

Sts. Peter and Paul Albanian Orthodox Church

First-enthroned of the apostles, teachers of the universe: Entreat the Master of all to grant peace to the world, and to our souls great mercy!

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June 27, 2021

HOLY PENTECOST – FEAST OF THE HOLY TRINITY

Today 10:00am Divine Liturgy
Feast of Ss. Peter & Paul
Wed. 30 7:15pm Bible Study with
GoogleMeet
Sun. 04 10:00am Divine Liturgy

One must be baptized and chrismated an Orthodox Christian to receive Holy Communion. Guests are invited to receive a blessing at the chalice and partake of the post-Communion bread (Antidoron).

Fast Days: Monday, Wednesday and Friday (fasting from meat, fish, eggs, dairy, wine and oil as you are able.)

Troparion – Tone 4
(All Saints)

*As with fine porphyry and royal purple,
Thy Church has been adorned with Thy martyrs' blood shed throughout all the world.
She cries to Thee, O Christ God: "Send down Thy bounties on Thy people,
grant peace to Thy habitation and great mercy to our souls!"*

Kontakion – Tone 2
(Ss. Peter & Paul)

*O Lord, Thou hast taken up to eternal rest
and to the enjoyment of Thy blessings
the two divinely inspired preachers, the leaders of the Apostles,
for Thou hast accepted their labors and deaths as a sweet-smelling sacrifice,
for Thou alone knowest what lies in the hearts of men.*

Prayers for those in our Sts. Peter and Paul community (parishioners, family, friends) can be listed for remembrance in our litanies during the Liturgy. Feel free to give names to Fr. Nicholas - please indicate how each person listed is connected to us (parishioner, family, friend, etc.), as well as why we are praying for them (health, memory, travel, etc.).

Confessions can be heard by appointment. If you need, I will come to you during the week. Please do not hesitate to call for a time to drop by the church or to have me visit you.

Remembrances for both the living and the dead during the prayers of preparation of the Eucharistic Lamb and during the Augmented Litany should be given the week before the desired remembrance so that the names can be put into the bulletin and given to the Deacons for the prayers. Any names of the living that are not marked as sick or traveling will be listed under general prayers.

SCRIPTURE THIS WEEK

Church Lectionary

Today

Hebrews 11:33-12:2
Matthew 10:32-33, 37-38, 19:27-30

Monday

Romans 2:28-3:18
Matthew 6:31-34, 7:9-11

Tuesday

2 Corinthians 11:21-12:9
Matthew 16:13-19
Romans 4:4-12
Matthew 7:15-21

Wednesday

1 Corinthians 4:9-16
Mark 3:13-19
Romans 4:13-25
Matthew 7:21-23

Thursday

Romans 5:10-16
Matthew 8:23-27

Friday

Romans 5:17-6:2
Matthew 9:14-17

Saturday

Romans 3:19-26
Matthew 7:1-8

Reading the Bible in a Year

June 27: Isaiah 33-36
June 28: Isaiah 37-40
June 29: Isaiah 41-44
June 30: Isaiah 45-48
July 01: Isaiah 49-52
July 02: Isaiah 53-57
July 03: Isaiah 58-62

Children's Word

Saints are like stars!

Have you ever looked up into the sky on a very dark night? Did you ever try to count how many stars are up there? Maybe you did...but you probably lost count! There are billions of stars up there.

Today is All Saints Sunday. That's the day we remember and celebrate all the saints of our Church. We remember their strong faith in God and what they did (and still do) for all of us! They did what the Gospel today says for all of us to do—to remember God, even in front of our friends and even in front of our enemies.

One of our saints, named Saint Dimitri of Rostov, said something about our saints. He said, "The lives and praises of the saints are like the bright stars. Because of their number, we do not know the names of all the saints. Still, they amaze us by their radiant majesty, as do the stars." When we look up at the night sky, we see thousands and thousands of stars! We can't even count them. But they give us so much light. Did you know that the saints are the same way? They give us so much light and beauty because they all point to Christ. There are too many saints to count and to name, but we look to them to shine in our lives, too!

