

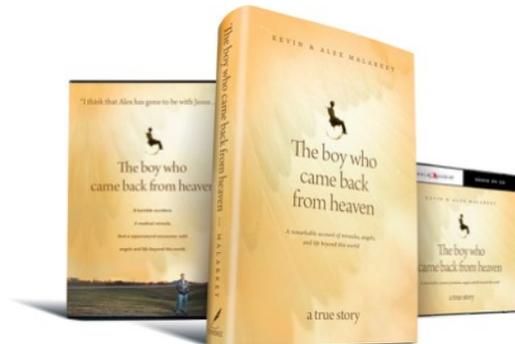
Mark 12:18–27 — The Resurrection Is Better Than The Joy Of Marriage

February 23, 2020

On November 14, 2004, 6-year-old Alex Malarkey was with his father as they drove home in rural Ohio. When his father made a left turn, their car collided with another vehicle. The force of the impact sent Alex's father flying from the vehicle. Alex didn't fly out of the vehicle but remained seat-belted into the car. The force of the impact was so severe that it detached his skull from his spinal cord. Thankfully, Alex did not die. When he awoke from a coma two months later, he was a quadriplegic.

After coming out of his coma, Alex began telling his family stories. He told them about traveling to heaven and meeting Jesus. He told them about meeting angels that saved his father on the infamous day of the accident. Alex's father began writing his son's stories down. In July 2010, Alex's father took those stories to Tyndale House

publishers. Alex' stories were turned into a book, The Boy Who Came Back From Heaven. It sold more than a million copies and spent months on the New York Times best



sellers list. Right on the cover the book claims to be the true story of a young boy's trip to heaven when he almost lost his life.

From the beginning of this book project, there were problems. Alex's mother said the book contained numerous places that did not accurately represent the stories of heaven told by her son. Finally, in January 2015, in a

blog Alex wrote himself, he admitted to fabricating the whole thing. Let me quote his own words in that blog post, “I did not die. I did not go to heaven. I made everything up to get attention.”¹

Alex’s childhood lies, that his father turned into a manuscript, which Tyndale House Publishers turned into a book, ended up deceiving millions. It has left millions frustrated and unsure what to believe about life after death. If you can’t trust a book by a Christian publisher, who can you trust? People were left with no answers to their big questions. If there is life after death, can we prove it? If there is life after death, can we know what it is like? This morning, we will get some answers to those questions from a source we can trust.

Open your Bibles to Mark 12:18. We are in the last week of Jesus’ life. Jesus has been going head to head with the Jewish Sanhedrin in Jerusalem as they continually challenge his authority. In every encounter, Jesus won. Last week, we saw the Sanhedrin were so defeated by Jesus that they withdrew from him to come up with a new strategy to trap him.

The Sanhedrin, which was the Jewish ruling council, had three distinct groups in it. They were the Pharisees, Sadducees, and scribes. The new strategy was for each group in the Sanhedrin to send a delegation to Jesus. Each one of them would try to trap Jesus in his words. The hope was that Jesus would lose his popularity with the people and possibly even find Rome fighting against him.

Last week, we met the first delegation. It was a group of Pharisees that tried to trap Jesus with a trick question about paying taxes. Jesus saw through

¹ https://www.huffpost.com/entry/alex-malarkey-boy-who-came-back-from-heaven_n_6483432

their ploy and evaded the trap of their question. This week, we meet the next delegation to come to Jesus. It was a group of Sadducees. Their goal was to trap Jesus in a deceptive question that would leave him looking like a fool in front of the vast crowds. If their plan worked, the crowds would lose respect for Jesus. The Sanhedrin would have successfully undermined his power. That was their goal. Let's read Mark 12:18-27 to see how they tried to make Jesus look like a fool, but in the end, Jesus made them look like fools.

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." Mark 12:18–27 (ESV)

By the way, I am not to sure what to think about this poor woman. She obviously didn't have much luck with men. Can you imagine if you were the seventh brother marrying her? I am sure you would be convinced she was a black widow spider and would be scared to death on your wedding night.

