

Rev. Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church

Mark 12:18-27 | Badly Mistaken

July 11, 2021

WELCOME:

- Vacation: Dr. Dallas Bivins next Sunday and Omer Irby July 25.
- Please turn your Bibles to Mark 12:18-27
- Bibles in back—our gift to you.

REVIEW:

We are in the last week of Jesus' earthly life.

This is Wednesday of Passion Week.

Passion week includes all the events from Jesus' Triumphal entry on Monday ~~into~~ the city of Jerusalem to His crucifixion on Friday.

Monday was also called "lamb selection day" for the Passover.

The Jews were to bring a perfect lamb to be offered as a sacrifice for sin.

And for the next four days, the religious leaders would then test these lambs and scrutinize them—to make sure that they were indeed perfect for the sacrifice itself.

While that was taking place, God the Father was also preparing His own Son, Jesus Christ, to be the perfect—once and for all—sacrifice for mankind.

So, just as the Jews were having their lambs tested for four days, God the Father was also testing God the Son—four times.

For the past three Sundays, we watched Jesus pass the first two tests by the religious leaders.

Today we encounter test number three, this time from a group of staunch conservatives called the Sadducees.

Now keep in mind, as Jesus passes every test, He comes closer and closer to fulfilling God's Will.

On Friday, just two days from now, Jesus will be humiliated, beaten, and murdered on a Roman cross for the sole purpose of paying your sin debt.

And that's where we ended last week talking about tax debt, the government, and sin debt.

KEYPOINTS:

We must pay our tax debt, but only Jesus can pay your sin debt.

Jesus also taught
~~We also learned about~~ how we can live in two worlds simultaneously.

Honoring God does not mean that you have to dishonor the government.

Why?

Submission to your government is part of your submission to God.

Jesus told us to give the government what is rightly theirs and give God everything else.

Caesar owned the denarius, but he did not own the people.

Last week we witnessed a beautiful response to a trick question by the Pharisees and the Herodians.

So, yes, Jesus clearly passed test number two with an A+.

INTRODUCTION:

Today we'll witness Jesus navigate the waters of test question number three from the Sadducees.

This question is a silly little riddle that the Sadducees most likely have stumped the Pharisees with many times in the past.

~~The Pharisees are their archenemies.~~

The Sadducees probably asked this question many times over the years with no decent answer from the Pharisees.

How does Jesus handle test number three as the Lamb of God?

Let's find out!

Please stand for the reading and honoring of God's Word.

SCRIPTURE: Mark 12:18-27 CSB

Mark 12:18— *Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him and questioned him:*

Mark 12:19— *“Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, leaving a wife behind but no child, that man should take the wife and raise up offspring for his brother.,*

Mark 12:20— *There were seven brothers. The first married a woman, and dying, left no offspring.*

Mark 12:21— *The second also took her, and he died, leaving no offspring. And the third likewise.*

Mark 12:22— *None of the seven left offspring. Last of all, the woman died too.*

Mark 12:23— *In the resurrection, when they rise, whose wife will she be, since the seven had married her?"*

Mark 12:24— *Jesus spoke to them, "Isn't this the reason why you're mistaken: you don't know the Scriptures or the power of God?"*

Mark 12:25— *For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like angels in heaven.*

Mark 12:26— *And as for the dead being raised—haven't you read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the burning bush, how God said to him: **I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob?***

Mark 12:27— *He is not the God of the dead but of the living. You are badly mistaken."*

PRAY:

EXEGESIS:

Mark 12:18— *Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him and questioned him:*

Last week, Jesus passed test number two, and the Pharisees and the Herodians left with their tails between their legs.

It didn't take long for the Sadducees to hear about their failure from the Sanhedrin.

So they feel it's their turn to take a shot at Jesus—by themselves.

The Sadducees are a much smaller group of men than the Pharisees.

In fact, our Gospel writer, Mark, only mentions this one conversation with them. *specifically*

The Sadducees *only* worked in the Temple.

They were not out in public like the Pharisees.

They were of a priestly order like the Pharisees—but their work was based solely on the operations within the Temple.

That's why they were so upset when Jesus came in and starting turning over the tables a few days prior.

We would say that the Sadducees were theological conservatives, and the Pharisee's theological liberals.

The Sadducees didn't believe in a resurrection.

the Pharisees did
~~The Pharisees believed in the resurrection,~~ but their problem was that their theology didn't come from Scripture.

The Pharisees believed that people would have the same problems and sicknesses as before their resurrection.

Politically, the Sadducees' cooperated with Rome.