SAINTS PETER AND PAUL FIRST IN RANK

Have you ever wondered how the Christian Church started? Christ rose from the dead. Then what?

Well, then Jesus's followers worked and worked to tell people about Jesus Christ. They wanted everybody to know what Jesus had done for us. They wanted everybody else to know how God wants us to follow Him.

It wasn't easy to do this! Lots of times people were angry at Jesus's followers. On Tuesday, we celebrate the nameday of two of Jesus's best helpers. The church hymn about them calls them "first in rank." They did everything they could to keep the Church going. Their names are Saint Peter and Saint Paul.

In a letter, Saint Paul tells what he put up with. He was whipped with lashes. He was hit with rods. People threw stones at him. He was shipwrecked three times. He was cold, hungry, thirsty. Lots of times, his life was in big danger.

But Saint Paul kept at it! He knew what God wanted from him. Saint Peter and he both knew that their job was to spread the good news about Jesus Christ. This week, let's remember all that these two great men did to start the Christian Church!

We remember Saints Peter and Paul on Tuesday, June 29th.

June

27 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy *Feast of Ss. Peter & Paul*

30 – 7:15pm Bible Study with GoogleMeet

July

02 – 6:00pm Fun Night

04 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

07 – 7:15pm Bible Study with GoogleMeet

11 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

Fear Based Communities Use Abuse to Keep Their People in Line

There are a lot of fear based communities in our world. Some are religious and some are political. All are guilty of missing the mark when it comes to the message of the Church. We Christians were not programmed to be victims, living in fear. For the Christian the True Self is the one that is created in the image and likeness of God. As children of the Most High we are meant to live, not in fear, but in a joyful state, knowing and experiencing the love of God. Our God is not a god of anger and vengeance, but one Who invites us into a relationship based in loving communion. God is not waiting to send down fire upon our heads as an angry parent, but rather a loving Father Who desires that we connect with our true selves and put off the false self.

When we live as problem centered people we miss the mark. If we focus on those things in our lives that are negative, such as struggles with a particular sin, or negative thinking, we fail to live up to the true self.

Many therapists keep their patients in a codependent state by giving them labels that speak of mental illness. Political parties often keep themselves in power by playing to the negative labels they've created for the opposition. Religions often do the same thing, even with their own adherents, keeping them hooked in a negative pattern that disallows a spiritual growth that leads to healing and spiritual well being.

Fear based communities use abuse to keep their people in line, leaving them in a state of perpetual infancy, unable to reach their full potential and preventing them from realizing their true self. Such institutions, political or religious, prevent people from flourishing.

God invites us to integrate our lives as His children and utilizing all the gifts He has given us which lead to fulfilled lives. Fear is vanquished for the Christian precisely because we ARE His children. In Orthodoxy the priests and bishops are called upon to encourage the faithful to live lives in faithfulness to God's commandments, not because there will be grave consequences if we don't, but because of the great joy that is ours when we have communion with Him.

With love in Christ,

Abbot Tryphon

A Prayer for the Week

Dear Lord, when Your life is my priority and living faithfully to You is my focus, my life becomes a blessing to all around me. And You made it to be this way because You love me and You love all around me. You want me to be like You and You are so selfless that everything You do is for others. You are complete within Yourself so You need nothing. And that means every word You say, every act You do, and every thought You think is for others. I am meant to be a blessing to others because You live in me. Help me to be that way! Amen.

Hebrews 11:33-12:2

who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented – of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us. Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

2 Corinthians 11:21-12:9

To our shame I say that we were too weak for that! But in whatever anyone is bold – I speak foolishly – I am bold also. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. Are they ministers of Christ? – I speak as a fool – I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness – besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation? If I must boast, I will boast in the things which concern my infirmity. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king, was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me; but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands. It is doubtless not profitable for me to boast. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord: I know a man

in Christ who fourteen years ago – whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows – such a one was caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man – whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows – how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such a one I will boast; yet of myself I will not boast, except in my infirmities. For though I might desire to boast, I will not be a fool; for I will speak the truth. But I refrain, lest anyone should think of me above what he sees me to be or hears from me. And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Matthew 10:32-33, 37-38, 19:27-30

Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven. He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. Then Peter answered and said to Him, “See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?” So Jesus said to them, “Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

Matthew 16:13-19

When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?” So they said, “Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

You Are Meant to Be A Blessing. Yes, YOU!

