

The Gospel of Mark – Close, But Not Quite

Mark 12:18-34 September 13, 2026

- Chief Priests in their Prestige
- Scribes with the intellect
- Elders with their prominent reputation
- Pharisees with their patriotic commitment
- Herodians with the political views (give to Cesar)

For the first and only time in the Gospel of Mark;

We are introduced to the Sadducees

WEALTHY & WORLDLY

*Aristocratic families, powerful and rich, noted for their arrogance and harshness
Small in number but big in reputation. Entitled, smug, and just plain rude*

Modernists: Cutting edge, enlightened to new things, not bound up like their parents' generation.

One historian wrote;

“They did not believe there was any life after death, and therefore there was no judgment, no rewards, no penalties.” And of course, according to them, there was no resurrection.

Though they believed in God, they did not believe in the spiritual or supernatural.

What a convenient way to live, accountable, in the end, to no one.

Some today believe in God but live like He doesn't matter, eternity isn't coming, and that they will never meet the Lord and personally account for the decisions they make.

They thought that this life was what this life was all about.

Danger: The idea that as long as you love God with your spirit, you can do whatever you want with your body.

HAHAHA

Now, Some think that the Sadducees would have been very solemn, almost sad people. *If you don't believe in the resurrection, you too would be very sad-you-see?!*

Scripture

While they held the prophets loosely and with little value, they held a rather firm grip on the Torah and their belief in God. (Must be in the first 5, or it doesn't jive.)

John 11 “I am the resurrection and the life.”

If you can discredit the teaching, then you can discredit the teacher.

READ Mark 12:18-23

The mistake: They didn't know Scripture as much as they thought they knew Scripture.

True: This was the Scriptural instruction given through Moses. (Pre-Law)

To preserve the family line and inheritance. If there were no children to take on the name and inheritance, the next brother in line was to marry his brother's widow.

Partial understanding leads to Misunderstanding - SMUG self-confident scenario

“How dumb to believe in a resurrection. Then she would have 7 husbands – duh”
A little bit of pompous sarcasm. But don't worry, Jesus is about to deflate their overly arrogant and self-admiring criticism.

We've learned that the Lord always has an answer.

He may not always give it, but He does always have it.

THE ANSWER (Mark 12:24-27)

Mistaken: To have gone astray, you have gotten yourself lost.

1. You do not know the Scriptures
2. You do not know the power of God

If you do not know your Bible you will find yourself **CONVINCED** of things that are strange and full of false ideas. – Counterfeit ideas and unbiblical beliefs that have drifted through the Treasure Valley.

NO ANCHOR - Ephesians 4:14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

THE POWER OF GOD: Strength and ability (Acts 1:8)

Many have struggled to endure and failed to live victoriously due to a diluted or missing understanding that there is nothing God is incapable of doing.

The REALITY of the RESURRECTION (26-27)

Jesus takes the Sadducees back to the first 5 books, the ones they know.

The Lord will meet you where you are, but He will not leave you where you are.

- Abraham 425 years dead
 - Isaac 405 years dead
 - Jacob (Israel) 350 years dead
- I AM the God of, not I WAS the God of.

OTHER PLACES (FOR OUR STUDY)

Hebrews 11:10 Abraham, future building... I go prepare a place for you.

By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Torah Testaments

- Gen. 2:7 Adam's lifeless body to a living one
- Gen. 5:24 pre-rapture rapture (life after this one Enoch)
- Gen. 22:5 servant stays, The boy and I will be back... Hebrews, resurrection
- Exodus: Israel's deliverance from Egypt. A nation that was dead and gone, alive somewhere, and then brought back. Happened again in May of 1948 never to be uprooted again. The fig tree that cursed, brought back to life (Romans 11)

In the Resurrection, what we will be like

- Body that will not wear out
- Special needs – when I get a new body
RESURRECTED BODIES 1 Corinthians 15:50-53
- (Molecular Biologist – Jesus walking through walls)
- Gold in the kingdom descriptions
- New Earth, no more sea. (Rev. 21:1)

Two resurrections (1 Thessalonians 4 & Rev. 20)

Relationships... *the next life will be different than this life.*

- Like the angels (We find out about them and us)
- My wife and I will talk of these days

One MISTAKE is to think that the next life will be just like this one.
WE DO NOT JUST PICK UP WHERE WE LEFT OFF HERE.

