

Matthew 22:23-33 A Question about the Resurrection

Introduction: The Pharisees and Herodians had asked Jesus a trick question. In our text the Sadducees try their hand.

I. Who the Sadducees are.

- A. They were a relatively small religious group in Israel. (Smaller than the Pharisees.)
- B. But what they lacked in number they made up for in clout.
 - 1. They were strictly upperclass.
 - 2. They were rich and powerful. (Usually the high priests were Sadducees.)
 - 3. They were well educated and highly cultured. (Intellectuals.)
- C. Religiously they differed from most Jew.
 - 1. Most Jews believed in angels: the Sadducees did not.
 - 2. Most Jews believed in a resurrection: they did not.

II. Their purpose.

- A. These Sadducees were apparently listening and watching when the Pharisees and Herodians failed to trick Jesus.
 - 1. After the Pharisees and Herodians left, they decided to ask Jesus a question.
 - 2. They did not waste any time, verse 23.
 - 3. They too asked a trick question. One that would trap Jesus either way He answered.
- B. Apparently their purpose was not as sinister as the Pharisees.
 - 1. The Pharisees wanted to trap Jesus and kill Him.
 - 2. The Sadducees just wanted to embarrass Him and force Him to publicly admit that there is no resurrection.
- C. But Satan's purpose was sinister. What a victory if would be for Satan if, just a few days before the death of Jesus, he could get Jesus to admit that there is no resurrection.

III. Their question.

- A. They first reminded Jesus that the Law of Moses required that when a man dies and has no heirs his brother is to marry his widow and raise up heirs to him, verse 24.
- B. Then they pretended to know a woman who was married by seven brothers but who had no heirs by any, verses 25-27.
- C. Their question was, "Whose wife will she be in the resurrection?" verse 28.
 - 1. They felt that He could not name any given man.
 - 2. They felt that He would be forced into admitting that it was doubtful whether there would be a resurrection.
 - 3. Either that or He would admit publicly that He did not know.
- D. No doubt they had used this question many times on others and had convinced many that there is no resurrection.

IV. The surprising answer from Jesus.

- A. Jesus said, "You are wrong; you have the wrong idea," verse 29.
- B. He gave two reasons for their error:
 - 1. They did not know the Scriptures.
 - 2. They did not know the power of God.
- C. These men did know what the Scriptures say. (They told Jesus what the Scriptures say about a brother marrying his brother's widow and raising heirs.)
- D. But they did not know the meaning of the Scriptures.

1. They had concluded that the Scripture proves that there is no resurrection.
 2. That Scripture teaches no such thing. (Nor does any other thing.)
- E. It is vital that men understand and believe the Scripture.
1. Because these men did not believe in a resurrection they would make no preparation for it.
 2. If a man would understand and believe the Scriptures they would straighten him out in his thinking.
 3. The Scriptures are inspired of God and are the final authority in all spiritual matters. (Doctrine, morals, prophecy).
- F. If they had understood the power of God, they would not have doubted the resurrection.
1. It was the power of God that had taken the dust of the earth and created man in the first place.
 2. That same God would have no problem taking that same dust of the earth after the body has decayed and raising it up again.
- G. Then Jesus answered the question about whose wife the woman would be in the resurrection, verse 30.
1. The woman would not be the wife of any of the seven brothers.
 2. In the resurrection there will be no marriage. (No marriage will extend over into the resurrection; no new marriages will take place.)
 3. In our resurrected forms we will be like the angels. (Non-sexual beings).
- H. Then, knowing their disbelief about the resurrection, He proved to them by Scripture that there is life beyond the grave, verses 31-32.
1. He quoted what God told Moses at the burning bush.
 2. God claimed to be the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob.
 3. Jacob had been dead nearly 200 years, Isaac more than 200 years and Abraham more than 300 years.
 4. Jesus said that in order for God to still be their God in Moses' day they had to live on beyond the grave.
- I. Jesus did not say that God had raised them because the resurrection had not yet taken place. (But He did show that they live on and anybody who knows the power of God would know that God will raise their bodies from the grave.)
- J. God will indeed raise all the dead from the grave.
1. The redeemed will spend eternity in the glory of God.
 2. The unredeemed will spend eternity in torment.

Conclusion: I probably am not preaching to anybody who challenges the resurrection as did the Sadducees. But I may be preaching to somebody who is unprepared for it.

Preached at Pleasant Hill 3-2-86 A.M.