And Since they believed that life in this world is all there is, the Sadducees pursued power, wealth, and position.

The Sadducees were elitists.

They are the wealthiest and most powerful people in all of Israel.

They are known for their arrogance and severity with people.

They have a well-known reputation for being mean-spirited, superior, and self-righteous.

Josephus wrote: "*The Sadducees ... are even among themselves, rather boorish in their behavior, and in their intercourse with their peers are as rude as aliens.*"

Obviously, they are not popular among the Jewish people. *either*

They are most well known for confidently believing that there is no resurrection.

They are the only Jews who believe this.

They claim, that there is no mention or teaching of the resurrection in the Pentateuch, also known as the Torah or The Law.

In other words, the Sadducees only believe that the first five books of the Old Testament are the authentic Word of God.

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy

In a nutshell, they idolize Moses.

They did not accept the Prophets, Proverbs, or the Psalms.

So they rejected any possibility of a resurrection.

They were annihilationists, meaning that people will be "extinguished" after they die.

And the old joke goes like this, Sadducees don't believe in Heaven, and that's what makes them sad...you, see?

So they believed that there is no life after death.

Think about this, if there is no life after death, that means that there are no consequences for how you live your life today.

It means that there are no rewards for your good deeds and no penalties for your bad.

In other words, they believe that there is no judgment from God because you are accountable to no one.

And since the Sadducees believed that there is no judgment from God, that automatically means they don't need a Savior.

Back to...

Mark 12:18— Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him and questioned him:

KEYPOINT: #1

Just because you say or believe something doesn't make it true.

In fact, the Sadducees believe in their own lie about the resurrection.

Our beliefs about God must be grounded in the Word of God.

Back to Jesus
Mark 12:18— ...came to him and questioned him:

The picture here is that they are walking confidently, proud and smug.

Mark 12:19— "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, leaving a wife behind but no child, that man should take the wife and raise up offspring for his brother.

The Sadducees don't spend as much time with flattery as the Pharisees did just a few moments prior.

But they do call Him "Teacher." The old King James Version uses, "Master."

By calling Jesus "teacher," it's like they're trying to raise the crowd's expectations for Him to answer correctly—

But secretly hoping that He'll say the wrong thing so the Sadducees can label him as incompetent.

And if Jesus is an incompetent Bible teacher, then He surely can't be the Messiah.

Although they call Jesus "Teacher," ^{intention} note they have no purpose to learn anything from Him.

They have one goal with this conversation: making Him look like an inept teacher.

Verse 19 points back to a law in the OT.

That's the source material for this question.

The Sadducees are referring to...

cf. Deuteronomy 25:5— "When brothers live on the same property and one of them dies without a son, the wife of the dead man may not marry a stranger outside the family. Her brother-in-law is to take her as his wife, have sexual relations with her, and perform the duty of a brother-in-law for her.

cf. Deuteronomy 25:6— The first son she bears will carry on the name of the dead brother, so his name will not be blotted out from Israel.

This is called a levirate marriage— also known as a brother-in-law marriage.

A levirate marriage was a law that stated if a man died without sons— his brother would take the widow as a wife to provide a son for his dead brother.

That son would receive the dead father's inheritance, and the family line would not be broken.

The purpose of levirate marriage was to keep the inheritance within the tribe.

~~Its purpose was to keep a family from dying out.~~ *And to*

God, in His mercy for the widow, was keeping her from poverty and destitution.

Now, this law only applied if the surviving brother was single.

This law does not say that the brother was to divorce his current wife or take an additional wife.

This is an interesting law because it actually predates Moses and obviously the Mosaic law.

You can read the story of a man named Onan in Genesis 38:6–10.

He didn't want to do this —and God struck him dead.

The most popular Scripture passage on a levirate marriage comes from the book of Ruth, where a man named Boaz marries Ruth. (Ruth 2:1; 4:1–13).

So that's the context of the question. So let's get to the set-up.

Mark 12:20— *There were seven brothers. The first married a woman, and dying, left no offspring.*

Mark 12:21—The second also took her, and he died, leaving no offspring. And the third likewise.

Mark 12:22—None of the seven left offspring. Last of all, the woman died too.

Question:
Mark 12:23—In the resurrection, when they rise, whose wife will she be, since the seven had married her?"

Pause...now, gentlemen, if you were brother eight, what would you be saying to yourself when you found out that this woman died?

Whew! Praise God; the black widow is dead!

So, right from the start, we see the Sadducees taking this law out of context.

They are doing theological gymnastics with it.

This whole story and setup is stupid.

They're trying to prove how silly the Resurrection is.