The other MISTAKE is to think that the next life won't be impacted by this one.
(1 Cor. 3) Not how big you think your calling is, but how faithful you were to it.

IF it all matters... what keeps us from getting lost in it.
How do we know what matters most? GREAT question! Let's find out.

No all Scribes are created equal.

This guy watches the philosophical and moves into the soulful

This man heard, listened, he observed... Jesus knows what He is talking about.

The edge may finally be coming off. Less of a trap and the closest thing we have this day of a genuine question. **(Critical thinking but also genuine curiosity)**

(John Randal – I have my question and at the right time I'm sending it)

Hmmm... This Jesus is pulling from Scripture, answers their question, and shows that we are wrong. I have something to go home and think about. But as I do, I have a question of my own.

READ MARK 12:28-34

THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

248 commandments and 365 prohibitions (613 precepts were imposed by the Pharisees, and if in conflict, it was debated which was most important and carried the most value.

“FIRST” commandment of all. (In order of importance)

The first part of Jesus' answer was known to everyone, for it was from the Shamma Israel, **“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!”**

The opening sentence of every synagogue worship service, from Deuteronomy 6:4

It was also **repeated** by every devout Jew morning and evening every day.

In fact, it was worn by the most serious in a tiny leather box called a phylactery, on the forehead and on the wrist while in prayer.

On the door post to their home was also hung the Shamma in a small round box called a mezuzah.

Everyone knew this part of Jesus answer. **It was the creed of Israel.**

Heart soul, mind and strength we're not intended as a specific breakdown on analysis, but in all consuming summary of what it meant to be fully devoted to loving God.

LOVE: To welcome, entertain, be fond of, to consider dear to you

Is God important to you?

How important is God to you?

Is God important to everything you are? (Heart, Soul, Mind, Strength)

(31) And coming in at a very close 2nd

Neighbor? (Luke 10:25)

Lev. 19:18 love your neighbor

God – People

Well... who is my neighbor? (Even sinners helps those whom they like)

Dose what is in their best interest

My lawn – Witness of Jesus

My car – I steward the things my heavenly Father has blessed me with

My family – the most important of all, and often first to be set aside

Do you take better care of people, things, or tasks?

We cannot love God and not love people.

Same Agapeo

1 John 4:20-21 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.

James 2:8 – If you show partiality, you commit sin. (Seats in the next sanctuary)

Galatians 5:14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: *"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."*

Romans 13: 8 & 10

Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.

Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

- If I love you I won't murder you, steal from you, lie to you, etc.
- If I love God, I will honor God, obey God, respect the will of God.

This is not an affection for God, it is a love for God.

(Marriage does not run long on like, it can run forever on love.)

"It does not matter if it is hard, it is right."

SCRIBE RESPONSE (32-33)

(33) It is MORE than

Like winning the lottery is more than adding up all your bank accounts

IT'S WORTH MORE THAN

The whole of burnt offerings

The whole of sacrifices

A genuine love for God is worth more than the entire sacrificial system combined

Galatians 3:24-25 TUTOR LAW FAITH

1 Samuel 15:22 "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams."

Fasting of sackcloth and ashes or ???

Blood of rams and bulls or obedience (revenge, lust, greed, etc.)

Living Sacrifice

Honorable but anemic

A son who does everything that his dad asks but has no relationship.

I love when they do their chores, but it's sitting in a field or watching a Boise Game, or a phone call talking about how their week was going. (BEST!)

Honest with himself and with the Lord

Natural allegiance did not keep him from agreeing with eternal truth.

Would you break ranks and leave behind what your circle is committed to?

There is an encouragement and a caution

"It is possible to be within an inch of Heaven, and go to Hell." – R. Kent Hugues

Agreeing vs. Receiving – will you fool so many that even the preacher at your own funeral will speak of your existence in heaven while you are actually burning in hell?

THE TRICKERY COMES TO A CLOSE BUT THE TRIAL IS STILL TO COME

You cannot out-smart Jesus

You cannot out-scripture Jesus

You cannot out-sacrifice Jesus (Which is why we don't have to try)

You don't earn God's love

While we were sinners, Christ died for us

A heart won by Christ and reconciled to the Father by grace, and not by works, is the most important/highest commandment. The most important principle, that God is first in all you are, not just all you do.