These verses break into three pieces. First, there is the background of the story. Second, there is a tough question designed by the Sadducees to make Jesus look like a fool. Third, there are biblically wise answers from Jesus that made them look like fools.

The Background of the Story

And Sadducees came to him, who say that there is no resurrection. And they asked him a question, saying... Mark 12:18 (ESV)

There are two things we need to explore by way of background in this verse. First is the Jewish belief on the resurrection. Second are the Sadducees and what they believe about the resurrection. Let's dive in.

What did the Jews believe about the resurrection?

The vast majority of Jews have always believed in a resurrection. They believe there is life after death. The Old Testament talks about life after death with great clarity.

Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure. For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption. Psalm 16:9–10 (ESV)

David was confident that when he died, he would not stay stuck in Sheol. Sheol was the afterworld. In the Old Testament, there is not much detail given about Sheol. Sometimes it is simply translated as the grave because the details of Sheol are so sparse. The important thing to notice is that David was confident he would not be stuck in Sheol. He would come out the other side of death into the very presence of God.

When we get to the New Testament, we also discover this Psalm is Messianic. It pertains to Jesus. He also was not abandoned to the grave. As it says here, he was the holy one that did not stay in the grave long enough to even see decay. Jesus rose from the dead on the third day. This is clearly telling us there is life after death.

You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will receive me to glory. Psalm 73:24 (ESV)

In this Psalm, the Psalmist was confident he wouldn't cease to exist after death. He was confident that after death he would continue to exist. He would continue to exist in the very presence of God, where God's glory can be found.

But God will ransom my soul from the power of Sheol, for he will receive me. Selah Psalm 49:15 (ESV)

In this Psalm we find the same theme. The Psalmist was confident he wouldn't spend eternity in the dreary underworld of the dead but that God would pay a price to release his soul from the grave so he could be with God after death for eternity.

From a New Testament perspective, we can clearly see this is a reference to Jesus. He died on the cross to pay the ransom price for our sins. Jesus paid the price we couldn't pay to free us from the power of the grave, so we could be brought home to heaven.

The Old Testament was also clear that life after death was ultimately not just continuing to exist spiritually in God's presence but it was continuing to exist in a physical body for all of eternity. Look at the words of Job.

And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God... Job 19:26 (ESV)

Job was confident in a resurrection. He was confident that after his skin was destroyed — that means his body was rotten in the grave — yet in his flesh he would see God. Job was confident that we wouldn't continue to exist for eternity just in spirit but that one day our very bodies would rise from the grave and be united with our spirits so we would be before God in the flesh.

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. Isaiah 26:19 (ESV)

Isaiah was also confident in bodily resurrection. He was confident the same bodies that were buried in the ground would one day supernaturally reassemble and rise from the dead. One day we will be before God in resurrected flesh-and-blood bodies, not just our spirits.

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. Daniel 12:2 (ESV)

Daniel was also confident in a resurrection of our bodies. Daniel adds information about the resurrection that we have not seen in earlier verses. He tells us the resurrection will not be the same for everyone. Some will have their bodies rise from the dead and will spend eternity in the flesh in everlasting life. Others will have their bodies rise from the dead and will spend eternity in everlasting contempt. Contempt means repulsiveness or revulsion. This was Daniel talking about the Lake of Fire before the Book of Revelation talks about the Lake of Fire.

It is important for us to know the majority position of Judaism has always been belief in life after death and the resurrection of the body. These things are clearly spelled out in the Old Testament. This is important to know because today we meet a group within Judaism called the Sadducees. They did not believe in life after death. They did not believe in the resurrection of the body.

Who were the Sadducees and what did they believe?

This is the first and only appearance of the Sadducees in Mark's Gospel. They were a group in Judaism who denied the resurrection of the dead. They also denied the existence of angels. They denied the existence of a spirit world. We find this description of their beliefs in Acts 23:8.

