

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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October 31, 2021

19TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST:

NEW HIEROMARTYR ARCHPRIEST JOHN KOCHUROV

Today 10:00am Divine Liturgy
Wed. 03 7:15pm Bible Study with
GoogleMeet
Sun. 07 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: Wednesday and Friday (fasting from meat, fish, eggs, dairy, wine and oil as you are able.)

**Troparion – Tone 1
(Ressurrection)**

*When Thou didst descend to death, O Life immortal, Thou didst slay hell with the splendor of Thy Godhead. And when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead, all the powers of heaven cried out:
“O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to Thee!”*

**Kontakion – Tone 4
(St. Arethas)**

*Now the holy Hieromartyr is glorified, for he took up his cross and followed Christ. In so doing, he gave us a model of true discipleship. Therefore, let us cry aloud to him:
“Rejoice, O Father John, the glory of priests!”*

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 13:7-16
Luke 12:32-40
2 Corinthians 11:31-12:9
Luke 8:26-39

Monday

Philippians 2:12-16
Luke 11:29-33

Tuesday

Philippians 2:17-23
Luke 11:34-41

Wednesday

Philippians 2:24-30
Luke 11:42-46

Thursday

Philippians 3:1-8
Luke 11:47-12:1

Friday

Philippians 3:8-19
Luke 12:2-12

Saturday

2 Corinthians 1:8-11
Luke 9:1-6

Reading the Bible in a Year

Oct 31: Luke 19-21
Nov 01: Luke 22-24
Nov 02: John 1-3
Nov 03: John 4-6
Nov 04: John 7-9
Nov 05: John 10-12
Nov 06: John 13-15

Anything that is quickly obtained is also easily lost

Americans are not a particularly patient people, as demonstrated by the fact that the fast food industry began with us. We don't tolerate slow service, thus much of the food we consume is prepared before we order it. We drive our car to a window, order our food, and expect it to be ready, without delay, at the next window. If we be church goers, we expect the service to end within one hour, on the dot. Our gardens are filled with flowers that come fully grown, are dropped into the soil, and look good from the very first watering. No waiting around for the germination of seeds, we want instant beauty.

If an appliance breaks down, we buy a new one, rather than wait a week for repairs. We throw ourselves into the latest fad diet promising fast weight loss, only to see the weight come back after we've tired of the menu. We don't apprentice for a career, but walk out of a university with the expectation our career will begin on day one. Many of our children are allowed to dress in adult pop fashion, resulting in the loss of innocence, and the precious sweetness of childhood is transformed into a sort of miniature adult.

Since we have grown accustomed to having everything happen quickly, and without delay, we also expect our spiritual lives to be on the same quick time line. We don't have the patience to build upon the knowledge of the holy fathers, so we don't practice regular spiritual reading. Our church attendance is limited to the essential Sunday Liturgy, and even then we arrive late and perhaps leave before the Thanksgiving Prayers have been concluded. If fasting is difficult for us, we don't fast at all. If keeping a Prayer Rule is tedious, we don't try at all to develop a set time for our prayers. If our mind wanders during prayer, we let it, avoiding even the least amount of struggle.

If we hope to make progress in the spiritual life, it is good to remember the words of Saint Isaac the Syrian, "For anything that is quickly obtained is also easily lost, whereas everything found with toil is also kept with careful watching."

With love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon

Children's Word

DO YOU KNOW SAINT JOHN OF CHICAGO?

We all want to be first at something, don't we? First in line. Or first to finish our work. Or even first to invent something important or solve some great puzzle.

Saint John Kochurov of Chicago was first at something that not many people would want to be first at! A hundred years ago in Russia, a big group of people hated the Church, and they hated their Christian leaders too. They (called the Communists) started a huge rebellion, and they wanted to throw out all the leaders and put their own people in charge. Saint John Kochurov was the first priest to be killed by these God-hating people. He was the first one...out of many, many Christian priests.

