

Daily Discipleship

Sunday, November 6-12 (C) - Luke 20:27-38

Discipleship: *A New Life*

Focus Question: *What will life be like after you are resurrected?*

word of life

“Indeed they cannot die anymore, because they are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection.” Luke 20:36 (NRSV)

Read Luke 20:27-38

Luke 20 describes several incidents where the chief priests, scribes, elders, and Sadducees test Jesus with their questions. Although they challenge his authority and try to trap him in his responses, they are not successful. “And they were not able in the presence of the people to trap him by what he said; and being amazed by his answer, they became silent.” (Luke 20:26 NRSV)

1. *Why would the religious leaders try to trap Jesus?*
2. *Does this type of testing and questioning continue today? How so?*

The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection. They were a conservative religious group who based their beliefs on only the first five books of Moses. Since there is no mention of resurrection in these books, the Sadducees dismissed this theological belief. Thus, it is quite suspicious for them to ask Jesus about the resurrection.

And yet, the Sadducees are concerned about the resurrection of a woman who has had the misfortune of marrying men who die while being married to her and before parenting a child. By law, in order to carry on her husband’s line, a childless woman was required to marry the brother of the deceased husband. By the end, she has married seven brothers. The Sadducees want to know which husband she will have after death.

3. *How realistic is this example?*
4. *Why would the Sadducees spend any time speculating about a topic which they did not believe?*
5. *What possible answer might the Sadducees have been looking for?*

Jesus responds despite the obvious trap by the Sadducees. He explains the difference between life in this world and life after the resurrection. It is simply inappropriate to take the patterns and expectations associated with life on earth and transfer them to eternal life. In offering such a response, Jesus never challenges the issue of resurrection. Instead, he accepts resurrection as a reality, and does not question the theological basis for it.

6. *Do you think this would have satisfied the Sadducees?*
7. *Does it appear Jesus was rattled by the question? Why or why not?*

Jesus makes a special reference back to the Sadducee’s beloved Moses. As the Lord spoke to him in the burning bush, the Lord claimed to be the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This was a present claim as if Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were living. God is a God of the living and not the dead.

An important theological foundation is being laid. Resurrection is not a passing fad, but it is part of God’s plan even when people cannot grasp it. Jesus will make resurrection a reality in his life and for his followers.

8. *What does it mean for God to be the God of the living and not the dead?*
9. *What does it mean for you personally?*

word among us

Jamie and her dad laid on their backs on the hill outside of their home. It was a tradition to find faces, animals, and objects in the white fluffy clouds above their heads. They could not always find each other's objects in the clouds, but they had fun trying. Out of the blue, Jamie asked her dad, "What will I look like in heaven? Will you know me?"

1. *If you were Jamie's dad, how would you answer?*
2. *Will you be able to recognize loved ones in heaven? How so?*
3. *How do we know what life will be like after the resurrection?*

The Sadducees tried to trap Jesus with their questions about the resurrection. They didn't even believe in the resurrection. Imagine non-believers approach you with questions about Jesus. You sense they are attempting to trap you.

4. *How would you respond?*
5. *What are things not to say?*

Imagine someone comes to you who has not heard about Jesus or life after death. This person is genuinely concerned and interested in resurrection.

6. *How would you respond to that person?*
7. *Compare and contrast your responses in these two situations.*
8. *How often does someone talk to you about faith?*
9. *What would need to change in order to have more of these conversations?*

Jesus describes the dead as "like angels and are children of the resurrection" (Luke 20:36 NRSV) Life after our resurrection is beyond our grasp and understanding. No doubt we want to imagine it, but Jesus pushes the description beyond our reach. Instead we are to trust in God to care for us like a loving parent cares for a child.

10. *What questions do you have about resurrection?*
11. *Is it possible to both trust and have questions? How so?*

God is God of all – creation, the dead, and the living. Nothing is beyond the realm of God. Resurrection is part of God's plan. As humans, we have to be patient as God unfolds the plan for life and resurrection. In Jesus Christ, we get a glimpse of resurrection.

Even though Jesus prepared his disciples and followers, they were not anticipating the reality of resurrection. Their lives and faith were turned upside down. To their credit, the disciples became powerful and effective witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus as they proclaimed a living God. No doubt, some tried to trap and deter them, but they kept their faith.

12. *How do you keep your faith in the resurrection?*
13. *What do you look forward to in the resurrection?*

Prayer

Resurrected Christ, thank you for the promise and reality of resurrection. Open my life to the opportunities to share the good news with others. Amen.

Dig Deeper

Job 19:23-27a

last word

Take a walk and imagine life
after the resurrection.



Daily Discipleship

Written by John and Robin McCullough-Bade

Copyright © 2007 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

May be reproduced for local, non-sale use provided the above copyright notice is included.

www.elca.org/evangelizingchurch/dailydiscipleship

Nov. 11, 2007 Page 2 of 2