For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all. Acts 23:8 (ESV)

While the majority of Jews believed in the resurrection of the dead, the Sadducees, who were a minority party in Judaism, believed there was no resurrection of the dead, no angels, and no spirit world. They believed that when you died, you just ceased to exist. You ceased to exist like a flame was snuffed out of a candle, never to exist again. They believed there was no such things as a final judgement, rewards, and an afterlife. They believed you needed to get as much fun out of this life as you could because once this life was done with, that was it. Our existence was done. The way I have remembered this unique belief of the Sadducees, that is their refusal to believe in a resurrection, is I have a little rhyme about them. “The Sadducees are sad-you-see because they don’t believe in the resurrection.” I hope that little rhyme helps you remember their unique belief.

While the Sadducees were small in number, they were powerful in influence and position. They controlled the Jewish temple. The high priest on down in the temple were all Sadducees. Their position in the temple made them very wealthy, very powerful, and they conducted themselves with an aristocratic attitude because of their power and influence. All of their power was centered around the temple and their job running the temple. In fact, once the temple was destroyed in 70 A.D., they ceased to exist as a movement in history.

Last week, I told you the Pharisees were the conservative right-wing group in the Jewish Sanhedrin and the Sadducees were the liberal left-wing group in the Sanhedrin. I did more research and learned that is not completely true. The

Sadducees were liberal in many areas but they were ultra-conservative in other areas. The same thing was true for the Pharisees. In many areas they were conservative, but in other areas they were also a little liberal. That is no different for people today. Let me show you how the Sadducees thought about life.

The Sadducees were socially liberal. They were pro-Rome because Rome kept them in power in the temple. They were liberal when it came to wealth, politics, and society. They were aristocratic in nature. So socially, they were liberal materialists. Theologically, they were ultra-conservative.

While the majority position of the Jews affirmed the resurrection and the existence of angels, the Sadducees did not believe in life after death, a resurrection, and the existence of angels. They were pure annihilationists who believed we are snuffed out like a candle and cease to exist when we die. How did they come up with those strange beliefs when so much of the Bible clearly articulates life after death with God and a resurrection body? The answer is they only believed in the Pentateuch. Penta means five. They only accepted the first five books of the Old Testament as the Word of God. They didn't believe the rest of the Old Testament was from God. Notice all the verses I quoted earlier about life after death and the resurrection did not come from the first five books of the Bible, so they wouldn't believe those verses. The Sadducees claimed the first five books of the Bible did not speak about life after death and the resurrection of the dead, that is why they did not believe in them. You and I will disagree with them. Jesus will disagree with them, but that is what they believed. So the Sadducees were social liberals who were ultra-conservative theologically. They

claimed evidence for a resurrection, angels, and life after death was not found in the books of Moses so they didn't believe they existed.

Historically, the Pharisees loved to argue with them over this issue and try to show them verses from the books of Moses that hinted at the existence of the resurrection, angels, and life after death. As you might be able to guess, the Sadducees were not open to hearing these pieces of evidence. The more the Pharisees argued with them, the more deeply entrenched they became in their faulty position. That is usually what happens when people start arguing. People stop listening.

On the other hand, the Pharisees, who were socially conservative, could at times be biblically liberal. Not only did the Pharisees accept the rest of the books in the Old Testament, like we do, but they spent endless amounts of time speculating beyond the Old Testament adding oral tradition and extra-biblical written tradition to their system of beliefs. The Pharisees used to get into discussions about what it would be like when the resurrection took place. Would people rise from the dead clothed or unclothed? For obvious reasons, they leaned toward clothed. When people rose from the dead, would the dead wear the old clothes they died in or would God give them new clothes? Soon they moved beyond speculating about clothing to speculating about infirmities. They wondered that if you were born without a hand, would you rise from the dead without a hand? They speculated that if you had a large mole on your arm, in the resurrection, you would still have that mole on your arm. The general consensus of the Pharisees was that in the resurrection everyone rose from the dead exactly

the way they were when they died. They speculated that the similarity between our current bodies and our resurrection bodies continued into relationships. If you were married to someone in this life, they believed you would be married to the same person in the next life.

Remember the Bible doesn't say any of this. It was all Pharisaical speculation about the resurrection life. That is where much of the problem lies, going beyond what Scripture clearly teaches.

That is the background we need to know to understand the trap the Sadducees tried to set up for Jesus about the resurrection.

The Sadducees tried to make Jesus look like a fool by proving the resurrection was wrong.