June 25, 2021 · Fr. Barnabas Powell

Ouch! That hurt! It wouldn't have hurt anymore if he'd actually hit me with his fists. He had confronted me with the reality that my words had so offended his friend that that friend didn't want anything to do with God anymore. Oh No!

I was young and foolish (of course now I'm old and foolish, but, oh well), and I had tried to explain why a certain tragedy had happened to his family. I said that they had brought this tragedy on themselves because they weren't "under God's protection." What a stupid thing to say to someone who is hurting!

To be sure, we do bring things on ourselves by our choices, but to suggest to this hurting family that God would have protected them but He chose not to since they weren't on His "side" at the moment. I repent! Look at our lesson today in Romans 2:14-28:

BRETHREN, when the Gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or perhaps excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus. But if you call yourself a Jew and rely upon the law and boast of your relation to God and know his will and approve what is excellent, because you are instructed in the law, and if you are sure that you are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth – you then who teach others, will you not teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal? You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who boast in the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law? For, as it is written, "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you." Circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law; but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? Then those who are physically uncircumcised but keep the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. For he is not a real Jew who is one outwardly, nor is true circumcision something external and physical.

Paul tells these Romans that when any human, even a human not blessed with the wisdom of the truth given to God's people, does what is right, he proves that God's wisdom is in the hearts of men if they would only follow it.

Unfortunately, Paul was dealing with his own tribe of people who had, actually, had centuries of spiritual advantage in having the wisdom of God revealed to them through Moses and the Prophets. To be sure, God gave this treasure to the Jews precisely for the reason of having them share it with the world, be an example to the world of a society shaped by God's wisdom, and be a blessing to the whole world through their sharing this wisdom with everyone.

But, instead, they allowed their treasure to become a source of spiritual pride and arrogance. They made what was meant for everyone, a badge of pride exclusively belonging to them and they allowed their shortsighted pride to turn them into something they were never meant to be! Paul plainly speaks to them in such a way that there is no doubt where they went wrong. They boast of having the revealed wisdom of God but then never keep it. However, those who didn't have such a blessing prove the Jews have no reason for arrogant, ethnic pride because these gentiles are keeping the Law without having the benefits of the Law. Paul calls these faithful Gentiles "a law to themselves."

Today, God loves the whole world. Every person, regardless of their skin color, national origins, their education, or their economic status, is valued beyond worth by God. You are blessed to BE a blessing! The only purpose for Him giving His wisdom to anyone, any tribe, any nation, is so that blessed people will share it, live it, and show it to everyone else by being Orthodox on Purpose.

К Евреям 11:33-12:2

которые верою побеждали царства, творили правду, получали обетования, заграждали уста львов, угашали силу огня, избегали острия меча, укреплялись от немощи, были крепки на войне, прогоняли полки чужих; жены получали умерших своих воскресшими; иные же замучены были, не приняв освобождения, дабы получить лучшее воскресение; другие испытали поругания и побои, а также узы и темницу, были побиваемы камнями, перепиливаемы, подвергаемы пытке, умирали от меча, скитались в милотях и козых кожах, терпя недостатки, скорби, озлобления; те, которых весь мир не был достоин, скитались по пустыням и горам, по пещерам и ущельям земли. И все сии, свидетельствованные в вере, не получили обещанного, потому что Бог предусмотрел о нас нечто лучшее, дабы они не без нас достигли совершенства. Посему и мы, имея вокруг себя такое облако свидетелей, свергнем с себя всякое бремя и запинаящий нас грех и с терпением будем проходить предлежащее нам поприще, взирая на начальника и совершителя веры Иисуса, Который, вместо предлежавшей Ему радости, претерпел крест, пренебрегши посрамление, и воссел одесную престола Божия.