Before that though, Saint John grew up in Russia and he studied to be a priest. He wanted to go to America, to serve as a priest where there weren't too many Orthodox churches yet. The bishop sent him (along with his wife) to Chicago, Illinois. Saint John worked hard to teach the people there, and many people became Orthodox Christians. Saint John built churches here in the United States with help from Tsar Nicholas (the king) in Russia. He was a great priest with lots of energy.

Sadly, when he went back to Russia, things were becoming hard for Christians. He was a very popular priest, and the rebels didn't like that. He was killed for his Orthodox faith. But Saint John loved his flock in the U.S., and now we can pray for his help!

We celebrate St. John today, October 31st.



It is certainly a finer and more wonderful thing to change the mind of enemies and bring them to another way of thinking than to kill them, especially when we recall that the [disciples] were only twelve and the whole world was full of wolves. . . . We ought then to be ashamed of ourselves, we who act so very differently and rush like wolves upon our foes. So long as we are sheep we have the victory; but if we are like wolves we are beaten, for then the help of the shepherd is withdrawn from us, for he feeds sheep not wolves. .

. . This mystery [of the Eucharist] requires that we should be innocent not only of violence but of all enmity, however slight, for it is the mystery of peace

-St. John Chrysostom



2 Corinthians 11:31-12:9

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.

Hebrews 13:7-16 (St. John Kochurov)

Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them. We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come. Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Luke 8:26-39

Then they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee. And when He stepped out on the land, there met Him a certain man from the city who had demons for a long time. And he wore no clothes, nor did

he live in a house but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, “What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!” For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had often seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness. Jesus asked him, saying, “What is your name?” And he said, “Legion,” because many demons had entered him. And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss. Now a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He would permit them to enter them. And He permitted them. Then the demons went out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned. When those who fed them saw what had happened, they fled and told it in the city and in the country. Then they went out to see what had happened, and came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. They also who had seen it told them by what means he who had been demon-possessed was healed. Then the whole multitude of the surrounding region of the Gadarenes asked Him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. And He got into the boat and returned. Now the man from whom the demons had departed begged Him that he might be with Him. But Jesus sent him away, saying, “Return to your own house, and tell what great things God has done for you.” And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.

Luke 12:32-40 (St. John Kochurov)

Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them. And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

An Omen For Destruction

October 29, 2021 · Fr. Barnabas Powell

My grandmother use to say “Your actions are so loud I can’t hear what you are saying.” When I was small, I didn’t understand what she was trying to teach me, but as I got older I began to realize that she was trying to tell me that my actions were a more trustworthy insight into my true beliefs than my words.

And even after all these years, I still struggle with the implications of this wisdom.

But I guess we all eventually confront the inconvenient truth that our words and our actions can sometimes not match at all. But when they do, Oh Boy...

Look at our lesson today in Philippians 1:27-30; 2:1-4:

Brethren, let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you stand firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear omen to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, engaged in the same conflict which you saw and now hear to be mine. So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any incentive of love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests but also to the interests of others.

St. Paul is writing to his beloved Phillipian Church and his words ring so loudly, we are still hearing them today! What an amazing passage! But make no mistake, St. Paul is both warning and instructing the Philippians and us as well.

First, the Instruction: Live your life worthy of the Gospel! Stand firm in one spirit! Have one mind as you “strive” (I love that word. It’s a war word.) side by side with each other. Never be afraid of your Opponents! Paul means these Philippians to be Orthodox on Purpose, to allow the message of the Resurrected Jesus to actually change their lives AND unify them even in the face of opposition. He tells them that living in the way of Christ is going to accomplish two very different outcomes. First, this purposeful living the message of the Faith, allowing the wisdom of the Faith to actually change your mind, actions, and perspectives, will unite you to each other! But, this lifestyle will also stir up opposition from the kingdom of darkness because your living as a faithful community will be seen as an “omen to them of their destruction.”

