



## The Gospel According to Luke Wk. 98 “The Afterlife” By Pastor Jody May

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### Luke 20:27-40

#### Sadducees Ask About the Resurrection

<sup>27</sup> There came to him some Sadducees, those who deny that there is a resurrection, <sup>28</sup> and they asked him a question, saying, “Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, having a wife but no children, the man must take the widow and raise up offspring for his brother. <sup>29</sup> Now there were seven brothers. The first took a wife, and died without children. <sup>30</sup> And the second <sup>31</sup> and the third took her, and likewise all seven left no children and died. <sup>32</sup> Afterward the woman also died. <sup>33</sup> In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had her as wife.”

<sup>34</sup> And Jesus said to them, “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage, <sup>35</sup> but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage, <sup>36</sup> for they cannot die anymore, because they are equal to angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. <sup>37</sup> But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the passage about the bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. <sup>38</sup> Now he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for all live to him.” <sup>39</sup> Then some of the scribes answered, “Teacher, you have spoken well.” <sup>40</sup> For they no longer dared to ask him any question.

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#### Introduction:

This debate is the last one that Jesus will have with the Religious leaders before the crucifixion. This is the last verbal confrontation He will have with those that are seeking to kill Him, those that do not want Him for their Messiah. After this he spends His time pouring into His disciples making sure they were prepared for His death. What would be the **most agonizing time in their lives, when they would lose hope, and doubt their faith in Him.**



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I for one am very glad and encouraged that our Father would ordain that this topic would be handled before Jesus’s exit out of this world. Jesus had taught in other stories, that He believed in an afterlife, but here in our story today Jesus not only states He believes in it, but He gives some very clear and specific parameters about it. His views are generated from His beliefs and knowledge in the OT, they were then demonstrated in His own life, and the apostles expounded on them in the early days of the church.

This past week some of you already know that Clay Whatley’s mother passed away. She had suffered dementia over the last 4 years rarely leaving her home nor entertaining guests. Over the last month she had suffered acute appendicitis, and after her surgery she continually got worse and never recovered. On Thursday I called my friend and I was ok with him until I prayed for Him on the phone. My prayer was one of lament and thanksgiving.

You see my mother passed away in a very similar way, and I watched her die from the same complications and not only that, but our moms seemed to come from the same stock. Both ladies were southern bells, didn’t like to be seen without their hair and makeup, both loved their kids to a fault, they loved music and loved to sing, and they both were followers of Jesus.

I prayed and thanked God that at that moment that according to Phil. 1:23 & 2 Cor. 5:6-8 that when we die, we are present with the Lord. That means our moms are with Christ and there was no more pain. And according to the New Creation we see in Revelation they will have a new glorified body the next time we see them, having regained the ability to know their children, and celebrate with us the goodness of Jesus, singing to the top of their new lungs, and hugging those that are precious to them with new strengthened arms. That is the promise for the Christian, it is our promise family, and today we will learn some of the things we all will encounter in the afterlife when it is our time to join our deceased loved ones.

There is though, a danger I want to make us all aware of today. The Sadducees are to be pitied I believe more than the Pharisees in the scripture. The Pharisees were blind to Jesus and yet some of them came to faith in Jesus, because they



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believed in all the OT. So, when the Spirit showed them, like Paul, who Jesus was they believed in Him **because of the acceptance of all of God’s Word**. The Sadducees though only believed in part of the Bible, and on top of that they didn’t believe in the resurrection. Their whole life was wrapped up in their **immediate physical lives** for to them there was no afterlife. That’s how we remember their name, because they were SAD-U-CCEE because they didn’t believe in the resurrection.

### The DANGER we need to be aware of:

The danger they suffered from is a danger we can easily fall into as well, so I want to state it, and show its’ implications:

1. **DANGER:** People like to read the Bible so that they get their best life (what they want) now...

The Sadducees interpreted the scriptures not to learn about God, not to become aware of their sin, not to glorify in who their God was but they read their Bible to use it as a tool to keep their way of life. **This led them to this DOCTRINE:** Justification, not based on Faith, but in the Mosaic Covenant, was rewarded by governing the Jews.