2-е Коринфянам 11:21-12:9

К стыду говорю, что [на это] у нас недоставало сил. А если кто смеет [хвалиться] чем-либо, то (скажу по неразумию) смею и я. Они Евреи? и я. Израильтяне? и я. Семя Авраамово? и я. Христовы служители? (в безумии говорю:) я больше. Я гораздо более [был] в трудах, безмерно в ранах, более в темницах и многократно при смерти. От Иудеев пять раз дано мне было по сорока [ударов] без одного; три раза меня били палками, однажды камнями побивали, три раза я терпел кораблекрушение, ночь и день пробыл во глубине [морской]; много раз [был] в путешествиях, в опасностях на реках, в опасностях от разбойников, в опасностях от единоплеменников, в опасностях от язычников, в опасностях в городе, в опасностях в пустыне, в опасностях на море, в опасностях между лжебратиями, в труде и в изнурении, часто в бдении, в голоде и жажде, часто в посте, на стуже и в наготе. Кроме посторонних [приключений], у меня ежедневно стечение [людей], забота о всех церквах. Кто изнемогает, с кем бы и я не изнемогал? Кто соблазнится, за кого бы я не воспламенялся? Если должно мне хвалиться, то буду хвалиться немощью моею. Бог и Отец Господа нашего Иисуса Христа, благословенный во веки, знает, что я не лгу. В Дамаске областной правитель царя Ареты стерег город Дамаск, чтобы схватить меня; и я в корзине был спущен из окна по стене и избежал его рук. Не полезно хвалиться мне, ибо я приду к видениям и откровениям Господним. Знаю человека во Христе, который назад тому четырнадцать лет (в теле ли--не знаю, вне ли тела--не знаю: Бог знает)

восхищен был до третьего неба. И знаю о таком человеке ([только] не знаю--в теле, или вне тела: Бог знает), что он был восхищен в рай и слышал неизреченные слова, которых человеку нельзя пересказать. Таким [человеком] могу хвалиться; собою же не похваюсь, разве только немощами моими. Впрочем, если захочу хвалиться, не буду неразумен, потому что скажу истину; но я удерживаюсь, чтобы кто не подумал о мне более, нежели сколько во мне видит или слышит от меня. И чтобы я не превозносился чрезвычайностью откровений, дано мне жало в плоть, ангел сатаны, удручать меня, чтобы я не превозносился. Трижды молил я Господа о том, чтобы удалил его от меня. Но [Господь] сказал мне: 'довольно для тебя благодати Моей, ибо сила Моя совершается в немощи'. И потому я гораздо охотнее буду хвалиться своими немощами, чтобы обитала во мне сила Христова.

От Матфея 10:32-33, 37-38, 19:27-30

Итак всякого, кто исповедает Меня пред людьми, того исповедаю и Я пред Отцем Моим Небесным; а кто отречется от Меня пред людьми, отрекусь от того и Я пред Отцем Моим Небесным. Кто любит отца или мать более, нежели Меня, не достоин Меня; и кто любит сына или дочь более, нежели Меня, не достоин Меня; и кто не берет креста своего и следует за Мною, тот не достоин Меня. Тогда Петр, отвечая, сказал Ему: вот, мы оставили всё и последовали за Тобою; что же будет нам? Иисус же сказал им: истинно говорю вам, что вы, последовавшие за Мною, --в пакибытии, когда сядет Сын Человеческий на престоле славы Своей, сядете и вы на двенадцати престолах судить двенадцать колен Израилевых. И всякий, кто оставит дома, или братьев, или сестер, или отца, или мать, или жену, или детей, или земли, ради имени Моего, получит во сто крат и наследует жизнь вечную. Многие же будут первые последними, и последние первыми.

От Матфея 16:13-19

Придя же в страны Кесарии Филипповой, Иисус спрашивал учеников Своих: за кого люди почитают Меня, Сына Человеческого? Они сказали: одни за Иоанна Крестителя, другие за Илию, а иные за Иеремию, или за одного из пророков. Он говорит им: а вы за кого почитаете Меня? Симон же Петр, отвечая, сказал: Ты--Христос, Сын Бога Живаго. Тогда Иисус сказал ему в ответ: блажен ты, Симон, сын Ионин, потому что не плоть и кровь открыли тебе это, но Отец Мой, Сущий на небесах; и Я говорю тебе: ты--Петр, и на сем камне Я создам Церковь Мою, и врата ада не одолеют ее; и дам тебе ключи Царства Небесного: и что свяжешь на земле, то будет связано на небесах, и что разрешишь на земле, то будет разрешено на небесах.

