



Sermon, November 9, 2025
God of the Living: Luke 20:27-38

In the Gospel of Luke, the twentieth chapter, we meet the Sadducees, religious leaders who tried to trap Jesus with a tricky question about the resurrection. The Sadducees were a group that did not believe in life after death. They rejected the idea of angels, spirits, or resurrection. Their name, Sadducee, means righteous ones. They were wealthy, priestly, and closely tied to the Temple in Jerusalem. They accepted only the written Torah (the first five books of Moses) as the true authority. Because of that, their understanding of faith was limited, and they often debated others, especially Jesus, about life after death. Yet in their question, Jesus did not rebuke them, but he saw an opportunity not just to correct their misunderstanding, but to reveal a deeper truth about God's power and the hope of eternal life. Through his response, he invited them and us to see that resurrection is not a human invention, but a divine promise grounded in the very nature of God, who is "not the God of the dead, but of the living."

Therefore, to challenge Jesus, the Sadducees came with a story of a woman who had married seven brothers, one after another, after each husband died. Then they asked Jesus, "In the resurrection, whose wife will she be?" (Luke 20:33). However, their question was not born from faith; it was born from mockery. They did not believe in the resurrection at all. For them, death was the end. Any talk of life beyond the grave sounded like foolishness to them. Nevertheless, Jesus did not dismiss their question. He did not scold them or walk away. Instead, He took their challenge as a moment to educate them and those who were around. Jesus revealed the Sadducees' misunderstanding of the afterlife. He explained that the life to come is not a continuation of this earthly life; it is a transformation. In the resurrection, there will be no marriage and no death, because those who are raised are like the angels and are children of God. (Luke 20:36).

Then Jesus did something brilliant: He took them back to Moses, the one they respected most. He reminded them that God called Himself "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." (v37). This means that the God Jesus is talking about is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to Him, all are alive. People of God, many of us still have questions like the Sadducees. Maybe not about husbands and wives in the afterlife, but about what happens beyond the grave. We wonder: If there is life after death, what will it be like? Will we recognize one another? Will we be reunited with those we love?

And just like he did to the Sadducees, Jesus does not dismiss our questions. He redefines the reality of resurrection. He educates us that resurrection life is not an extension of this world's life. Resurrection is a transformation. In the resurrection, our relationships will be perfected, not erased. Love will no longer need the covenant of marriage, because all of us will be united in perfect communion with God and with one another. In that eternal communion, every longing of our hearts will find its fulfillment in God's boundless love. What we comprehend now in faith will then become the radiant reality of unending joy and peace.

"The people of this age marry and are given in marriage. But those who are considered worthy of taking part in the age to come will neither marry nor be given in marriage." (Luke 20:34-35).

As Jesus said, "They can no longer die, for they are like the angels." (Luke 20:36) Not that we become angels, but that we share in their immortality and their closeness to God. In this way, our humanity is perfected, not replaced, as we enter into the fullness of eternal life. It is a promise of transformation, where death loses its power and we live forever in the light of God's presence.

People of God, our hope in the resurrection does not rest on our imagination, but it rests on the very character of our God. The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. This living God is faithful. God's promises cannot be undone by death. The resurrection is not just a doctrine to believe, but it is the inevitable result of God's faithfulness. Because our God is the God of the living, not the dead. For him, all of them are alive." (Luke 20:38). To believe in the resurrection is to believe in the living God whose power, whose love, and whose presence reach even beyond the grave. Amen.

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