The Sadducees didn’t believe in the resurrection, they didn’t believe in angels, and they didn’t believe in one’s Spirit. Once you died your body and soul both perished and went into the ground. They were comparable to what some of our founding Father’s were, Deists, someone that believed God created the world and then left us to fend for ourselves. You should know by this point there are places in the OT that teach about the resurrection:

### **Daniel 12:2 ESV**

<sup>2</sup>And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall **awake**, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

### **Isaiah 26:19 ESV**



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Your dead shall live; their bodies shall rise.

You who dwell in the dust, awake and sing for joy!  
For your dew is a dew of light,  
and the earth will give birth to the dead.

There are also multiple places in the Psalms (49 & 139) where even King David talks about it (Psalm 16:9). Not to mention the extra writings of Rabbis, the apocrypha, which support these beliefs. The belief in the Resurrection was a popular belief for the Jews, well for most that is.

The only portion of scripture the Sadducees held to was the Pentateuch, the first 5 books of the Bible, those things that were written by Moses. Believing this was the most important part of scripture and since they did not see any evidence to the resurrection in the Pentateuch, they looked at the promises in the Mosaic Covenant to only be tied to this life.

Their highest priority was to maintain the family lineages so that they would keep the land, and hopefully outlast the Roman invaders. All their hopes were tied into worldly wealth and how good could they make their life comfortable now. Which was easy for them because these guys were career politicians living as royalty in the capital. They had come to power when the Greeks had invaded the Holy Land so from that point on, they always worked with foreign powers to keep their seat of power. You see the High Priests of the temple were Sadducees as well they made up the majority of the Sanhedrin that was the Elder Governance system which controlled the Jews. The Jews hated them more than they did the Pharisees.

Here's what we have. A group of people, that ran the temple, knew who had come to the temple to offer sacrifices, knew how much you sacrificed and had control of your family's lineage that was stored in the temple. They loved how they read the scriptures for it kept them in power over their people controlling their lives of comfort. Their downfall was Greed. Their Justification, was in who they were in this life, based on their control through the temple, to read the scripture any other way would be to give it all up!



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Now, in light of those facts, let’s go back to our passage and go through their argument with Jesus as they seek to put Him down so they could maintain their power in government.

<sup>27</sup> There came to him some Sadducees, those who deny that there is a resurrection, <sup>28</sup> and they asked him a question, saying, “Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies, having a wife but no children, the man must take the widow and raise up offspring for his brother. <sup>29</sup> Now there were seven brothers. The first took a wife, and died without children. <sup>30</sup> And the second <sup>31</sup> and the third took her, and likewise all seven left no children and died. <sup>32</sup> Afterward the woman also died. <sup>33</sup> In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had her as wife.”

**They are basing their argument from the Pentateuch, from Deuteronomy, where Moses has built a structure to ensure the preservation of wealth and land titles for the 12 clans.**

### **Deuteronomy 25:5 ESV**

<sup>5</sup> “If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the dead man shall not be married outside the family to a stranger. Her husband’s brother shall go in to her and take her as his wife and perform the duty of a husband’s brother to her.

**Above all else the highest goal you could attain to them is the proliferation of the line and the securing of your land.** You all read this week about the Daughters of Zelophehad in Numbers 27. You saw the importance of making in the law stipulations in case you didn’t have sons.

OK, for someone that doesn’t believe in the afterlife they sure do show a lot of concern for this possible dilemma. This argument they had contrived though was not a new argument, it was something they had posed to the Pharisees and it was used as a tool to stump them to show that thinking about the afterlife was ridiculous.

**The shared DANGER:**



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The Pharisees unlike the Sadducees loved to talk about the afterlife. They discussed whether you would be resurrected with new clothes on, or your old ones or if you would be ‘naked’. They even had theories about tunnels in the earth so that if a Jew died outside of Jerusalem, they would end up on the day of resurrection back in Jerusalem. To them the Resurrection was one of those topics that was supported in the OT, and in other historical documents that left one to speculate about it.