Hebrenjve 11:33-12:2

të cilët, me anë të fesë nënshtruan mbretëria, realizuan drejtësinë, arritën ato që u premtuan, ua zunë grykën luanëve, fikën fuqinë e zjarrit, shpëtuan nga tehu i shpatës, nga të dobët u bënë të fuqishëm, u bënë të fortë në betejë, thyen ushtritë e huaja. Gratë morën të vdekurit e tyre me anë të ringjalljes; e të tjerët u torturuan, sepse nuk pranuan çlirimin, për të fituar një ringjallje më të mirë. Dhe të tjerë hoqën përqeshje dhe goditje, madje edhe pranga dhe burgime. U vranë me gurë, me sharrë, u prenë, u vranë nga shpata, u endën të mbuluar me lëkurë dhësh e dhish, nevojtarë, të pikë-lluar, të keqtrajtuar (bota nuk ishte e denjë për ta), u sollën nëpër shkretëtira e nëpër male, nëpër shpella dhe nëpër guva të dheut. E pra, të gjithë këta, ndonëse morën dëshim të mirë me anë të besimit, nuk morën atë që u ishte premtuar, sepse Perëndia kishte paraparë diçka më të mirë për ne, që ata të mos arrinin në përsosje pa ne. Prandaj edhe ne, duke qenë të rrethuar nga një re kaq e madhe dëshimtarësh, duke hedhur tej çdo barrë dhe mëkatin që na qarkon vazhdimisht duke na joshur, le të rendim me durim në udhën që është përpara nesh, duke i drejtuar sytë te Jezusi, kreu dhe plotësonjësi i besimit, i cili, për gëzimin që ishte përpara tij, duroi kryqin duke e përçmuar fyerjen dhe u ul në të djathtën e fronit të Perëndisë.

2 e Korintasve 11:21-12:9

Flas për turpin tim, sikurse ne të ishim të dobët; megjithatë në çdo gjë që dikush guxon, po flas si i marrë, marr guxim edhe unë. Janë ata Hebrenj? Jam edhe unë! Janë ata Izraelitë? Jam edhe unë! Janë ata pasardhës të Abrahamit? Jam edhe unë. Janë ata shërbëtorë të Krishtit? Po flas si i pamend, unë jam edhe më tepër si këta; në mundime më tepër, në goditje më tepër, në burgje më tepër dhe shpesh në rrezik për vdekje. Nga Judenjët mora pesë herë nga dyzetë kamxhike pa një. Tri herë më rrahën me shkopinj, një herë më qëlluan me gurë, tri herë m'u mbyt anija në det, kalova një ditë e një natë në humnerë. Në udhëtime të shpeshta në rreziqe lumenjsh, në rreziqe kusarësh, në rrezik nga ana e bashkëtdhetarëve, rreziqe nga ana johebrenjve, rreziqe në qytet, rreziqe në shkretëtirë, rreziqe në det, rreziqe midis vëllezërve të rremë, në lodhje e në mundim, në netët pa gjumë, në uri e në etje, shpesh herë në agjërime, në të ftohtë dhe në të zhveshur. Përveç këtyre gjërave të jashtme, ajo që më mundon çdo ditë është kujdesja për të gjitha kishat. Kush është i dobët, që të mos jem edhe unë? Kush është skandalizuar dhe unë të mos përvëlohem? Në qoftë se duhet të mburrem, unë do të mburrem me ato që kanë të bëjnë me dobësinë time. Perëndia dhe Ati i Zotit tonë Jezu Krisht, që është i bekuar përjetë, e di se unë nuk gënjej. Në Damask, qeveritari i mbretit Areta e ruante qytetin e Damaskasve për të më zënë, por nga një dritare më ulën përgjatë murit me një shportë, dhe shpëtova nga duart e tij. Sigurisht nuk kam dobi nga të mburrurit; prandaj do t'ia filloj me vegimet dhe zbulesat e Zotit. Unë njoh një njeri në Krishtin,

i cili, para katërmbëdhjetë vjetësh (a ishte në trup, a ishte jashtë trupit, nuk e di; Perëndia e di), u rrëmbye gjer në të tretin qiell. Dhe e di se ai njeri (a me trupin ose pa trupin, nuk e di, Perëndia e di), u rrëmbye në parajsë dhe dëgjoji fjalë të patregueshme, që nuk është e lejuar të thuhet nga njeri. Për atë njeri unë do të krenohem, por nuk do të krenohem për veten time, veç se për dobësitë e mia. Edhe sikur të doja të krenohesha, nuk do të isha i marrë, sepse do të flisja të vërtetën; por nuk e bëj këtë, se mos ndonjë më çmon më tepër nga ajo që më sheh, a më tepër nga ajo që dëgjon nga unë. Dhe, që të mos më rritet mendja për shkak të jashtëzakonshmërisë së zbulesave, m'u dha një gjëmb në mish, një engjëll i Satanit, për të më rënë me grushta, që të mos mbahem me të madh. Lidhur me këtë iu luta tri herë Zotit që ta largonte nga unë. Por ai më tha: “Hiri im të mjafton, sepse fuqia ime përsoset në dobësi.” Prandaj me kënaqësi të madhe do të krenohem më tepër për dobësitë e mia, që fuqia e Krishtit të rrijë tek unë.

Mateu 10:32-33, 37-38, 19:27-30

Prandaj kushdo që do të më rrëfenjë përpara njerëzve, dhe unë do ta rrëfejë përpara Atit tim që është në qiej. Por kushdo që do të më mohojë përpara njerëzve, edhe unë do ta mohoj përpara Atit tim që është në qiej.” Ai që e do të atin ose nënën më shumë se unë, nuk është i denjë për mua; dhe ai që e do birin ose bijën më shumë se unë, nuk është i denjë për mua. Dhe ai që nuk e merr kryqin e vet dhe nuk vjen pas meje, nuk është i denjë për mua. Atëherë Pjetri iu përgjigj duke thënë: “Ja, ne i lamë të gjitha dhe të ndoqëm; çfarë do të fitojmë, pra?” Jezusi u tha atyre: “Në të vërtetë po ju them, në krijimin e ri, kur Biri i njeriut të ulet në fronin e lavdisë së vet, edhe ju që më keni ndjekur do të uleni mbi dymbëdhjetë frone për të gjykuar të dymbëdhjetë fiset e Izraelit. Dhe kushdo që ka lënë, për hir të emrit tim, shtëpi, vëllezër, motra, atë, nënë, grua, bij ose ara, do të marrë njëqindfish dhe do të trashëgojë jetë të përjetshme. Por shumë të parë do të jenë të fundit, dhe shumë të fundit do të jenë të parët.”

Mateu 16:13-19

Pastaj Jezusi, mbasi arriti në krahinën e Cezaresë së Filipit, i pyeti dishepujt e vet: “Kush thonë njerëzit se jam unë, i Biri i njeriut?” Dhe ata thanë: “Disa Gjon Pagëzori, të tjerë Elia, të tjerë Jeremia, ose një nga profetët.” Ai u tha atyre: “Po ju, kush thoni se jam unë?” Dhe Simon Pjetri duke u përgjigjur tha: “Ti je Krishti, Biri i Perëndisë të gjallë.” Dhe Jezusi duke përgjigjur u tha: “I lumur je ti, o Simon, bir i Jonas, sepse këtë nuk ta zbuloi as mishi as gjaku, por Ati im që është në qiej. Dhe unë po të them gjithashtu se ti je Pjetri, dhe mbi këtë shkëmb unë do të ndërtoj kishën time dhe dyert e ferrit nuk do ta mundin atë. Dhe unë do të të jap çelësat e mbretërisë së qiejve; gjithçka që të kesh lidhur mbi tokë, do të jetë lidhur në qiej, dhe gjithçka që të kesh zgjidhur mbi tokë, do të jetë zgjidhur në qiej.”