

Title: THE GOD OF THE LIVING, LUKE 20:27 – 38
(Chatham, NJ; 11/13/16, AM) [S-P, Question and Answer Outline]

Theme: In a dialogue with his contemporaries Jesus engages them with a theological lesson on the afterlife and the nature of God.

Purpose: To clarify Jesus' beliefs on these two issues and to demonstrate their relevance to us.

Introduction:

1. Jesus allows something of a question and answer session with him.
2. This is in Jerusalem, and chronologically we are past the triumphal entry, the cleansing of the Temple, and challenges to Jesus authority.
3. Apparently this will be the last attempt to question Jesus on anything, 40.
4. This seems like an irrelevant question to us moderns, but Jesus' answers are not.
5. He addresses not only the nature of our heavenly existence but also the nature of God.

I. First, the Question, Luke 20:27-33

A. Trap questions

1. Many of the questions in this section reveal an attitude of those who don't genuinely want answers but only want to discredit Jesus: the trappers
2. Questions about his authority and paying taxes to Caesar are examples.
3. Perhaps you've encountered the same folks; their questions seek to trap you into admitting something false.
4. Like, "Have you stopped cheating on your income taxes yet?"

B. True seeker questions

1. Other people genuinely want to know
2. Their questions may sound challenging, but we should not fear trying to answer
3. Luke 21:7 is one such question of the disciples

C. The Sadducees' question

1. Not one we would ask: the issue is over the marriage law in Deuteronomy
2. This law was meant to perpetuate the deceased's name in Israel
3. But like the other "trap" questions this one leads to a scenario difficult to reconcile, hence, the desire to trap Jesus in some logically impossible scenario
4. Questions Buddha asked his pupils do something similar: What is the sound of one hand clapping? If a tree falls in the woods and no one is there to hear it, does it make a sound?
5. Each questions implies that you should suspend your logic
6. Jesus plows ahead with his answers to their question.

II. Understanding the Afterlife

A. The afterlife

1. The Sadducees didn't believe in it anyway
2. Matthew 22:29 reveals another part of Jesus' answer: you are wrong because you don't know Scripture or the power of God
3. This question is designed as a trapper: there is really no answer the way it is framed: "Whose wife will she be?"

B. Jesus reveals something about heaven

1. We will not be the same in heaven as we are on earth
2. The Sadducees are trying to compare apples and oranges
3. There is no marrying and giving in marriage in heaven
4. Equal to angels and are sons of God because they are sons of the resurrection

5. Understand sons to speak of both male and female
6. There is a fundamental change in those who are considered worthy of attaining the resurrection
7. Paul addresses this in a different way in 1 Cor. 15:44, 53
8. Suffice it to say that we will partake of an eternal nature that transcends this mortal nature

III. Understanding the Nature of God

A. More than a debate about marriage

1. The Sadducees accepted no portions of Scripture other than the Books of Moses
2. Jesus answers them from there, Exodus 3
3. God is thus the God of the living, not the God of the dead
4. I cannot speculate on what this says about the present state of the dead
5. But we do know that God's very nature transcends the boundaries of time

B. The nature of God today

1. If God does not exist, as some suppose, there is no afterlife and we have nothing but a hopeless outlook on life
2. So Jesus moves this beyond some parochial debate about marriage in heaven
3. There was a controversy at Wheaton College recently: a young teacher wore the Islamic head covering because she suggested identifying with Islam because our God's are the same.
4. They are not.

Conclusions:

1. We have the hope of an afterlife.
2. We worship a God who is fundamentally different from all others.
3. He is the God and Father of Jesus Christ.
4. He is also the God who has provided the means of attaining an eternal home with Him.
5. We must accept the Gospel to do so.