The Pharisees did the same thing as the Sadducees as in they picked their favorite parts and neglected the study of the rest of it. Just like their physical life, the **afterlife was only about being rewarded for the good you could do**. Both the Pharisees and the Sadducees missed that the **whole point of scripture**, that it was about one man, the Messiah, redeeming His people because Father God made a promise to them that He would redeem them, and that is why He alone should be praised for what He does alone! Jesus of course realizes the problem and begins to correct them:

**The TRUTH from Jesus:**

**Matthew 22:29 ESV**

**<sup>29</sup> But Jesus answered them, “You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God.**

Any time someone makes an error in their beliefs it is usually because they just don’t know enough, **OR THEY DENIE**, about the scriptures. They have either taken something out of context or they only look at the things they like. Jesus then points out that they neither knew the power of God. Of course, they don’t they have been depending on their wits and how they can keep a firm grip on control on people, while working with the foreign invaders.

They knew not the power of God because they **weren’t looking for it**, they didn’t need it, because their belief was dead, it needed a resurrection. There was no room for the gospel in their belief system because they were so enamored by



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how they could **use God’s word to get what they wanted** at that moment, a cushy life.

Family don’t get caught in the lie that the Bible is all about giving you the earthly desires and pleasures you want now. **The Bible IS NOT a cookbook or a road map for life.** It is the **testament** of God’s Work calling us to repentance and obedience to the one man, Jesus the Resurrected Christ/Messiah.

It is by Jesus’ Holy life, that a perfect sacrifice was produced, giving the precise redemption needed for our sin, by the only pure blood ever spilled on the earth. The Bible is about **His story** of a love for a Glorious Father that loved us so much to send His only begotten Son, that even when we knew Him not, He still died for us!

The Bible is not about giving me a verse a day to help me live as if quoting it makes a magical bubble around me for that day. The Bible is about me **being equipped to suffer well** in this fallen existence so that I may bear the image of Christ, making much of Him. It is not for my cushy life **now**, but the Bible has been graciously given so that by reading it **I endure to the end**. So that I may bask in His presence when the end of time comes, in a resurrected body, enjoying Him forever!

It tells me of my **Justification by Faith** in all of this so that I may be free from any type of work. The whole of the Bible explains that any attempt, to only take a part of it and try to make some way of life from it (Mormonism, Jehovah Witnesses, Islam, Buddhism, Scientology, and all forms of postmodern thinking that leads to governmental models like Communism that puts hope in man), other than the Gospel, then we are guilty of the highest treason and deserve **eternal death** (Galatians 1:8) according to the Apostles.

**To know the power of God is to know how it is you were saved.** That through the authority of Scripture alone we are saved through Grace alone in the giving of the Gift of Faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone, all to the Glory of God alone. Anything added or taken away is cursed by the God. So family, here’s the **Truth** I want you all to walk away from here this morning!



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2. **TRUTH:** God wrote the Bible so we would know our best life is still to come...  
Vs.

**DANGER:** People like to read the Bible so that they get their best life  
(what they want) now...

<sup>34</sup> And Jesus said to them, “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage, <sup>35</sup> but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage, <sup>36</sup> for they cannot die anymore, because they are equal to angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. <sup>37</sup> But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the passage about the bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. <sup>38</sup> Now he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for all live to him.” <sup>39</sup> Then some of the scribes answered, “Teacher, you have spoken well.” <sup>40</sup> For they no longer dared to ask him any question.

### There is no need for children

Let’s start with, “Equal/Rather they’re like angels.” That’s a verb that Luke coins, *isangeloi*, “equal to angels,” used only here. The angels were all created at one time, they don’t procreate, and they don’t die. Their number is fixed. There’s no need for marriage because there’s no need for propagation. There’s no need for replacement. There’s no need for continuity in the race. And if that is the case since God before time had elected some for Salvation then in eternity **that is still a fixed number** and all who were to be saved have been saved.

