

Luke 20:27-38

One thing is for certain, the only way to eternal life is through Jesus Christ. Is that hard for us to understand or just hard to believe?

Jesus was teaching in the temple when some Sadducees came to test and trick him. One thing you need to know when trying to trick someone is how they think. It's hard to trick Jesus anyway, ok, impossible to trick Jesus but if you are going to give it a try you should do your homework and try to understand how he thinks what he teaches and what he believes.

For example you've probably heard of people try to discourage Christians by saying, "oh I would never believe in a god that takes all the fun out of life." Well neither would I. People are often turned off by Christianity because they have a misconception of what it is.

Some Sadducees come and try to trick Jesus about the resurrection. They don't believe in the resurrection. Perhaps you've heard that Sunday School song about wanting to be one of Jesus' sheep, one of Jesus' followers. **One verses says, "I don't want to be a Sad-du-cee, I don't want to be a Sad-du-ce, cause their so sad-you-see, I just want to be a sheep"** They are sad because they don't believe in the resurrection.

Either they don't understand what the resurrection is so they don't believe in it. Or they don't believe in the resurrection so they don't understand it. I don't know which it is. Maybe a little bit of both. But before we beat up on the Sadducees we need to remember that one of the reasons they didn't believe in the resurrection was that they were concrete black and white thinkers. If there couldn't see it, or prove it they didn't believe it. It's hard to believe in things you can't see or prove and don't understand. So they didn't believe in Angels, miracles or the resurrection.

So they didn't understand that the resurrected life, the life we live after we die and Jesus raises us up from the dead. They didn't understand that the resurrected life was different than this life. They thought it was the same. They thought it went by the same rules in this life, you got hungry, thirsty, you lived you died. For example they come up with this theoretical situation to trick Jesus. A man marries a woman and he dies. There are no children so by custom the dead man's brother is obligated to marry her to help her produce heir. As the story goes one brother after another marries this woman until all 7 brothers are dead and the woman is dead.

I was trying to figure out why these brothers were marrying this widow. I thought maybe the 2nd one married her because she was good looking, the 3rd because she was still pretty good looking, the 4th maybe out of devotion to the family, the 5th maybe devotion to the dead brother and the 6th devotion to the custom of marrying your brother's widow. The 7th, don't you think it's because he's not too smart? 6 of your brothers married this woman. I don't want to be superstitious but they all died after they married her.

The woman no doubt would be looking for security, I wonder if there were insurance policies in place. Maybe she married the brothers because she already knew the family.

7 brothers are dead and the woman is dead. So here is the question the Sadducees put forth. "Whose wife is she?".

The Sadducees were strict followers of the law. They only believed what they could see. If you can't see a life with God after the resurrection how do you achieve eternal life? How does one carry on once you die? They believed that if there is eternal life, it was through your children.

These days you hear of people trying to relive their childhood through their children or trying to experience things or achieve things they couldn't for whatever reason in their own life, so they try to do it through their children. The Sadducees believed that you achieved eternal life, you carried on, after death through your children.

So you see the flaw in their thinking, each brother marries the woman to achieve an heir. The Sadducees think that in the resurrection the same rules apply. They think you still need an heir to achieve eternal life. **They don't realize that eternal life is life with Jesus. Eternal life is life with Jesus, before and after the resurrection.**

There are a lot of ways that people try to attain eternal life. If we ever get to the point where we can stop denying our death, when we accept the reality that yes, we will die some day, it's a tough pill to swallow. It's tough because you realize we are all like dust in the wind to quote the song. We are here today and gone tomorrow and will anyone know we even existed? So you can see how some people will seek to rectify that through their heirs. I know this one man of means who likes to commission statues his name is credited on a plaque of each one. Statues last a long time so people will see his name for years to come. People try to make their mark. Try to prove their worth to the world.

We don't need to make our mark. We don't need to prove our worth to the world. **Our worth was shown when Jesus chose us as his own, in baptism. What greater worth could you have than to be chosen by Jesus to be his child?**

I think that children's song holds a lot of wisdom. We think children books and songs are simple but a lot of them carry great wisdom. The song gives us a lot to think about.

I just want to be a sheep. I just want to be a sheep. And I pray the Lord my soul to keep. I just want to be a sheep.