



# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

*Week 37: Resurrection, our final redemption*

The Sadducees were just as opposed to Jesus as were the Scribes and Pharisees. And although they were in a different league in terms of their rank and influence, and had a difference in their theology on the resurrection, they were happy to side with the Scribes and Pharisees, when it came to collaborating with them in order to get rid of Jesus.

In this particular encounter with Jesus, the Sadducees tried to trick him into giving an answer about the resurrection that would condemn him, but their attempt backfired on them, serving only to reveal their own ignorance.

## 1. The Resurrection Means That The Dead Will Rise

- Read Mark 12:24-27, Exodus 3:6, 1 Corinthians 15:50-53

It's tragic to think that the most powerful religious leaders of God's people, at the time, did not really know the scriptures or the power of God for themselves. The Sadducees only held to the first 5 books of the Bible, known to us as the Pentateuch, which dictated the laws of Moses. They were experts in this area of knowledge, yet in just one encounter, Jesus managed to expose them as having only a superficial and incomplete understanding of these scriptures. Jesus pointed them to a passage they knew by heart, in which God told Moses that He was the same God as that of Moses's ancestors. Yet, God spoke to Moses in the present tense, showing that, although his forefathers died many generations ago, they were spiritually alive with God, and that He was still their God (Exodus 3:6). So, even though the Sadducees were "experts" in theology, they had missed some significant insights in this passage they knew so well, which caused them to hold incorrect beliefs about the resurrection.

It is helpful for us, as Christians, to have this encounter written so clearly for us in this passage, as it gives us absolute confidence in Jesus's teaching on the resurrection. The resurrection is central to the Christian faith. If resurrection had not been possible, Jesus would not have been able to rise from death to life, in order to conquer sin and death and give us eternal life. But we know from the scriptures that Jesus did, in fact, rise from the dead, and that he was the first of many who will rise from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:50-53).

- ❖ Q: Why is the doctrine of the resurrection central to the Christian faith?
- ❖ Q: Have you ever had a conversation about the possibility of a resurrection with a non-believer? What did they think about your beliefs?
- ❖ Q: Have you taken the time to consider why you believe what you believe about the doctrine of the resurrection?

## 2. The Resurrection Means All Who Rise Will Be Judged

- Read Hebrews 9:27-28, Romans 3:21-23, Acts 17:30-31, Romans 14:12, Ephesians 2:1-10
  - We are either judged in Christ or outside of Christ  
We are all going to be judged for our sin. Whether we will be declared innocent or guilty depends entirely on whether or not we have placed our faith in Christ. If we have, God as the judge will declare us righteous, based on Christ's righteousness on our behalf. For those of us who have placed our faith in Christ, there will be no condemnation.. Jesus took the punishment for our sin, and took the full wrath of God onto himself, so that we would not have to endure it ourselves.
  - God ultimately judges all things and justice will be served  
Although there is great injustice on the earth now, at the final judgment, God will deal with sin once and for all. And we will all have to account to God for the way in which we lived our lives.
  - Christians face judgment for reward  
As Christians, we will be declared righteous before God, and will be rewarded according to how we lived our lives for Him. God is the only one who knows the motives of our hearts; only He knows whether the things we did on this earth were truly for His glory and His kingdom. It is a wonderful thing to know that, although our service to Him here on earth may have been done in obscurity, it will reap a great reward in eternity.



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- ❖ Q: Is the final judgment something that Christians should fear? Explain your answer.
- ❖ Q: On what basis will God declare a person righteous on the Day of Judgment?
- ❖ Q: Consider the way you live your life in the following 3 areas, and ask yourself whether you are living for reward now or reward in eternity: the way you spend your money, where you use up your energy and where you spend your time.
- ❖ Q: In which of the above 3 areas of your life do you most struggle to prioritise eternal rewards over earthly rewards, and why?
- ❖ Q: How can we overcome the struggle to focus on temporary rewards, and to keep our eyes on eternal rewards?
- ❖ Q: What do you think it would look like for folks in a wealthy suburb like Bryanston to be considered faithful by God, on the Day of Judgment?

### 3. The Resurrection Means That We Have Before Us An Eternal Life That Makes This Life Worth It

- Read Revelation 21:3-7, Philippians 3:20-21, 1 Corinthians 2:9, 1 Corinthians 15:35-49

What God has promised in eternity for those of us who believe is unimaginable. We will be raised to newness of life, and our new resurrection bodies will be without the limits to which our earthly bodies are subject. There will be no more death, no more crying or pain. Hurt and disappointment will no longer have any power over us. There will be no more illness or tragedy, no more crime or fear, injustice will be banished, and shame and brokenness will be no more. Everything we loathe in this life will be gone, and we will be in the presence of Almighty God, fully satisfied in Him forever.

- ❖ Q: How should the knowledge of our future resurrection and all that awaits us in eternity spur us on in our daily lives?
- ❖ Q: How can the reality of our eternal inheritance help those who currently are sick, struggling, in pain or filled with despair?