According to Johnny Mac<sup>1</sup> - There’s also no need for that kind of union, a sexual one that is a blessing from God, because having a relationship with God and Christ as our true bridegroom and having a perfect relationship with everybody else in the glory of heaven precludes the necessity of having any other lesser relationships. Let me talk plain, sexual relations will not be needed because 1<sup>st</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/42-248/the-savior-silences-the-sadducees>



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there is no need for procreation and 2<sup>nd</sup> all our relationships will be fulfilling emotionally without it.

But then he tells them, Look don't worry about it you won't be there anyways, so you don't have to worry about that dilemma.... As a Son of this age, you're not worthy...

Then as if the logic of the explanation wasn't enough, Jesus shoots a hole in their doctrine by showing them that the **Pentateuch DOES speak of Resurrected and Eternal life**. So along with point two today that - **TRUTH: God wrote the Bible so we would know our best life is still to come**... I want us to see 3 things from scripture, for Scripture is our authority of why the best IS still to come:

- **God is the God of the Living!**

### **Exodus 3:6 ESV**

And he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

That was the text that Jesus was alluding to here in Luke.

His point was that "Moses" spoke of God as *presently* being "the God of Abraham, ... Isaac, ... and Jacob"—all of whom had died. He inferred from this that God could only be their God—then—if they would rise from the dead eventually. God will raise all people eventually. "All live to Him" in that sense. Therefore "to Him all are alive" (NIV). Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whose souls are presently alive, will experience bodily resurrection at the Second Coming, and will live in the kingdom as "sons of the resurrection" (v. 36).<sup>2</sup>

**This was also an early church belief as Stephen recounts it in his speech:**

### **Acts 7:32 ESV**

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



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‘I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob.’ And Moses trembled and did not dare to look.

The author of Hebrews sees these men as having saving faith:

### Hebrews 11:13-14 ESV

<sup>13</sup> These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. <sup>14</sup> For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland.

These dead patriarchs were told they would receive, **God can't break a promise**, I guess He'll just have to resurrect them to make sure they get it! That's the same promise for us too! We have been promised so many things in eternity but because of sin and the decay of our physical bodies we will have to spend some time waiting for that ultimate fulfillment. But again, as I said in the beginning, you won't be bored because to be absent from the world is to be present with God. When we believe in that great Truth, Christian, you can endure anything this world throws at you, I hope that is you today church family!

Here's the second thing we look to as we believe that our best life is still to come!

- **We will rise with a new body!**

### 1 Corinthians 15:50-58 ESV

<sup>50</sup> I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. <sup>51</sup> Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all **be changed**, <sup>52</sup> in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be **raised imperishable**, and **we shall be changed**. <sup>53</sup> For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. <sup>54</sup> When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:



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“Death is swallowed up in victory.”

<sup>55</sup> “O death, where is your victory?

O death, where is your sting?”

<sup>56</sup> The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. <sup>57</sup> But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>58</sup> Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

I really can't say anything more than what Paul just said here except I have always liked the movie Highlander, it should have won an academy award according to Ricky Bobby, but I can't wait to get a body like that! How about you!? Do you believe today that your best life is still to come, I hope so!

- **We shall live forever with God.**

### **1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 ESV**

<sup>13</sup> But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. <sup>14</sup> For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. <sup>15</sup> For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. <sup>16</sup> For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so **we will always be with the Lord.**

Nothing but NOTHING shall ever separate us again from God. No more fear, no more guilt, no more shame, no more hiding, no more embarrassment, nothing breaks our relationship with God because through Jesus' work it has been made perfect. In the end we will experience the type of relationship with the Father that Jesus had, we will know Him fully when we see Jesus fully, glorious and resurrected. To always be with the Lord means even the work we will do will always find success, it will always be rewarding, and it will always account for



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something because sin is no longer in the way. Always with the Lord means always, in a never dying body, never plagued by sin again!

Your best life is still to come my family, believe in what Jesus believed, and let that fuel you these next days in light of a crazy election. Because your best life is not about now it is about the glorious tomorrows in eternity with our God.

### PRAYER

### COMMUNION

### BENEDICTION

#### Hebrews 13:20-21

<sup>20</sup> Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, <sup>21</sup> equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.