Next, the Warning: Yes, those who reject the wisdom of the Faith will treat you as crazy, as backward, as socially unacceptable, because your living this Faith will be such a contrast to their blind selfishness that they will naturally perceive your life in Christ as a foretaste of their judgment! No wonder the kingdom of darkness screams when Christians stand for morality and truth. No wonder they hate us. I’d hate us too if every time I came in contact with someone they reminded me by their loving and humble life that I am headed for a fall! A consistent Christian life is hated by others because it reminds the darkness of how empty it really is!

Paul finishes up his wisdom to us today by reminding us that the path of this Christian life creates such a sense of humility and love that we always “count others better than” ourselves. And it drives us to think of others as much or more than we think of what we need for ourselves. What a contrast to the mentality of “he who dies with the most toys wins” or “always look out for number 1” or “I have to demand my rights.” This dark and dead-end mentality of selfish living will always be less than what a true believer experiences in living for others instead of himself. That means lovingly warning others that their lifestyle is destructive and offering them the loving home of the Church to join with the rest of us in being healed by God’s grace through the sacramental life of the Faith.

Today, are you experiencing the life-changing effects of the wisdom of the Life of Jesus? Is this changed life deepening the unity you are experiencing with the people of your parish? And are you seeing how those who reject the Faith see you as an “omen” of their destruction? Know this, being Orthodox on Purpose produces this kind of life.

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER EVENTS

October

31 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

November

03 – 7:15pm Bible Study with
GoogleMeet

07 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

10 – 7:15pm Bible Study with
GoogleMeet

13 – 3:00pm Ethnic Festival

6:00pm Vespers

14 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

17 – 7:15pm Bible Study with
GoogleMeet

20 – 6:00pm Vespers

21 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

*Feast of the Entrance of
the Theotokos into the
Temple*

Coffee Hour

This Week: Hot Dog Sunday

Next Week: Sharon Marshal-
Memorial for Eric, her brother

Flower Donation

***This week's flowers were
donated by:***

A Prayer for the Week

Dear Lord, please forgive me for my short-sighted self-centered living. This broken way of living only produces division and isolation. I wasn't created to live this way, Lord, and You have come to undo this spiritual slavery in my life and the lives of those around me. Help me today to see my own life becoming more like You and draw together us all in our local communities so that we can be the "city set on a hill that cannot be hid." Amen.

Ss. Peter & Paul Ethnic Festival

We are ramping up for our Ethnic Festival being held at 3:00pm on **Saturday, November 13.**

We're looking for both cooks and attendees. We have so many parishioners with so many different backgrounds and countries of origin, and we would like to celebrate the diversity of our parish by having a dish from everyone's home tradition.

Please contact Donna Bacon if you wish to contribute or attend.

She can be reached by:

email: dab0893@verizon.net

Phone: 267-250-0520

The Greater Philadelphia Committee of IOCC invites you to the

10th Anniversary Event to Benefit IOCC

Sunday, November 7, 2021

3:30pm Hors d'Oeuvres & Silent Auction

5:00pm Dinner & Program

Come and learn about IOCC's programs around the world and how your support makes a difference in places like USA, Albania, Greece, and Ethiopia

**Adelphia Restaurant – Pan Athenian Grand
Ballroom**

1750 Clements Bridge Rd., Deptford, NJ 08096

Register online at ioccc.org or make checks out to IOCC and give them to Tina Murianka or Mary Jaxheimer

Questions? You can call or email Connie:

215-343-4709 hbckb@msn.com

Making the Witness of Faith Evident

October 25, 2021 · Fr. Basil

The word of the day is “evident.” There is something enticing about secrets. In our time, spiritualism, theosophy, New Age spirituality, and the occult claim hidden knowledge and connections to the supernatural. From the beginning Christianity has opposed these esoteric ways of false spirituality.. It rejected what are now called “secret” Gospels that hid the truth from the faithful. Instead, it preached an open Gospel and a faith that was clear and evident to all.

