

Eastern Mission

Apostolic Lutheran Church of America New Year

March 2020

"And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. ¹⁰ And straightway coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him: ¹¹ And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. ¹² And immediately the spirit driveth Him into the wilderness. ¹³ And He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto Him."

Mark 1:9-13

Each year, the first Sunday of Lent directs our attention to the temptation of Jesus Christ. It is fitting that we should begin the Lenten season in this manner. In Adam, the fall of mankind begins with temptation, and so also in Christ, the redemption of the human race begins with temptation.

In his manner, Mark bears record of this event in his Gospel in a rather succinct way. What appears to be an unfolding drama, pitting good against evil is anything but uncertain. The Second Adam will not fail in His battle against the devil, the way the first Adam did. Christ will not fail in His encounter with Satan, **because He cannot fail**. Jesus Christ is the Son of the Most High God. **"Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."**

Romans 5:18

This is the best news for us as fallen sinners, because the Second Adam's victory is our victory as well. In His baptism, Christ joins Himself to the human race in order to save it. The season of Lent is a journey that leads us to mankind's redemption at the Cross. This is the new creation, from which there will be no fall. The Second Adam overcomes temptation for us, enlightens us with His teaching, suffers for us, dies for us, rises for us and ascends for us. **"Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection..."**

Romans 6:4-5

This is the essence of Lent. Life springing forth from death. The seed of the woman has crushed the head of the serpent. We have the forgiveness of sins though the blood of Christ and newness of life in His death and Resurrection. God bless you all with the blessed assurance of Christ's finished work in this Lenten season.

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

I Corinthians 15:55-57

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Chuck Bylkas