

# Eastern Mission

Apostolic Lutheran Church of America New Year

**August 2020**

*“From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.” Matthew 16:21-28*

Who do men say that I am? Jesus asked this question of his disciples before our text begins. Peter gives the great answer *“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”* Jesus blesses Peter and tells him *“Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.”* After such a blessing many are puzzled by Peter's response to the pronouncement of what will happen to him in Jerusalem. Why would he say such a thing? Well, the Father revealed to Peter that Jesus is the Christ. But Peter is still flesh and blood and he is stuck on his flesh and blood perspective of who the Christ is. Peter is expecting a political messiah, a revolutionary. His perspective needs to be completely undone. This is why Jesus' rebuke rings so strongly. *“Thou savourest not the things that be of God but the things that be of men.”*

We, like Peter often get caught up in our flesh and blood earthly perspectives of how we think God should be. To those of us who find themselves doubting, challenging, and even fighting with God about things we really need to pay attention to what Jesus says next. *“If any man would come after me...”* This statement seems less of a command and more of a declaration. Those that follow Jesus will deny themselves and take up the cross. We will understand that our flawed earthly perspective doesn't show us the whole picture as to who God is. We will deny ourselves and find our identity only in him. The promise of the gospel goes far beyond this life. Jesus gifts us with a heavenly perspective. He gives us eyes to see and ears to hear that we would know who we are, and more importantly, just who he really is. The savior of the world.

God's Peace,  
Nicholas Kandoll