

“Marriage in Heaven”  
Mark 12:18-27  
(Preached at Trinity, January 22, 2013)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. In the previous verses the Pharisees had been put to shame to the amazement of the people. This would have been to the delight of the Sadducees who held opposite views on many areas of doctrine.
  - A. The Sadducees were wealthy aristocrats – the governing class. The chief priests were Sadducees. They were quite willing to cooperate with the Roman government if it meant retaining their power.
  - B. The Pharisees recognized two standards for doctrine – the Scriptures and tradition. The Sadducees only recognized the Scriptures; however, the only part of Scripture which they regarded as binding was the Pentateuch. They did not accept the authority of the prophetic or poetic books.

This is why Jesus appeals to the Book of Exodus in His response. While there are other books of the Bible that express the resurrection they did not accept these books.
  - C. The Sadducees were at odds with the Pharisees in that they completely denied the possibility of life after death.

**Acts 23:6-8 NAU** - "But perceiving that one group were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, Paul *began* crying out in the Council, "Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees; I am on trial for the hope and resurrection of the dead!" <sup>7</sup> As he said this, there occurred a dissension between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the assembly was divided. <sup>8</sup> For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor an angel, nor a spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all."
2. The Pharisees and Sadducees agreed on one thing, however. Both hated Jesus. Jesus condemned both groups.
  - Jesus exposed the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and their emphasis on tradition.
  - In cleansing the Temple Jesus exposed the money-grabbing racket of the Sadducees.

Both groups desired nothing less than the complete destruction of Jesus.
3. The Pharisees had tried to discredit Jesus but repeatedly failed. Now the Sadducees came to Jesus with a question they thought would discredit Jesus since He claimed to give eternal life to those that follow Him. And if they proved the impossibility of the Pharisaical position on the resurrection at the same time they would achieve a double victory.

4. According to Hebrew law the brother of a man who died childless must take his deceased brother's wife and bear children in his name. This was referred to as the Levirate Law. **See Deut. 25:5-10.** This is the principle we see with Boaz in the Book of Ruth. What if such a woman was passed down through seven brothers? Whose wife would she be in eternity? Surely this absurdity would prove the resurrection to be absurd. Could this woman have seven husbands? No she could only have one – but which one
5. Jesus exposes their error
- Mark 12:24 NAU** - "Jesus said to them, "Is this not the reason you are mistaken, that you do not understand the Scriptures or the power of God?"
- A. They erred in their failure to understanding the Scriptures.
- a. The Sadducees claimed only the Pentateuch as authoritative and claimed that there are no proofs in the Pentateuch for the resurrection.
  - b. Jesus points them to the Pentateuch. One of the commonest titles for God in the Pentateuch was "the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob"  
**Mark 12:26 NAU** - "But regarding the fact that the dead rise again, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the *passage* about *the burning bush*, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, and the God of Jacob '?"  
**Exodus 3:6** – "Moreover he said, I *am* the God of thy 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 upon God."
  - c. God cannot be the God of dead men. The living God must be the God of living men.
  - d. Jesus is saying at the heart of God's covenant is redemption and our eternal salvation. Abraham's hope in God transcended this life.  
**Hebrews 11:13-16 NAU** - "All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. <sup>14</sup> For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. <sup>15</sup> And indeed if they had been thinking of that *country* from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. <sup>16</sup> But as it is, they desire a better *country*, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them."
- B. They erred in their failure to understand the power of God.
- a. Jesus defended the resurrection. It is a small thing for God to be able to raise men from the dead.
  - b. God is also able to raise men in such a manner that marriage will no longer be necessary.  
Many imagine reuniting with family in heaven and living together as we did on earth.  
The truth is that in heaven there will be new and greater relationships which will transcend the physical relationships of time.

