

Anonymous Irish Presbyterian minister wrote:

What about those who are nearest to us on earth?
Will I still have a special relationship with my spouse in heaven?

Will you still treat your parents as father and mother?
Will our close friends here be are close friends there?

It's all very well and good to look forward to meeting tens of thousands of new folks,
but are we not created in such a way to still want an inner circle?

Such questions are natural but not easy to answer.

We will certainly know one another in heaven, King David looked forward to being reunited with his dead son. Paul urges bereaved believers to not sorrow as those who have no hope, because God will bring with Him those who died knowing Jesus.

The reason for not grieving like unbelievers is because their parting isn't permanent. They will meet again. We cannot know less in heaven, then we did on earth, and so we will recognize there those known to us here.

We are also told that according to the gospel of Mark they neither do we marry or are we given in marriage. Henceforth there will be no reproduction. The husband will not need a helper, nor the wife someone to cherish her protectively. Children will not require parental care. The relationship between Christ and His church will be so obvious as to render unnecessary a human illustration.

Does this mean then that a spouse or a best friend won't mean anymore to us then any other in the multitude of the redeemed? I don't think so. For every good thing will be better in heaven then on earth. With all our loved ones the friendship there will be closer then it is now.

You will know them more intimately, love them more intensely, delight in them more fully. It is impossible that we should lose anything good where good abounds.

Then Jesus in verse 26 says let me come down to the real question, the notion of the resurrection itself.

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'? 27 He is not the God of the dead, but of the living; you are greatly mistaken."
Mark 12:24-27

Sierra Community Church October 21st, 2012-Dan Wilvers



Part 35:
Heaven Imagined and Real
Mark Chapter 12 verses 18-27

Jewish majority believed in the resurrection

No wonder my heart is glad, and I rejoice. My body rests in safety. 10 For you will not leave my soul among the dead or allow your holy one to rot in the grave.11 You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of your presence and the pleasures of living with you forever.

Psalm 16:9-11

But the Sadducees did not.

Then Jesus was approached by some **Sadducees**—religious leaders who say there is no resurrection from the dead. Mark 12:18

To put it in it's simplest term they were annihilationist.

When you died you went out of existence. So since both the soul and the body perished they were no penalties for bad behavior and no rewards for good behavior.

They prided themselves on:

1. Following exclusively the first five books of the Bible.
2. Being in charge of the Jewish Temple
3. Being strict legalist
4. Dominating the ruling class called the “Sanhedrin” or “The Seventy”

An Absurd Scenario

“Teacher, Moses gave us a law that if a man dies, leaving a wife without children, his brother should marry the widow and have a child who will carry on the brother’s name. 20 Well, suppose there were seven brothers. The oldest one married and then died without children. 21 So the second brother married the widow, but he also died without children. Then the third brother married her. 22 This continued with all seven of them, and still there were no children. Last of all, the woman also died. 23 So tell us, whose wife will she be in the resurrection? For all seven were married to her.”

God had ordained in the Book of Deuteronomy for the nation of Israel all the necessary obligations to the eldest son to advance family name, to hold onto the land and the family inheritance via their tribal identities.

This is why a younger brother was obligated to marry his brothers widow, if he were of age, and still single himself.

Jesus responds with two questions:

1st question: Jesus said to them, “Is this not the reason you are mistaken, that you do not understand the Scriptures or the power of God? 25 For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. Mark 12:24,25

2nd question: 26 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’? 27 He is not the God of the dead, but of the living; you are greatly mistaken.” Mark 12:24-27

The resurrection is absolutely foundational to the unfolding of God’s purposes for Jesus’ coming and our destinies with Him.

Heaven Imagined And Real

My contention is that people are content with a vague notion of God, and a clear idea of their positioning in heaven. Unexamined and undemonstrated confidence that things will be fine on the other side, no matter how they have lived their life in this world.

But for followers of Jesus, belief in the afterlife is no mere sentiment.

- We believe just as there is justice in this world there will be much more even perfect justice in the next.
- We believe there are moral consequences to be faced in the next world for one’s life in this world.
- We believe that God will not be mocked and that whatever a person sows this to shall they reap.
- We do not believe it will go well for all people no matter how well they have lived if they have not embraced God’s offer of salvation through his Son Jesus.
- We do not believe that Heaven is the only destination. *But we certainly do believe in Heaven, we have reasons not just sentiment.*
- We do not believe life continues after death merely because we want it to or because we hope it will.
- We believe Heaven exist for those redeemed because God has promised it to us, because Jesus Christ our Savior rose from the dead.