, then!” said Pilate. Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”*** Jesus didn’t deny the fact that He is truly a king, but notice what He says. Being a king is the exact reason He came. He is *a king with a unique purpose and kingdom*. He says the very reason He came was to be that king—to testify to the truth. But what is that truth? It’s that His Kingdom is not of this world. It is of another place. It is greater than any other kingdom in this world. It’s a spiritual kingdom and He came to be our spiritual King.

Why is this important? What happens to earthly kingdoms? They rise and they fall. They only are over a certain amount of people. What about Jesus’ Kingdom? His spiritual kingdom is for ALL people of ALL time—uniting people. As Pilate says, “I’m not a Jew,” but we understand that EVERY nation, EVERY people are a part of His Kingdom because Jesus came, not to fix this kingdom or to set up this earthly kingdom or to solve

all the little problems of this world but to solve the greatest problem of this world—to come and conquer death, to kill it, to say that it no longer has power over you and your loved ones. As He came and defeated death, He would rise so that you and I, too, will rise. Then what is the Kingdom? It's an eternal kingdom. It's a kingdom that will never fall. It's a kingdom that is inside of each and every one of us. It's a kingdom that is united by the truth, the truth that Jesus came to live and die for you.

It's true that we can struggle with how things are. We can struggle with putting ourselves first and being selfish. We can struggle with understanding and thinking "Is God really in control?" But when we find ourselves as a child of God, as being one in Christ's Kingdom, we never lose that citizenship. Your sins, your doubt, God is greater than that.

In the back of church I have that "Simple Resiliency Prayer" that reminds us that we are not in control of so many things in our lives. There are things that happen all the time. You can be fearful and afraid, but your identity never changes. Jesus is your King! What joy that brings! What forgiveness that brings! What hope that brings! You are united with Him and all believers of all time and you don't have to fear. You don't have to fear the past, the present or the future. That's what Jesus says. He was and is and is to come. He defeats your worries of sin of the past, your fears of the present, and the fears of the future and it gives you confidence and hope knowing that you are loved and forgiven every day. So know Jesus is a king that is coming back, a king that has shown His power that this world cannot imagine and downplays. He is no ordinary king, but He is our Great King of kings of an everlasting eternal Kingdom. Amen.

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