They think they are clever with all this.

Because they stopped after seven brothers—the number seven represents “perfection or completion” from a biblical perspective.

They tragically believe that the subject of the resurrection is a joke.

Their question assumes that the future life will be just like this one—no changes whatsoever.

In other words, the Sadducees were asking Jesus, “How is it possible that one woman be married to seven men in heaven?”

Do you see the trick question?

The question itself breaks the law in Genesis.

cf. Genesis 2:24—This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh.

The Sadducees are implying that when everybody has been resurrected, the woman will have seven husbands at the same time in Heaven.

This clearly violates Genesis 2:24.

Like the Pharisees from last week, the Sadducees believe they are putting Jesus in a no-win situation.

They think they have Jesus cornered with only two options:

1. Jesus either speaks against marriage as one man and one woman
2. Denies the resurrection.

From the Sadducee's perspective, the resurrection doesn't make any sense according to the first five books of the Hebrew Bible.

And if the resurrection can't be taught clearly through the lens of the Torah, then the resurrection isn't real.

So let's look at what Jesus says.

Mark 12:24—Jesus spoke to them, "Isn't this the reason why you're mistaken: you don't know the Scriptures or the power of God?"

Jesus is not playing their game or following their rhetoric.

He turns the tables on them, just like He did with the Pharisees, by asking them a question.

Jesus says you are mistaken—"you have wandered" away from the truth.

"You have gone astray."

It's a kind way of saying, "Your wrong."

One Brother said this about verse 24, "*The audacity of Jesus' accusation of the Sadducees not knowing the Scripture— is like claiming that Wall Street knows nothing of finance!*"

Jesus is very bold.

How are they mistaken?

KEYPOINT:

They assume that the afterlife is going to be identical to this life.

Dear friends, please note that making assumptions on a Biblical truth will lead to heresy, unbelief, and idolatry.

Your false assumptions on Scripture will lead you away from God, not closer to Him.

Why?

Mark 12:24—...you don't know the Scriptures or the power of God?

Nearly every theological error *is* because we don't know the Scriptures.

In other words, Jesus says, you guys claim to be priests, and yet you don't even have the basics down.

You guys need to go to Sunday school.

There are many Scripture passages from the OT that deal with the subject of resurrection.

cf. Psalm 49:15—But God will redeem me
from the power of Sheol, SIAUR
for he will take me.

Many other psalms talk about the resurrection as well...

cf. Job 19:25—But I know that my Redeemer lives,
and at the end, he will stand on the dust.

cf. Job 19:26—Even after my skin has been destroyed,
yet I will see God in my flesh. wow!

The most convincing OT texts...

cf. Daniel 12:2—Many who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake,
some to eternal life, and some to disgrace and eternal contempt. → Hell
to Heaven

Question: Why weren't the Sadducees convinced of the resurrection with these passages?

Answer
Because they didn't believe anything outside the first five books of the Bible.

They thought that these texts were simply commentary and not authoritative like the Torah.

KEYPOINT: #3
We are led astray when we don't trust in the whole counsel of the Bible.

There are churches today that teach that you don't need the OT, or the Ten Commandments.

There are people who only believe in the Gospels.

And dear friend, that is simply not true. Jesus reveals that to us here.

② We're Teachable

① If the Sadducees read the whole counsel of God and had a teachable spirit, maybe they would have realized that this woman was the bride of Christ in Heaven.

But they didn't read the Song of Songs.

They didn't consider Psalm 45—the Royal Wedding Psalm, Scripture.

They weren't listening to Jesus with His parable of the Ten Virgins. (Matthew 25:1)

Yes, dear friends, we are led astray when we don't read or trust in the whole counsel of the Bible.

Back to

Mark 12:24—...you don't know the Scriptures or the power of God?

KEYPOINT: #4

It's impossible to experience the power of God apart from the Bible.

The Sadducees prided themselves on their Bible knowledge.

And yet, Jesus is showing them they are not as smart as they think they are.

Their problem with Scripture is the same problem we have today.

KEYPOINT: #5

Our biggest problem today is that we 1) don't read or 2) interrupt Scripture incorrectly.

Another Many people The biggest problem that we have is placing ourselves in the narrative of the Bible.

In other words, we think this Book is about us. It's not; it's about Jesus.

So Behind this stupid little story that Sadducees Pharisees conjure up— is the assumption that nothing changes if the resurrection is actually true.

They assume that life after death is just more of the same thing.

How sad is that?

That all the relationships on earth would be continued in heaven with all the same problems.