Paul wrote his letter to the believers in Philippi when he was under house arrest in Rome. In today’s reading of Philippians 1:18-14, Paul writes, “...it has become evident to the whole palace guard and all the rest that my chains are in Christ” (vs. 13). The Greek word that Paul uses is derived from the sense of shining. It means that something has come to light (Strong’s #5318, 261). Thus, Paul reports that it is no secret to the “palace guard” and everyone that his imprisonment is for the sake of Christ. Paul rejoices that because his witness to Christ is so open, his Paul’s associates, are becoming bolder in their preaching of Christ. They now dare to freely speak the word of the Lord without fear ((vs. 11) (Strong’s, #870, 49).
Evident in the Clear Light of Day

According to The Orthodox Study Bible translation, Paul prays that the Philippians may be “sincere” (OSB vs. 10) But a more precise sense of the term refers to showing something to be good in the full light of day (Strong’s #1506, 78.) Accordingly Paul prays to his beloved flock in Philippi that his beloved congregation would be pure, faultless, and “filled with the fruits of righteousness” until the Judgement day (OSB 11) They are to be just as “transparent” as Paul so that their virtue might be made evident to the glory of God (vs. 11).

How are they to reach that state of sincerity? Paul prays “that you may approve the things that are excellent” (OCA vs. 10) English speakers may find this phrase unclear. We no longer use “to approve” to mean “to demonstrate” or “to certify as good.” To find the meaning of “approve,” we should consider the beginning of the sentence. “Paul prays “that your love may abound still more in knowledge and all discernment...” (vs. 9).

Testing to Find What Is Excellent

What is the result of this judgment of discernment? The Greek word that the OSB translates as “approve” comes from the thought of testing (Strong’s 1381, 71). The Philippians are to test everything and to judge what is to be approved. That is, they should recognize by examination what is best. When they choose what is excellent, they would become “filled with the fruits of righteousness” (vs. 11).

We learn from this passage that our witness to our faith in Christ should be as open as Paul’s testimony to the Gospel. What we believe and how we act should be “transparent” because it shines through our lives. And this transparency is the result of our choice of what is excellent, that is, what is good and right and true.

For Reflection

In the Roman Empire of Paul’s day, many “mystery religions” led people astray. These cults practiced secret rituals known only to their members. And they often fostered altered states of consciousness to elevate the mind to a new level. But secrecy ensured that only those we who were chosen initiates knew of these esoteric states of awareness and the rituals that produced them. In contrast, Paul, the apostles, and the early church leaders proclaimed their message openly in the synagogue, the marketplace, and the courtroom. The transparency of their teaching followed the example of the Lord Jesus. When the high priest interrogated Jesus about his teaching, he answered, “I spoke openly to the world. I always taught in synagogues and the temple ... and in secret I have said nothing” (John 18:20).

2-е Коринфянам 11:31-12:9

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.

К Евреям 13:7-16

Поминайте наставников ваших, которые проповедывали вам слово Божие, и, взирая на кончину их жизни, подражайте вере их. Иисус Христос вчера и сегодня и во веки Тот же. Учениями различными и чуждыми не увлекайтесь; ибо хорошо благодатью укреплять сердца, а не яствами, от которых не получили пользы занимающиеся ими. Мы имеем жертвенник, от которого не имеют права питаться служащие скинии. Так как тела животных, которых кровь для [очищения] греха вносится первосвященником во святилище, сжигаются вне стана, – то и Иисус, дабы освятить людей Кровию Своею, пострадал вне врат. Итак выйдем к Нему за стан, нося Его поругание; ибо не имеем здесь постоянного града, но ищем будущего. Итак будем через Него непрестанно приносить Богу жертву хвалы, то есть плод уст, прославляющих имя Его. Не забывайте также благотворения и общительности, ибо таковые жертвы благоугодны Богу.