6. This passage confirms several things about the nature of marriage and the resurrection. Much of our resurrected state remains a mystery but we know that we will become as Christ in His resurrected body.  
**1 John 3:2** – "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."
7. Tonight I want us to examine some aspects of the resurrection, particularly as it applies to marriage.
- I. We will be raised with immortal bodies – **Verse 30**  
**1 Corinthians 15:53** – "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality."
- A. There will be no death in heaven
1. We will be as the angels whose number has never changed
  2. One of the purposes of marriage is for the procreation of the human race  
**Genesis 1:28** – "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."  
**Genesis 9:1** – "And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth."
  3. Procreation will be unnecessary in heaven because there will be no death  
**Luke 20:35-36 NAU** - "neither marry nor are given in marriage; <sup>36</sup> for they cannot even die anymore"
- B. Our physical appetites will be transformed in the resurrection. God has given us certain appetites due to the weakness of our mortal state.
1. In eternity sleep will no longer be necessary. This doesn't mean we won't experience rest and enjoy it. But it won't be essential to our existence.
  2. Food will no longer be necessary. This doesn't mean we won't eat.
    - a. Jesus shared food with His disciples in His resurrected body.  
**John 21:12-14 NAU** - "Jesus said to them, "Come *and* have breakfast." None of the disciples ventured to question Him, "Who are You?" knowing that it was the Lord. <sup>13</sup> Jesus came and took the bread and gave *it* to them, and the fish likewise. <sup>14</sup> This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples, after He was raised from the dead."
    - b. He also ate with the disciples on the Road to Emmaus  
**Luke 24:30-31 KJV** - "And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake, and gave to them. <sup>31</sup> And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight."
  3. Because procreation is essential in this life God gave us sexual appetites. Sexual desires will no longer be necessary
- II. Sexual distinctions will no longer have the same application
- A. This does not mean that there will not be male and female in heaven. Only that the earthly distinctions will be changed

1. The female sex was created as a companion and helper to the man  
**Genesis 2:18** – "And the LORD God said, *It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.*"
    - a. Such relationships will be unnecessary in heaven
    - b. No one will be alone – no one will be in need of companionship  
 We shall see Christ face to face. Not even pre-fall man knew of this glory. Adam was still in a weak human body with human needs.
  2. Woman was made the weaker sex and needed to be protected by the man  
 This weakness will not be apparent in the resurrection  
**1 Peter 3:7 NAU** - "You husbands in the same way, live with *your wives* in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered."
  3. In the God ordained hierarchy of authority the woman is to submit to her husband. The fall was a breach of this submission.  
**Ephesians 5:24** – "Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let the wives be* to their own husbands in every thing."  
 In the resurrection all earthly authority will cease  
 Civil, Pastoral, Family – all are delegated and will cease
- B. In heaven these distinctions shall no longer be applicable
1. Christ will be the husband of all – our Bridegroom
  2. Jesus says, **Verse 25** - "but are like angels in heaven."  
 The angels have never had sexual distinctions  
 (although all of their earthy appearances have always been masculine)

### III. Relationships will be transformed

- A. The Jews who believed in the resurrection believed that earthly relationships continued after the resurrection. Jesus was declaring that earthly relationships will be forever changed.
1. Our earthly love is partitioned – We love certain individuals more than others  
**Ephesians 5:25** – "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;"
    - a. We have particular love for our mates and for our children
    - b. We have particular responsibility for our relatives  
**1 Timothy 5:8** – "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."  
 This love is essential for survival upon the earth. The solidarity of the family strengthens society.
  2. In heaven our love will be equal for all
    - a. We will have a perfect full love for all of our brethren  
 Earthly families will be overshadowed by the great family of God. We will know our earthly family and love them but we will love others equally  
**Luke 20:36 NAU** - "because they are like angels, and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection."

- B. Our highest love will be for Christ, and our greatest desire will be to honor Him
1. Now our love for Christ is imperfect. After the resurrection we will have a perfect and full love for Christ
  2. Lost earthly relatives will be seen as the enemies of Christ

Conclusion:

1. Once again the people were astonished at the doctrines of Christ.  
**Matthew 22:33 NAS** - "And when the multitudes heard *this*, they were astonished at His teaching."
2. The doctrines of Christ must be our doctrines. His doctrine is the Bible. His appeal was to the authority of the Scriptures.  
**Mark 12:24 NAU** - "Is this not the reason you are mistaken, that you do not understand the Scriptures or the power of God?"
3. Our highest priority must be to receive the Word of God in its entirety. It must be our absolute authority.
4. Upon Jesus' appeal to Scripture the Sadducees were silenced.  
**Matthew 22:34 NAS** - "But when the Pharisees heard that He had put the Sadducees to silence, they gathered themselves together."
5. We must become masters of the Word of God. The authority of the Word of God will put to silence the disputers.  
**Titus 1:9 NAU** - "holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict."