

**Resurrection Correction**

**Mark 12:18-27**

1 Peter 3:15 - perhaps a familiar verse; "...but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect..." This is the idea, the concept of being able to give a defense for what we believe and how imperative that is. No doubt there are times when we are called upon to be able to do this. We all experience this, this opportunity that will arise. Whether or not someone comes to you and challenges you as strong as the leaders have challenged Jesus in the gospel of Mark, regardless, you have these opportunities where you can give "...a reason for the hope that is in you..." and you're called to do that. You're called to be able to do that, to be able to defend, to be able to offer that defense - the Greek word "apologia" or "apologetics" - to be able to partake in apologetics in defending what we do, in fact, believe and know to be true as revealed in Scripture. And as so many things in the Christian life, in this specific discipline and area, Jesus again is our model. He is our standard. He is the one who perfectly fulfills what this looks like, to be able to engage in this manner of defending the faith and to do it well, precisely, and to get right to the point and to be able to honor God in the process.

That's really where we find ourselves in our study of Mark's gospel in this time, at the very end of Christ's life where everyone is challenging Him - controversy after controversy - and a new wave comes, and a new group comes to try and win some argument, some verbal jousting with Jesus of some sort so as to make Him tripped up and looking foolish and to exalt themselves as the Jewish leadership. And we've been seeing this. And this all was kicked off because of the way in which Jesus entered into Jerusalem for Passover week. He was welcomed in, people declaring Him really to be the King, the Messiah. And the way that He came into Jerusalem this obviously got the attention of all the Jewish leaders. They weren't happy with that. The attention was off of them, and they felt that they were losing control. You add to that, the very next day that Jesus went into the temple and attacked the temple mount, took control of the temple mount, declared judgment upon what was taking place there at the house of God. And its intentions were not being fulfilled as God would have them to be fulfilled. So, this stirred up the people, and that's what led to the challenge of Jesus'

own authority that came from really the Sanhedrin, those chief priests, those scribes, those elders that came up to Jesus and said, who do you think you are? You can just come in here and start turning tables over? You can come in here acting like you own the place? What authority do you have to be able to do this, to act in this way? And they obviously were not wise in picking this kind of fight with Jesus. He turned the tables on them and showed just how little they really knew because of how wrapped up in the opinion of men they were so that they're best response to Jesus in the midst of debate is "we don't know." And they officially made themselves look like the fools they were.

Jesus then went on and basically explained and predicted, yet again, His death, how not only did you have wicked and evil men that were leading Israel and Israel in the past because God sent prophets in the Old Testament and they killed those prophets and persecuted them. And in the same way, Jesus tells the story about these basic servants that are coming to these tenants that own this vineyard, that are watching it for the owner, and in the process, they're killing each servant that comes representing an Old Testament prophet that came to the nation of Israel that was then killed. Ultimately, Jesus goes farther and says the owner's own son, the heir, the rightful heir to the vineyard, goes to these tenants, and the tenants, in fact, killed him as well. Jesus predicting again His own death, that He Himself is that Son that is here. And just as the wicked evil leaders of the past of the nation of Israel, so to now, you have it at its kind of climax, its apex here with these current men leading the nation, that Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, would come and they wouldn't recognize Him. Instead, that they would kill Him, He, being the significant one, the heir to the vineyard, the cornerstone of the building, the One who actually does have the authority and rules over all.

This led to more controversy, more challenges. As we saw last time, the unlikely team of the Pharisees and the Herodians, this religious group and politically driven group, coming together, although they normally would not see themselves as joining together to try and challenge Jesus about paying taxes to Caesar, hoping that Jesus would say the thing that got the people happy and get the Romans upset with Him, but instead, Jesus makes it very clear that you are accountable, not just to God, but to the governing authorities over you because God is the one who has established them. So, in

your worship and honoring and submission to God, you honor and submit to the governing authorities; that includes paying taxes to Caesar.

And this morning, we have yet again another time, another moment where Jesus sets Himself apart as perfect in His ability to defend, in His ability to interact with whoever might challenge Him and whatever they might throw at Him. And often times, we overlook the fact that these men are probably coming to Jesus with some of the best challenges they can think of. This isn't something they're coming up with on the spot, and, oh, try that one. See how He responds to this. This is them bringing the big guns to Jesus. They're bringing their A game at Jesus, and He continues to succeed and show His authority every time and defend the truth, and today is no exception.

Let's look at Mark 12:18-27 for this next challenge coming from the Sadducees; "And Sadducees came to him, who say that there is no resurrection. And they asked him a question, saying, 'Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife, but leaves no child, the man must take the widow and raise up offspring for his brother. There were seven brothers; the first took a wife, and when he died left no offspring. And the second took her, and died, leaving no offspring. And the third likewise. And the seven left no offspring. Last of all the woman also died. In the resurrection, when they rise again, whose wife will she be? For the seven had her as wife.' Jesus said to them, 'Is this not the reason you are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God? For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not God of the dead, but of the living. You are quite wrong.' "

This morning again, we see a very typical and standard format in these challenges that ensue, and it's the same format where there's a group that comes to Jesus with a challenge, and Jesus then responds in perfect manner, in perfect defense.

To begin in verses 18-23, the first half here of our text this morning, we see the Sadducees' challenge. So again, another challenge coming from, again, Jewish leadership to Jesus here in Jerusalem, here on this bustling week of Passover where much was happening, and many were in attendance. Many

from out of town were visiting for this time, and now we learn of a new group, the Sadducees. The Sadducees who are the ones that step up to the plate and have a go at challenging Jesus. First, before we look at their challenge and how they go about it, let's look at verse 18 again, and let's see what we can learn about these guys. Alright? The challengers behind the challenge, who are the ones challenging? Who are these Sadducees? Because if you've been paying attention, you might think of Mark's gospel, and you think, maybe we talked about the Sadducees? And the answer would be, no, we have not. Alright? We've talked about other groups of people like Pharisees that sound very similar, but not these Sadducees. This is the one time they pop up here in Mark's gospel. These Sadducees are the ones that are coming to Him, and they're ready for their shot after the chief priests, the experts in the Law, the scribes, the elders, the Pharisees, and the Herodians all had their chance and went away hanging their head in shame because of their inability to trip Jesus up. They all had their chance. They all tried to trap Him, and they all failed miserably. And so, what do the Sadducees do? They rise up, and they go for it. If I was a Sadducee, I'd be a little scared at this moment, but they're not somehow. There's going to be something different.

Well, what do we know about these Sadducees? Because we don't know much from Mark - as I've already mentioned to you, we haven't seen them. But we get more information from the other gospels and from outside literature as well, as even from the book of Acts, we learn about these Sadducees. They are a wealthy and influential Jewish group, very wealthy, very influential kind of aristocratic, and they are normally associated with the priests and the priesthood. So, that being said, most of their domain and their operation is around the priests, which would be around the temple. So, where they were located was in Jerusalem here at the temple. That's why we haven't seen them much because so much of what Jesus has done has been in Galilee away from the temple up in the north, and thus where the Pharisees are. But now we have Him interacting here in Jerusalem, and we learn of this Jerusalem sect, this group, this wealthy influential Jewish group, the Sadducees, that work hand in hand with these priests and leading in the temple operations.

What about their beliefs? What do they believe? The beliefs and the theology of the Sadducees is actually something we can learn from the book of Acts a little bit - in Acts 23:8. This is something that we will get to, Gerry

in his time, but this is a quick note that we get about what these Sadducees believe because of Paul being in this predicament between the Sadducees and the Pharisees, and he actually makes a very wise choice on it. But in this we learn, “For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.” The Sadducees and the Pharisees have a very different view of things. The theology is very different just on these major points. To say that there is no after life, to say that there is no spiritual realm, it’s a big deal. Alright? It’s a very big deal. It’s often probably because of kind of where these groups started from, in between the Old and New Testament. And you had the Greeks that were basically in control and battling over the land of Palestine, the land of Israel, and where they were. And so, while there in this kind of battle taking place, and they were sitting there just kind of inhabiting the land in the process, people responded differently. Certain Jewish people said, no, stay away from everything that is Greek, and they became the puritan ones, the Pharisees. Other individuals said a little Greek philosophy can’t hurt. Why not? And so, they would take some of it on, and that was probably some of what influenced these Sadducees. So, you had these kind of backgrounds playing into this, but more importantly now at the time of Christ, this is what they believe. These Sadducees were not believing in life after this one on earth.

In addition to that, there’s even a difference in what they follow in terms of the Scriptures because the Sadducees are committed to the Torah which for them is the book of Moses, and that’s it. So, Genesis through Deuteronomy was their book; that was the go to for them. They did not acknowledge the prophets. They did not acknowledge the writings. They didn’t acknowledge the rest of the Old Testament like the Pharisees and many Jews would. So, a lot of big differences here between these Pharisees and these Sadducees, focusing here on the Sadducees before us. And it’s worth stating, just so we’re reminded, and we don’t forget that pithy little statement helps us understand the difference and who we’re working with. The Sadducees not believing in the resurrection, that’s why they were sad you see. Right? That’s an easy way so you just don’t read it and you get lost because you think Sadducees, Pharisees, they sound the same. Who really cares? That’s easy to help you make a divide here and see the difference between the two. Alright? Sadducees, this wealthy, influential group are around the temple and very different in their theology, believing only in Genesis through Deuteronomy, not believing in the resurrection, not affirming the spiritual realm of any sort. This is what we are seeing in this passage. And so, Mark

makes it really clear to us; “For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection...” And that plays into what is before us.

So, then we move on in verses 18-19, and we learn the code related to the challenge. After recognizing who we’re dealing with here, this group of Sadducees, now we see them take specifically from a part of the Torah, from the Law of Moses and introduce it as the background for the challenge that they bring to Jesus, the code related to the challenge. The end of verse 18 through verse 19; “And they asked him a question, saying, “Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife, but leaves no child, the man must take the widow and raise up offspring for his brother.” Here they come asking Him a question. This is their opportunity. This is their time, and this is what they decide to do. They want to use this blossoming threat of Jesus as He’s in Jerusalem and clearly making it evident that He has the authority, and no one can stop Him. This is their time to shine, the time for the Sadducees to set themselves apart. And they don’t just want to trip Jesus up. They don’t want to just trap Him. They don’t want to just make Him look silly. They also want to prop themselves up which is a huge part of why what they’re going to address here ties in distinctly and very specifically to their theology of what they believe or what they do not believe about the resurrection.

This is where it’s going to go, but to do that, they begin by mentioning this concept here that’s from Deuteronomy 25:5-6. It’s kind of this concept of Levirate marriage. Alright? And it’s an interesting one, but nevertheless, it’s legitimate. It’s here in the Law, and so, they’re not making something up. It’s legitimate. They kind of give us a summarized reminder. But to see what it actually says in Deuteronomy, we read, “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. And the first son whom she bears shall succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel.” So, we have this scenario. It’s sad, but it definitely can happen where you have some people, a couple gets married and the man tragically dies before he’s able to have kids, and they’re able to have an offspring, an inheritance, an heir to receive the inheritance, and what is next. And so, then that leaves his wife as a widow. And so, to account for this, God commands that a person in that family would step up and be able to continue to help his name not get blotted

out from Israel as it says, but to produce offspring for him in his name and that's what the command is.

There's even more obvious, other helpful things to this, advantages to such a law. Josephus, a Jewish historian at the time of Christ, reflecting on this law, he says, "When a woman is left childless on her husband's death, the husband's brother shall marry her, and shall call the child that shall be born by the name of the deceased and rear him as heir to the estate; for this will at once be profitable to the public welfare, houses not dying out and property remaining with the relatives, and it will moreover bring the woman an alleviation of their misfortune to live with the nearest kinsman of their former husband." Clearly, this has even more benefits, not just maintaining the name of this man and his property, but the ability of benefitting the nation of Israel. So, this land that is now there, that he owned, isn't just kind of up for grabs, and what will happen next, but it stays in the family. And very obviously for this reason now, because the brother is now stepping in and caring for this widow, not just that you'd have the obvious difficult spot that the widow is in because at this time, this is a difficult time to actually live in that culture and that setting as a woman. You were either under the authority of your father, or then you were married, and you had the authority of your husband. But if you were in between or out of any of that, you were on your own, and in that society, there wasn't much you could do, if anything. So, with this woman having her husband die at a young age, she's now left not knowing what to do, in a difficult spot at a difficult time. Thus, it cares for her by having a brother step up and care for her. So, this is a specific law; the Sadducees aren't making it up. It's true. It's there, and it's in Deuteronomy. It's this law of Levirate marriage. And so, they bring up this law. They recall it so that way everyone's on the same page and knows what's being talked about and what's being addressed.

Then they take a step. They take a huge step in talking about this case that they put forth, this illustration, this kind of scenario that they put forth that becomes their challenge, the case illustrating the challenge, and it is a stretch, but they obviously think it's full proof. In verse 20 we go on to read, "There were seven brothers; the first took a wife, and when he died left no offspring. And the second took her, and died, leaving no offspring. And the third likewise. And the seven left no offspring. Last of all the woman also died." So, you think, huh? Is this an average everyday scenario in the nation of Israel? Probably not. Alright? The Sadducees concocted and put together

a pretty ridiculous hypothetical here, a very kind of strange and far-fetched scenario that they bring up, but it begins very normal, very practical in understanding that there is clearly a married couple. And then, you have the man dying, and so then the brother then steps in, and you have Deuteronomy 25:5-6 kicking into effect, Levirate marriage where the brother steps in to care for the widow. And he also then dies, and there's still no children. And then it goes to the third brother, and he also dies, and there's still no children. And this continues all through, that every brother then takes her, cares for her, no children, and then dies tragically. Until then, we have at the end of the scenario, the woman is the only one left after all the brothers have then died, and she herself dies.

So, instead of seven brides for seven brothers, you have one bride for seven brothers. Alright? A pretty sad scenario as this all unfolds and also very unlikely at the same time, no way. But this is what they put forward. So, not only have you taken a very intricate and detailed law (alright?), something that was a bit of a rarity no doubt. It could happen, and it would happen, but still a rare law here from Deuteronomy. And now, you've just gone haywire with it and thrown out a scenario that's absolutely ridiculous. But that's what they're doing. This is becoming their challenge. So, then after this illustration, after the scenario that they've posed as a legitimate scenario, we then see the consideration of the challenge in verse 23. In verse 23, we get their consideration of the challenge as they put it forward in light of these things in verse 23; "In the resurrection, when they rise again, whose wife will she be? For the seven had her as wife." Man, a head scratcher. What do you do with that? What will happen in heaven? What will happen in the afterlife? As we know, the Sadducees think this is a perfect argument because they do not believe in the resurrection. They do not believe in the afterlife. So they think, for instance, this is a perfect reason why there's no way there's an afterlife because what do you do with this and other scenarios like it? But this one's perfect because it's just so outrageous in showing the problem with the resurrection and upholding the Law of Moses.

This is their hypothetical situation that they use as their challenge. They thought they really had produced a certain dilemma at this point. They think this is something God hasn't even thought about actually. Right? God gave His Law to Moses and that went to the people. And then there's all this assumption among the people that there is a resurrection. There is an afterlife. And now what's God going to do? He hadn't thought about these

details of how the Law starts to look in the resurrection. Oh, no! What do we do with these people? Who do we put where and with what family? And how does it all get arranged. And what's the seating chart? How does all this work? Right? God hasn't thought through this, has He? It's interesting though when you think about the force of their argument here. How strong of an argument is this, really? Alright? If you really had to kind of break it down for a second and think about how they've actually approached and attacked this concept of resurrection, do they really have a strong argument? Well, first of all, they're not arguing from any teaching in the Torah that there is no resurrection. So, to begin with, it's at best an argument from silence because they have put forth no teaching from Moses that says there is no resurrection. So, it's an argument from silence to begin with. Then they're arguing, based on this argument from silence, they try to bolster it by identifying this law of Levirate marriage as too complicated for resurrection. They say, ah, don't forget, in the Law you have these two verses here in Deuteronomy 25. Now, how's that going to work with the resurrection? It's too complex. There's no way. These things could never go together. How do you reconcile this? They go against each other. It's a contradiction. It'll never fit.

So, they feel justified, and they think therefore it's right. We're right to believe there is no resurrection because what do you do with this? You can't solve this scenario. You can't fix this. You can't make it match. You can't make it work. Really, to think about it, what their argument is, it's just an argument from expedience, an argument of just what's easiest. Alright? They're lazy. They don't want to put the time into it. They haven't put the time into it. All they've put the time into doing is trying to make the scenario more outrageous to try and prove their point, but the reality is they don't want to think it through. They don't want to give it time. They don't want to actually consider how these things might work, how it's possible that there still might be resurrection and this upholding of this Law in some way. They think, ah, it just can't work so forget it. There's no way. If something's got to go, it's the resurrection. That's not happening. It's just this life and your done. That's it. And that's the conclusion they come to. I mean, they must've thought they stumped Jesus and made a name for themselves at this moment. He doesn't know what He's going to say to this. He's trapped. There's no way. He's in a corner. He can't say anything. And on top of that, we've risen above the rest of these leaders. We are the true ones upholding this concept that no one likes to believe, that there is no resurrection.

And just to be clear, they've taken a very unique and rare practice of the Levirate marriage as we've seen from Deuteronomy 25, and then they built on it, this outrageous scenario, unlikely, ridiculous, and then they decide that it can't be compatible with the concept of resurrection so therefore there's no resurrection. That's their argumentation. It's weak. It's all for the purpose of just doing what's easiest. I don't know how to make this work. I don't know who these things fit. I don't even think God's thought about this. So clearly, there's no resurrection. That's it. The reality is, while this comes across and as we dissect it and break it down, it definitely comes across as a weak argument. In the same way, we have to be aware of the same expedient impulses in the church today. These same temptations to just do what is easy, to take the easy way out still happens in our beliefs and theology even today in the church. For instance, the most obvious, take the peoples' view of God. How does the church, the modern church view God? Well, you look at Scripture and you get to see that descriptions of God are definitely loving and merciful and kind, but then you also have Him clearly upheld as a just judge, a righteous judge who has wrath every day and indignation every day against sin. And so, both these things are there in Scripture. And so, the modern church approaches it, and they go, ahh, it's too hard. They don't work together. It's not compatible. And they hit the easy button. They say let's just talk about the love of God. Let's just really talk about how He's such a loving friend. Let's pump that up. Let's give that all the attention and air time. Let's sing about it. Let's talk about it. Let's make that the main thing, and then we just don't really talk about that other part. They're hitting the easy button. They don't want to try and reconcile these things. They don't want to try and bring it together and think, well, if it's in the Bible, it might be there for a reason. They don't want to, so they pull back, and they settle for this low view of God.

What about Scripture? Well, the Bible is incredible. This document that we have, it's got tons of miracles, from the Old Testament and the New Testament, in it, and it's got lots of history, even references to science, and so you go look at it, and you start to think this is pretty amazing, some of this stuff. And people think it's hard to explain it to unbelievers because they think, yeah, right. There's no way that happened. That's way too supernatural. That's just way too miraculous. I can't believe that. And so, they think, yeah, that is kind of hard. This is hard to explain so maybe it's just easier if we just kind of take a back seat instead and just say, you know

what? The Bible is such an amazing book because what it is is a book about God's love for mankind, and that's it. Alright? It's a book about how God has sent His Son, and let's just talk about that. As long as we can talk about the good news, let's not worry about all that other stuff and talk about if you can trust it or not. It's too important. It's too complex. It's too hard. Just hit the easy button and just talk about the general, good stuff that comes from the Bible.

Or view of man - what does the Bible say about mankind? Man, yes, created in the image of God, unlike any other being on this planet, but at the same time that image has been marred because man is now plunged into sin from Adam and Eve. And so, the reality is the Bible teaches that man is sinful, sick, evil all the time, and that is his heart, sick, deceitful, and people think, man, that is not a popular message, and that's not easy to make these things work. How is it that we are in God's image, but at the same time, we're evil, wicked, and sinful? These things are hard. Are they even compatible? I don't think so. Let's just hit the easy button and say, hey, God loves you. He has a wonderful plan for your life. You're special. You're beautiful. You're smart. And they just pump themselves up. Hit the easy button.

View of sanctification - how are you and I to be holy? The Bible says that God causes the growth in our lives, but at the same time, the Bible says you're responsible. You need to "...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling..." (Philippians 2:12) It says both things. God Himself working in you, but you "...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling..." Ah, which one is it? And people hit the easy button. It's all about God's grace, and they have this view of hyper-grace, and it's God's grace gets you through, and it's God's grace that saves you, and it's God's grace that sanctifies you, and you just sit back and do nothing because they think it's too hard, and they opt out for easy options. It's what the Sadducees did. It's how they function - resurrection and Levirate marriage and the Law of Moses - ah, just take the easy route and say there's no resurrection, just be done with it. There's no afterlife. And this was the case for the Sadducees. We, too, need to be careful that we're not merely hitting the easy button when it comes to our beliefs and practice. We follow Scripture. We study it. We meditate upon it. Are there things in here that are hard? You bet. Difficult to understand? Of course. Don't be surprised. You're a fallen human being. Of course you're not going to understand it all perfectly. You need help. You need the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to understand the

Word of God. Just because it's hard, do you just throw up your hands and say, ahh, whatever? I'll just opt out for the easy option, the popular option, the one that people like. Unacceptable - can't do that.

Of course, Jesus has His opportunity to set Himself apart as the perfect One in defending the truth and giving a defense for the hope that you and I have, and He does that in verses 24-27 where we see the Messiah's correction – the Messiah's correction in verse 24. It begins, and we really just get Him summarizing the whole correction in one verse, in verse 24 - the whole problem with these Sadducees. Verse 24 reads, "Jesus said to them, 'Is this not the reason you are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God?' " That's it. That's the core of His correction. He flat out tells them you're wrong. I'm not going to play a game with you. I'm not going to think, you know, what? Everyone listen up. These Sadducees, they have something good there. Let's talk about the good here, and let's all contribute to a common good and put it all together, and everyone's right, and everyone wins. No, they're wrong. He flat out tells them you guys are wrong, and I'll tell you why. You're wrong because you've denied two important things, the power of God and the Scriptures. You don't know the Scriptures, and you don't know the power of God. He flat out tells them what is wrong with the way that they've thought and the way that they have taught the people. He says you are misled. You are deceived. Realistically, you're deceiving yourselves is what He says.

You're deceiving yourselves. So, on these two things, the ignorance of Scripture, and neglecting the power of God, He then focuses in verses 25-26, and that's where we find the content of the correction - the content of the correction. So, we have the two things being stated in verse 24, their ignorance of Scripture and neglecting the power of God. The first thing He addresses is the second one, neglecting the power of God. Verse 25; "For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven." So, He first addresses their neglect of God's own power. And their neglect of God's power is clearly evident in the challenge that they presented. They formulated this ridiculous scenario and believed that it was justification for their unbelief in the resurrection. They were clearly lacking the willingness to believe that God could somehow work out the dilemma between a woman with seven husbands in the course of her life and how that plays out in the resurrection - too big of a dilemma - can't be solved. God doesn't have an answer for it. God can create the world

but doesn't have an answer for that one. He's not ready for it. It's a dilemma.