От Луки 8:26-39

И приплыли в страну Гадаринскую, лежащую против Галилеи. Когда же вышел Он на берег, встретил Его один человек из города, одержимый бесами с давнего времени, и в одежду не одевавшийся, и живший не в доме, а в гробах. Он, увидев Иисуса, вскричал, пал пред Ним и громким голосом сказал: что Тебе до меня, Иисус, Сын Бога Всевышнего? умоляю Тебя, не мучь меня. Ибо [Иисус] повелел нечистому духу выйти из сего человека, потому что он долгое время мучил его, так что его связывали цепями и узами, сберегая его; но он разрывал узы и был гоним бесом в пустыни. Иисус спросил его: как тебе имя? Он сказал: легион, --потому что много бесов вошло в него. И они просили Иисуса, чтобы не повелел им идти в бездну. Тут же на горе паслось большое стадо свиней; и [бесы] просили Его, чтобы позволил им войти в них. Он позволил им. Бесы, выйдя из человека, вошли в свиней, и бросилось стадо с крутизны в озеро и потонуло. Пастухи, видя происшедшее, побежали и рассказали в городе и в селениях. И вышли видеть происшедшее; и, придя к Иисусу, нашли человека, из которого вышли бесы, сидящего у ног Иисуса, одетого и в здравом уме; и ужаснулись. Видевшие же рассказали им, как исцелился бесновавшийся. И просил Его весь народ Гадаринской окрестности удалиться от них, потому что они объята были великим страхом. Он вошел в лодку и возвратился. Человек же, из которого вышли бесы, просил Его, чтобы быть с Ним. Но Иисус отпустил его, сказав: возвратись в дом твой и расскажи, что сотворил тебе Бог. Он пошел и проповедывал по всему городу, что сотворил ему Иисус.

От Луки 12:32-40

Не бойся, малое стадо! ибо Отец ваш благоволил дать вам Царство. Продавайте имущества ваши и давайте милостыню. Приготовляйте себе влагалища не ветшающие, сокровище неоскудевающее на небесах, куда вор не приближается и где моль не съедает, ибо где сокровище ваше, там и сердце ваше будет. Да будут чресла ваши препоясаны и светильники горящи. И вы будьте подобны людям, ожидающим возвращения господина своего с брака, дабы, когда придёт и постучит, тотчас отворить ему. Блаженны рабы те, которых господин, придя, найдёт бодрствующими; истинно говорю вам, он препоясается и посадит их, и, подходя, станет служить им. И если придет во вторую стражу, и в третью стражу придет, и найдет их так, то блаженны рабы те. Вы знаете, что если бы ведал хозяин дома, в который час придет вор, то бодрствовал бы и не допустил бы подкопать дом свой. Будьте же и вы готовы, ибо, в который час не думаете, придет Сын Человеческий.

2 e Korintasve 11:31-12:9

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 dëgjoi 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.

Hebrenjve 13:7-16

Kujtoni të parët tuaj, që ju shpallën fjalën e Perëndisë dhe, duke çmuar rezultatin e sjelljes së tyre, merrni si shembull besimin e tyre. Krishti është i njëjtë dje, sot e përjetë. Mos e lëshoni veten aty e këtu prej doktrinah të ndryshme dhe të huaja, sepse është mirë që zemra juaj të forcohet me anë të hirit dhe jo prej ushqimit, të cilat nuk u dhanë asnjë dobi atyre aq sa ecën. Ne kemi një altar prej të cilit nuk kanë të drejtë të hanë ata që i shërbejnë tabernakullit. Sepse trupat e atyre kafshëve, gjaku i të cilave është sjellë prej kryepriestit në shenjtëroren për mëkatin, digjen jashtë fushës. Prandaj edhe Jezusi, për të shenjtëruar popullin me gjakun e vet, pësoi jashtë derës (së qytetit) Le të dalim, pra, drejt tij jashtë fushës, duke bartur poshtërimin e tij. Sepse nuk kemi këtu qytet të përhershëm, por kërkojmë atë që ka për të ardhur. Me anë të tij, pra, le t'i ofrojmë vazhdimisht Perëndisë një flijim lavdie, domethënë frytin e buzëve që rrëfejnë emrin e tij. Dhe mos harroni bamirësinë dhe t'u jepni ndihmë të tjerëve, sepse Perëndisë i pëlqejnë flijime të tilla.