This is where philosophy gets you.

Philosophy demands rationalism.

In other words, if I don't understand it, I won't believe it.

That's an extremely dangerous view.

That view leads to the broad road that leads to destruction. (Matt. 7:13)

Mark 12:24—...you don't know the Scriptures or the power of God?

Question—Why didn't these Sadducees know the power of God?

Because they are putting limitations on an infinite God.

They are reducing God's power to what they think they know!

In other words, they are lowering God's authority and raising their own.

And when we do this, two things usually happen:

1. We're putting ourselves on the same playing field as God.
2. We become unteachable.

We become unteachable because we believe we have everything all figured out.

Mark 12:25— For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like angels in heaven.

Notice here how Jesus is still trying to teach them.

They are unteachable, but Jesus, in His mercy, is trying to save their wretched souls. *from hell.*

Secondly, Jesus' choice of words in verse 25 is very interesting.

To marry, is a man's role. To be given in marriage is a woman's role.

According to Jesus, neither role is relevant after the resurrection.

How does Jesus know this?

Because He came from Heaven!

Author
He's the designer of marriage!

Thirdly, notice the simplicity of Jesus' answer— verses the complexity of their question.

Jesus' answer is so is simple—so straightforward: *There is no marriage in heaven!*

The Sadducees made a fundamental mistake with the Scriptures that they claimed to be experts in.

And when you build your life on a fundamental mistake—everything is unstable.

It all starts in...

cf. Genesis 1:1—In the beginning— God...

We either believe this, or we don't.

And if we do believe ~~this~~ ~~if we believe~~ that God created life from the very beginning, then it's not hard to believe that God can recreate life.

The Apostle Paul asks this question in Acts 26:8, Why do any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead?

Jesus is trying to teach the Sadducees that ^{the resurrection} ~~this~~ not just a minor change, but everything changes.

They had failed to see that God's power will make everything different.

And one of those things is marriage.

The resurrection changes the marriage relationship.

Let's see how...back to...

Mark 12:25— For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like angels in heaven.

Jesus did not say, "If they rise."

He said, "When they rise."

Next, we know that marriage is a God-ordained Earthly union.

The primary purpose of marriage is for procreation and companionship.

But in Heaven, Jesus is telling us that there is no need for procreation because there is no death.

Lastly, notice that Jesus says people are like angels.

Luke's gospel says, For they can no longer die, because they are like angels and are children of God. (Luke 20:36)

Angels are eternal beings who do not need to marry or bear children like humans.

Also Jesus specified angels in Heaven—meaning good angels in Heaven—not fallen angels on Earth.

Thirdly, He doesn't say people become angels. —like / compares—

In the resurrection, you will have what's called a resurrection body.

That's a different sermon for a different day—but it's all good news my friends.

Mark 12:26— And as for the dead being raised—haven't you read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the burning bush, how God said to him: **I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob?**

Notice where Jesus takes these Sadducees in the Bible.

He quotes Exodus 3:6, where it specifically deals with their hero, Moses.

He didn't take them to the Psalms, Job, or the book of Daniel that we looked at a few minutes ago.

He takes them to their Torah—the part of the Bible which they accepted as true Scripture.

The part of the Bible that they claimed said nothing about the resurrection.

Why does Jesus do this?

He's making the point that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were dead a long time before God even spoke to Moses.

They've been dead for at least 500 years.

BW Exodus 3:6 is not the only place where Jesus could have taken these Sadducees in their Hebrew Bible.

+ cf. **Genesis 5:24**— Enoch walked with God; then he was not there— because God took him.

What's that sound like to you?

God raptured Enoch!

This verse is about life, not death.

God took Enoch from this life and placed him directly into the next.

Jesus also could have taken the Sadducees to

Famous Passage
+ cf. **Genesis 22:5**— Then Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey. The boy and I will go over there to worship; then we'll come back to you."

This implies that somehow somehow— Abraham believed that God was going to resurrect Isaac after Abraham sacrificed him as an offering.

+ **Mark 12:26**— ... I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob?

Concept of the resurrection is not new.
It doesn't say, "I was the God."

It would be silly for God to say that he is the God of dead men.

What's the point of that?

Jesus is trying to teach the Sadducees that God the Father still has a relationship with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. *to this day: forever*

Mark 12:27— He is not the God of the dead but of the living. You are badly mistaken.”

Jesus ends the conversation.

Jesus is not going to debate what He just taught them.

Truth is truth whether you choose to believe it or not.

You are badly mistaken— This is the second time Jesus tells them that.

Can't you just picture the Sadducees trying to swallow that pill?