“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.” Mark 12:19 (ESV)

They addressed Jesus as teacher. That was a term of respect. They were not trying to give him serious respect. This was false respect. They were buttering him up to set him up. They were trying to trap him in a dilemma that would make Jesus look foolish so he would lose popularity with the people. Of course, the trap they tried to spring on Jesus dealt with their speciality, which was proving why the resurrection of the dead couldn't be true.

In their attempt to disprove the resurrection, they went to Deuteronomy 25:19 which talks about levirate marriage. Levirate marriage is Latin for brother-in-law marriage. If a man died and had not had a child, his wife was supposed to marry her husband's brother so she could have a child through him in order to continue the family line. This was especially important in the early days of the Old

Testament where farmland was supposed to stay in the family so people needed an heir. This is why the custom of levirate marriage strongly discouraged a widow marrying outside the family.

We see the practice of levirate marriage being lived out in two places in the Bible. In Genesis 38, we see Onan refusing to comply with this responsibility to give his deceased brother an heir, so God struck him dead because of his wickedness. Probably the most famous occurrence of this practice is in the book of Ruth. Ruth was a widow, and she didn't have a child to continue the family name and inheritance of the land. She met a man named Boaz who was a near relative. He qualified for levirate marriage. Boaz married Ruth. Together they had a son named Obed. Obed had a son named Jesse. Jesse had a son named David. That was King David. Jesus' birth line was continued by the practice of levirate marriage.

So levirate marriage was an important and well-known law. The Sadducees took this practice and made up a really weird fictional scenario in an attempt to prove the resurrection couldn't be true and leave Jesus embarrassed.

“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.” Mark 12:20–23 (ESV)

I want you to notice the Sadducees were drawing their understanding of the resurrection and what it will be like not from the Bible but from the speculation of the Pharisees. Remember the Pharisees said you would rise from the dead in the same clothes you wore when you died. They said that if you were married on

earth, you would be married to the same person in heaven. The Bible never says any of that stuff.

If people rise from the dead completely identical to how they are today with the same moles and marriages, then the Sadducees are right. That kind of resurrection look like an absurdity.

Jesus made the Sadducees look like fools by proving the resurrection was right.

Jesus said to them, “Is this not the reason you are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God?” Mark 12:24 (ESV)

I love Jesus on this one. He is more bold than Donald Trump. He didn't care if he offended people. He just said it straight. Jesus said, “You are wrong. The problem here is not with me. It is with you. You Sadducees just put your ignorance on display. Instead of making me look foolish, you just made yourself look foolish because you don't understand two things. You don't understand your Bible and you don't understand the power of God.”

When Jesus said, “You are mistaken,” the word mistaken in the Greek is the word *planeo*. We get our word planet from it. Jesus said, “You guys are so lost on this one you are in outer space.” Jesus then showed them why they didn't understand the power of God and why they didn't understand their Bible. Jesus took them in reverse order.

They didn't understand the power of God. The resurrection will be much more than just a continuation of this life.

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

Jesus said that when people rise from the dead, they will not be married or given in marriage in heaven. The whole idea of sex, reproduction, having

children, and having families will cease to exist in the resurrection. This is contrary to what the Mormons think, as they claim men will populate planets with spirit babies from multiple wives. This is contrary to what Islam teaches, when they claim men can end up with 72 virgins in eternity to satisfy their lustful desires. Jesus said sex, reproduction, and birth is limited to this life. It is not for the resurrection life.

Jesus further explained what we will be like after the resurrection. He said we will be like angels. Notice he didn't say we will be angels but that we will be like angels. I think Jesus threw this in for the Sadducees because they denied the existence of angels. What does it mean to be like angels? Angels are known for their power. Angels are known for glory, beauty, and brightness. Angels exist forever. They do not die. Angels do not reproduce. We will not be angels but we will be like angels.

Remember the Pharisees thought the resurrected life would be just like this life. Jesus said the resurrected life will not be just like this life. The resurrected life will be like this life in many ways but it will be vastly improved from this life in every way. This is how Paul described resurrection life:

But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him" 1 Corinthians 2:9 (ESV)

We cannot imagine how amazing our resurrection lives will be and how powerful our resurrection bodies. Trying to imagine how great our resurrection lives and our resurrection bodies will be is like a baby in the womb trying to imagine the sound of a symphony or trying to imagine the beauty of the Grand

Canyon. The beauty of resurrection life and power of our resurrection bodies is beyond our ability to comprehend.

This is why the hope of the resurrection is our greatest hope. This life is not all there is to life. When we die, none of us will cease to exist. Christians go immediately to be with Christ. Paul described that as better by far. One day, Jesus will return and for those who have trusted in Christ, they will get their bodies back, raised from the grave. Our bodies will be changed at that time. They will not just be like our bodies but they will be raised to be powerful and indestructible. For those who have trusted in Christ, their resurrection is also a time of being judged by Christ. It will be a judgment of rewards. At that time, our resurrection bodies will be just like Jesus' resurrection body.

For those who die apart from Christ, while their bodies are also buried in the ground, their spirits go to Hades. One day Christ will also resurrect their indestructible bodies. Christ will reunite their spirits with their indestructible bodies, and they also will face judgment before Christ. It will not be a judgment of rewards but a judgment of condemnation to determine a just eternal punishment in the lake of fire. Nobody ceases to exist after death. Everybody will eventually get his or her body back as indestructible. For those who have trusted in Christ, that will be the best thing that has ever happened to them. For those apart from Christ, that will be the worst thing that has ever happened to them.

As Christians, this promise of our resurrection is what gets us through the crises we face in this life. We persevere following Jesus in this life even when life is hard because we know we will be rewarded by Jesus in the resurrection based

on how we lived in this life. When we face suffering in this life, loss in this life, death of our loved ones in this life and even death of ourselves in this life, it is the hope of the resurrection upon which we stand. Just as Jesus is now alive in the flesh, so we will also be alive in the flesh because of our faith in him. On that day, when we receive our resurrection bodies, those bodies will be powerful and glorious, and they will last forever!

While the hope of the resurrected life and our resurrected bodies is more wonderful than we can comprehend, there are two things that many of us struggle with in our hearts. It is hard to comprehend how the joy, satisfaction, intimacy, and closeness we have with our spouses will be taken away from us in the resurrected because marriage no longer exists and how we will still be happy. The idea of being with our spouses but no longer married to our spouses is heartbreaking. How should we think about this? Here are two things we need to know.

1. The Bible tells us the joy of marriage in this life was created to whet our appetites for the joy of being with Jesus in the resurrected life.

[“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. Ephesians 5:31–32 \(ESV\)](#)

The apostle Paul talked about the purpose of marriage in this life. He said marriage and all the joys associated with it were designed by God to whet our appetites for the closeness and satisfaction we will experience with Jesus in our resurrected bodies in the next life. We sometimes feel distant to Jesus now, but in the resurrected life, we will not feel distant to Jesus then. We will be more satisfied with Jesus in that day than we can ever be satisfied by the closeness

we experience with our spouses in marriage today. Being with Jesus then will be more satisfying than being with our spouses now. That is mind-bending to comprehend. It is hard to fathom how any relationship would be more satisfying to us than the joy we experience with our spouses, yet the Bible tells us it is true. Being with Jesus in the resurrected life will be more relationally satisfying than being with our spouses in this life.

2. Our relationships with our families will be closer and more satisfying in the resurrected life than we can every experience in this life.

When we hear we will not be married in eternity and not have family in eternity, we think that means we will not be close to our families in eternity. That is not true. While marriage does not exist in heaven, all of our relationships in the resurrected life will be much closer, deeper, and far more satisfying than any of our relationships are now. In other words, our relationships with our spouses in the resurrected life will be closer, more intimate, and more satisfying to us in eternity than it can be today.

We must remember the infinitely creative God who created everything in this world with all the fish, birds, sunsets, plants, animals, colors, and designs in only six days will vastly outdo himself in the new creation, making it far better than this creation. In the same way, just as God will take our resurrected bodies and will not just resurrect them but will vastly improve them. Everything about God's resurrection life will be more than a thousand times better than the good things we experience in this life. The new creation will not just be a thousand times better, our resurrection bodies will be a thousand times better. Even more

exciting is that our resurrection relationships will be a thousand times closer and more satisfying. Everything will be beyond our wildest imaginations. The Pharisees and Sadducees were wrong to assume the next life would be no better than this life. They were massively underestimating the power of God.

The apostle Paul told us what we will be like in the resurrection.

But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?” 1 Corinthians 15:35 (ESV)

Doesn't it sound like he is talking to the Sadducees who don't believe there will be a resurrection?

You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. 1 Corinthians 15:36–38 (ESV)

Paul said, “Don't you understand that dying and being buried as a Christian is like planting a seed?” We put a corn seed in the ground but what comes out is a corn plant that is vastly larger, better and more amazing than the dry kernel we planted. Paul said that in the same way when our bodies are planted in the ground, what will come out of the ground will be our resurrection bodies, which will be 10,000 times better than the weak bodies we put in the grave. What we plant is an oak seed. What is raised from the dead is a mighty oak tree.

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. Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. 1 Corinthians 15:42–47 (ESV)

Paul contrasted our current bodies with our resurrection bodies and how they will be different. Our current bodies are perishable. Our resurrection bodies will last forever. Our current bodies are known for dishonor. Our resurrection bodies will be known for glory. Our current bodies are like Adam's body. Our resurrection bodies will be like Jesus' body.

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. 1 Corinthians 15:48–49 (ESV)

Paul again told us that the prototype for our resurrection bodies is Jesus' resurrection body. The Bible says Jesus is the firstborn of the dead but he is not the last born of the dead. Our bodies will one day rise from the dead, just like Jesus' body rose from the dead. Our graves will be empty. This is the promise from God that we look forward to seeing fulfilled.

Our resurrection bodies will be 10,000 times better than our current bodies. Our resurrection life will be 10,000 times better than our happiest moments in this life. Our resurrection relationship with Jesus will be so close, it will be even more satisfying than the relationship we have with our spouses today. Our resurrection relationships with one another will be closer, more satisfying and more fulfilling than any relationships we have ever experienced in this life. That is what we look forward to in the future. The resurrection is the unleashing of the power of God.

They didn't understand their Bible. The resurrection is spoken of in the first five books.

Remember the Sadducees refused to believe the resurrection because they claimed it wasn't found in the first five books of the Bible written by Moses. They only accepted the first five books as the true word of God. They prided themselves as being theologically conservative. Jesus showed the Sadducees that they completely underestimated the power of God in the resurrection, then he showed they didn't know their much smaller Bible. They missed seeing proof for life after death in the books of Moses.

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"? Mark 12:26 (ESV)

Jesus went to Exodus 3:6. This is the passage where God spoke to Moses from the burning bush. God said, "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." It is not "I was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" because they ceased to exist when they died. No. God said, "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." Even though Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have died, they still exist. It is a present tense verb, not a past tense verb. Even though all of the patriarchs died earlier in biblical history, here we find that though they are dead, God said they are still alive and with him.

When God calls someone into a relationship with himself, that relationship continues not just for this life but past this life, into death and into the next life. Look how Jesus finished.

He is not God of the dead, but of the living. You are quite wrong." Mark 12:27 (ESV)

Who is the fool now? They wanted to make Jesus look foolish by pointing out the absurdity of marriage in the resurrection. Jesus made them look like fools by proving they underestimated the power of God and what he will do to our resurrected bodies. They wanted to make Jesus look like a fool but Jesus showed how they didn't even their their much smaller Bible which had evidence for life after death clearly spelled out in it.

Conclusion

Isn't it wonderful to think about the resurrection? Isn't it wonderful to know this life is not the end? When we die, everyone will continue to live. One day, everyone will get their bodies back, and they will be indestructible. We know for sure there is life after death. We also know for sure that those who die in Christ will be with Christ forever; one day they will get their bodies back. The resurrected life on the new creation will be better than we can imagine. Our resurrected bodies will be better than we can imagine. Our resurrection relationships will be better than we can imagine, especially our relationship with Christ.

Where did we learn all this good news? Not from the made-up stories of a 6-year-old boy but from Jesus and the Word of God.



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