Jesus establishes Himself as the authority as He does so often in actually speaking truth here and giving the answer, giving the answer of God's power and what is exactly true about the power of God. He says, "For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven." Since the Sadducees argued from silence, on one hand, you could say that Scripture does not indicate that there will be marriage in the resurrection. So, your argument isn't a good argument because where in Scripture does it say that there for sure is marriage in the resurrection and in heaven? It's not there. So, you're arguing against the non-point that doesn't exist because that's not what Scripture even teaches. It's in fact true that Jesus now affirms this. This is the case for heaven, that marriage had its purposes. It did. It served its purposes as delineated in Genesis, it's purposes of companionship and the continuation of the human race, and as what we know of what Paul says in Ephesians 5, this wonderful picture, this beautiful picture of the gospel as you have Jesus, the groom, and the church, His bride, and Him laying down His life in sacrifice for her, and God, knowing the truth of the good news of what Jesus would do, created, then, marriage as a picture of that. Marriage comes second as a symbol of the beautiful message that you and I know, the good news, the gospel.

So, what happens when you get to the resurrection? What happens when you get to heaven, the afterlife and you have the consummation, you have Jesus, the groom, with His bride, the church, is there a need for the symbol of marriage anymore? No, that's why Jesus can confidently teach this. And not only does He know this, but He has actually received this from His Father that He can teach, "...they neither marry nor are given in marriage..." That's not how heaven works. There is not marriage taking place. Marriage has run its course. It's time has come. He goes on and states that people "...are like angels in heaven." And that's important to note, "...like angels..." Right? The simile as angels, "...like angels..." not actually angels as so many people like to say when they kind of comfort one another with people going to the afterlife; they're an angel now. It's not true. One commentator says. "They will not become angels but will be as angels in heaven who now have the heavenly existence and are deathless. The distinction between men and angels will remain." You don't die and go and become an angel or just like them in the sense that you are identical to them, but you have a heavenly

existence like they do, and you will not die again like they do. Right? You're deathless as it says in mortality.

Obviously, we get more teaching about the resurrection and heaven from other New Testament scriptures. Listen to what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:42-44; "So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body." 1 Corinthians 15:48-49, a little further down in the chapter, he goes on to say, "As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven." And this is what John says in 1 John 3:2, "Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is." This concept of what Jesus actually was like in His resurrected body, His ability to actually converse with people, to still be physical in some sense, to eat food, to enjoy a meal with His disciples before He ascended into heaven. And so, in the same way, we have this promise about the resurrection.

So, thinking about this as Jesus enlightened them, they make the assumption, it's too hard for God. It's too hard for God to uphold this concept of Levirate marriage and the Law of Moses in Deuteronomy 25 and to have resurrection taking place. And Jesus says you don't even know what God's doing. You have no idea of what My Father has planned. You don't even know the purpose of marriage. You've got it wrong. You don't know the power of God and what He's prepared in the resurrection. They don't know the power of God. One commentator summarizes, "His questioners had thoughts of the resurrection life only in terms of present earthly conditions they had failed to see that God's power could make a new world in which the conditions of life were wholly different. His power in transforming the resurrection body no longer made marriage a necessary part of the future state." So, Jesus first has to confront them on that. You are wrong because you don't even know the power of God. You don't even know what God can do in regard to the new world, this concept of marriage and beyond.

But not just that, Jesus goes on to address their ignorance of Scripture, and that's what we find in verse 26; "And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob' " I mean, at this moment you're talking about resurrection according to the Word of God. Jesus could've gone to so many places. Alright? He could've taken His time and jumped all over the Old Testament. There are multiple places where we are told, and we are taught about this resurrection concept. For instance, He could've gone to Isaiah, one of the prophets, and talked about it. He could've come to Job and other poetic places, and Psalms, and talked about how this was a clear known fact, the resurrection. There's one hang-up with this. If Jesus would've done this, how would the Sadducees have responded? They'd have said that's nice and good, Jesus, but we don't believe that. We believe the Torah. We believe Genesis through Deuteronomy. We're not listening to that. And so, what does Jesus do? He indulges. He engages them on that level and says, fine, we can talk about this. Let's talk about the resurrection according to your man Moses. Let's talk about it. What did he have to say? What do we learn from the Law of Moses about this concept of resurrection? And He references one of the most obvious titles of God in the Torah, and He references one of the most well-known events, the commissioning of Moses, how God is calling Moses in the burning bush and identifying him as the leader of the people to lead them out of the slavery in Egypt that they were experiencing into the wilderness to worship God.

And in that popular well-known passage, you get this, what Jesus Himself here is now quoting. What did God tell to Moses? "...how God spoke to him, saying, '[I am the God of your father], I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob' " This is what He said, and He said it more than once to Moses, not just at one time, but it was mentioned more than once. So, God spoke to Moses, and identified Himself as the God of the dead patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But we have to notice the way in which God spoke to Moses. There is significance here, and it comes down to details of grammar, the very details of grammar that you have to pay attention to. God said, "...I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?" If they were in fact dead, and if there was no resurrection, how would God have said that? Would He have used present tense or would He have used past tense instead? You would expect to see something like "...I [was] the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and

the God of Jacob'?" But that's not what you see. You see, "...I am..." ...  
"... I am..." This is what you would do past tense if you were speaking  
about the deceased, but that's not what God does. He uses present tense in  
speaking to Moses and in giving Himself this title. What does this imply? So  
what? It's clear they're alive. Abraham's alive to God. Isaac and Jacob,  
they're alive to God. That's how He views it, and that's why He says it this  
way to Moses. He's not being deceptive. He's telling the truth. He's saying  
there is resurrection. They're alive. "...I am the God..." of these men.  
Alright? A very obvious well-known passage with a very well-known title,  
and built into that very title of who God is, you have an argument for the  
resurrection. And the Sadducees missed it, completely missed it, overlooked  
it.

And here's Jesus, you think of debates and how debates often go now days,  
and they take hours, and there's a back and forth and rebuttal, and it keeps  
going, and here you have so often like with Jesus where there is a huge  
argument that these men have cooked up for some time, and they bring it  
with full force and weigh it at Jesus. And He smacks it down like lifting His  
pinky. It's no problem for Him. Oh, you want to know that there's  
resurrection based on what Moses said? How about this title that you all can  
recite in your sleep, "...I am the God of Abraham..." There is resurrection,  
and that's what brings us to the conclusion, the conclusion of His correction  
there - the conclusion of Jesus correcting them. He states in verse 27, "He is  
not God of the dead, but of the living." ... "He is not God of the dead, but of  
the living. You are quite wrong," stating it once again, saying it two times  
total. In the beginning, you are wrong. And then again at the end, "You are  
quite wrong." You are deceiving yourselves. God is "...the God of  
Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob' ", who are alive.  
There is resurrection. There is afterlife. This is true, thus you see not only  
the failure and shortcomings of the Sadducees as they just opted for what  
was easy. They operated under the principle of expediency, what was the  
easiest thing rather than actually trusting the power of God, and that God can  
work these things out. Even though you read something in Scripture, and at  
first, you're not sure at first blush how it works. They were not willing to go  
there and trust God and His power to do it. On top of that, they were not  
willing to do the work to see what Scripture has to say in its entirety, and  
they missed basic and major concepts like the resurrection.

It's a lesson for us. We, too, have to be diligent. How much more so must we be diligent, approved workmen who are not ashamed, knowing how to handle accurately the word of truth, knowing how to actually divide this the way that God would have us to with the help of His Spirit as He authored it through men. We need that. Let us not push the easy button and opt out for expediency. And at the same, let's look to Jesus, the perfect model. He sets Himself up as the standard every time in every way, and even more so in how to defend and how to give a reason for the hope that is within us, how He's able to speak concisely and precisely to the very need of the moment, what these Sadducees and all the other Jewish leaders needed to hear, speaking with power and authority. Why? Because it's the Word of God. Speaking the truth - may that be our commitment, to know truth so that we can use truth, and speaking it and defending what we have as the hope within us. That is our goal, and let Jesus continue to be our standard in that.