Now, our Gospel writer Mark doesn't say how the crowd or the Sadducees responded.

However, Matthew records that the crowds were astonished. (Mt. 22:33).

Luke says that the Pharisees were impressed, and the Sadducees were silenced. (Lk 20:39).

Isn't that interesting, the *Sadducees* Pharisees were not repentant but silenced.

How do you respond when you find out that you have been entirely wrong on an issue that you've thought you've been quite right all these years?

PREACH:

The Sadducees had a wrong view of God because they didn't know God.

They thought they did, but they were dead wrong.

If they knew God, they would have worshipped Jesus as God— instead of asking him a dumb question.

I thought about titling this message, "There are no dumb questions — except this one."
~~There is so much to talk about when it comes to the subject of resurrection.~~ *↳ SMARKY*

Volumes of books have been written about death, resurrection, the afterlife, Heaven, and Hell for the past two thousand years.

The one thing that I want to leave you with today deals with the nature of God.

The very nature of who God is— demands a resurrection.

Because throughout the OT, God has made promises to His people.

Now, you and I break our promises, but God does not.

Although death will separate you from your friends and family here on Earth temporarily,

Death will not separate you from God for one nano-second.

Because Death doesn't change your relationship with God.

It simply brings you into a new chapter.

God is using this life to prepare you for the next.

Think about this...

God is especially using all the trials and pain and heartache that you're going through for your good and His glory.

In other words, God is preparing you for the moment that you die.

~~It sounds a little strange so stay with me—~~

One of the reasons you continue to come back to church week after week is 1) preparation and 2) community.

As the church, we are to bear one another's burdens. (Gal 6:2)

Are you prepared for your next health crisis or financial problem, or relationship issue?

It's coming...

If you don't know the Word of God and you haven't been applying the Word of God to your life—then there's a good chance you're going to freak out when it happens.

And dear friend, if you're freaking out on the smaller things in life, how are you going to handle dealing with death?

Now, we know that there is a resurrection because Jesus said...

cf. John 11:25— Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me, even if he dies, will live."

Jesus proved this verse to be true by walking out of the grave.

cf. Revelation 1:17— I am the First and the Last and the Living One. I was dead, but look—I am alive forever and ever.

And because Jesus is alive means that He offers eternal life to you.

Eternal life is not automatic.

Jesus says this...

cf. John 11:26— Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. ~~Do~~
you believe this?"

To have eternal life means that you must believe that Jesus is God.

If you believe that Jesus is God— then please know this.

Death is nothing to fear.

Yes, I understand that fear is a human emotion.

But please don't let your human feelings overwhelm God's truth.

God tells us through His Word He will make all things new through the resurrection.

Think about this with me...

Death is the worst thing that sin can do.

So if death is the worst thing that you'll experience in this life, but Jesus conquered sin and death, what's that mean?

It means —death has lost its power.

God has preserved His relationship with you— for eternity.

He will give you a new body that doesn't sag or jiggle!

Everything about you and your personality will be glorified through Christ.

Your love, humor, charm, will be more loving, more witty, more charming, and more glorious than ever! Why?

Because you're no longer stained with sin. - Truly Alive

Please don't think that Heaven will be an extension of the life you live now—that's human rationalistic thinking.

Let's learn a lesson from the Sadducees today. They expected the future to be like the past.

Jesus told them that they were dead wrong.

Expecting the future to be just like the past limits our faith.

Dear friends, please know this—The same God who gave us life in the first place—has the power to raise us to new life.

Lastly, please also know that there are two resurrections, one to life and one to death.

If you do not have a relationship with God in this life, you will not have one in Heaven. the next

That's just common sense.

If you don't want God on Earth, you certainly won't want Him in Heaven.

Please know that if you don't have a relationship with God, your sins are not forgiven.

You don't have peace with God.

You still have a sin debt that must be paid and will be paid by you.

As the bumper sticker says, "Good people don't go to Heaven, forgiven sinners do."

If you don't allow Jesus to pay your sin debt—you will not be resurrected to life but death.

You will be resurrected to a very real place called hell to pay for your sins for eternity.

And it's in this place where you will not experience God's grace, mercy, and kindness like you are now— but you also can't get entirely away from God.

cf. Psalm 139:8— If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.

In other words, you will experience the full wrath of God, knowing the gospel but denying it.

Dear friends, I said it last week; I'll repeat it.

Hell is too hot and too long for you to be wrong.

- Please don't be mistaken like those Sadducees.

PRAYER ROOM:

BAPTISM:

PRAYER:

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