

Eastern Mission

Apostolic Lutheran Church of America

October 2024

“ Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. 54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. 56 He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. 57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. 58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever. 59 These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum. 60 Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? 61 When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? 62 What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? 63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. 64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. 65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. 66 From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. 67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? 68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. 69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.” John 6:53-69

This passage in the Gospel of John highlights a very important aspect of studying God’s Word. Sometimes we hear sayings that are difficult to understand. This was the case with the disciples of Jesus after the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand. In His discourse following that miracle, Jesus declares that He is the Bread of Life. The greatest need of the people is not earthly food or drink. They need Jesus. In fact, Jesus says that He is their food and drink “Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.” John 6:54 These sayings of Jesus, which foreshadows the celebration of the Lord’s Supper, emphasize the intimate union that God is establishing with His people. For many of Jesus’ disciples however, His words are too difficult to listen to “This is an hard saying; who can hear it?” John 6:60 Many of those disciples ceased to follow Jesus. When Jesus asks the Twelve if they too will go away, Peter makes this wonderful confession “Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. 69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.” John 6:68-69 Even if the words of Jesus appear to offend or are difficult to understand, Peter and the disciples are determined to remain with Jesus.

So it is with us as well. Even though there are many things in the Holy Scriptures that challenge or even offend us, we remain steadfast in God’s Word. The Bible is trustworthy because the God who gave us this Word is trustworthy. Faith tells us that everything that God

reveals in His Word is beneficial, because it teaches us about who God is, who we were in light of the Fall and who we now are in Christ. The death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ has given us the forgiveness of sins, Life and salvation. God grant us grace to continue to follow Jesus, who does indeed have the words of eternal life.

God continue to bless you for your steadfast support of the ministry of the Eastern Mission.

Yours in Christ,
Chuck Bylkas