Luka 8:26-39

Pastaj lundruan drejt krahinës së Gadareasve, që ndodhet përballë Galilesë; dhe, porsa Jezusi zbriti në tokë, i doli përpara një njeri nga ai qytet, i cili prej shumë kohe ishte pushtuar nga demonët, nuk vishte rroba, nuk banonte në shtëpi, por ndër varreza. Kur e pa Jezusin, lëshoi një britmë, iu hodh ndër këmbë dhe tha me zë të lartë: “Ç’ka mes meje dhe ty, Jezus, Biri i Perëndisë Shumë të Lartë? Të lutem, mos më mundo!” Sepse Jezusi po i jepte urdhër frymës së ndyrë të dilte nga ai njeri, sepse shumë herë e kishte pushtuar dhe ndonëse e kishin lidhur me zinxhirë e me pranga dhe e ruanin, ai i këpuste prangat dhe shtyhej prej demonit nëpër shkretëtirat. Dhe Jezusi e pyeti duke thënë: “Si e ke emrin?” Dhe ai u përgjigj: “Legjion.” Sepse shumë demonë i kishin hyrë në të. Dhe ata e lutnin të mos i urdhëronte të shkonin në humnerë. Dhe aty ishte një tufë e madhe derrash që kullotnin në mal, dhe këta demonë iu lutën t’i lejonte të hynin në ta. Ai ua lejoi atyre. Atëherë demonët, si dolën nga ai njeri, hynë te derrat, dhe ajo tufë u turr nga gremina në liqen dhe u mbyt. Kur panë ç’ndodhi, ata që i ruanin derrat ikën dhe e çuan lajmin në qytet e nëpër fshatra. Atëherë njerëzit dolën për të parë ç’kishte ndodhur dhe erdhën te Jezusi, dhe gjetën atë njeri, nga i cili kishin dalë demonët, të ulur te këmbët e Jezusit, të veshur dhe me mendje në rregull, dhe patën frikë. Ata që e kishin parë ngjarjen, u treguan atyre si ishte shëruar i idemonizuari. Atëherë gjithë popullsia e krahinës së Gadareasve, i kërkoi Jezusit të largohej prej tyre, sepse i kishte zënë një frikë e madhe. Dhe Jezusi hyri në barkë dhe u kthye mbrapa. Ndërkaq njeriu prej të cilit dolën demonët, i lutej të rrinte me të; por Jezusi e përcolli duke i thënë: “Kthehu në shtëpinë tënde dhe trego çfarë gjërash të mëdha ka bërë Perëndia për ty.” Dhe ai shkoi anëmbanë qytetit duke treguar gjërat e mëdha që Jezusi bëri për të.

Luka 12:32-40

Mos ki frikë, o tufë e vogël, sepse Atit tuaj i pëlqeu t’ju japë mbretërinë. Shitni pasurinë tuaj dhe jepni lëmoshë! Bëni për vete trasta që nuk vjetrohen, një thesar të pashtershëm në qiejt, ku vjedhësi nuk arrin dhe tenja nuk bren. Sepse atje ku është thesari juaj, atje do të jetë edhe zemra juaj.” Le të jenë ngjeshur ijët tuaja, dhe llambat ndezur. Ngjajini atyre që presin zotërinë e tyre, kur kthehet nga dasma, për t’ia hapur derën sapo të vijë dhe të trokasë. Lum ata shërbëtorë, që zotëria, kur të kthehet, do t’i gjejë zgjuar! Në të vërtetë po ju them se ai vetë do të ngjeshet dhe do t’i vendosë ata në tryezë, dhe ai vetë do t’u shërbejë. Dhe, në se do të vijë në të dytën a në të tretën rojë të natës dhe t’i gjejë kështu, lum ata shërbëtorë. Por ta dini këtë: se po ta dinte i zoti i shtëpisë në cilën orë i vjen vjedhësi, do të rrinte zgjuar dhe nuk do të linte t’i shpërthenin shtëpinë. Edhe ju pra, jini gati, sepse Biri i njriut do të vijë në atë orë që nuk e mendoni.”