



King Jesus - Part 7
Anticipating His Eternal Kingdom
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Well today in our study we encounter a group of cultural elites who would fit right in here in a modern America. They are called the Sadducees and I'm sure you've heard of the Sadducees, if you've had any exposure to the Bible at all, but just to inform you, they were a first century group, a very powerful, quasi-religious, political aristocrats. That's who they were. They had a lot of sway on what went on in the Temple Mount. And you remember the context of what we've been studying, Jesus had just come in, and in their minds, as well as the Pharisees and the chief priests and the scribes, had presumptuously presented himself as the King. Well these Sadducees, as they step up in the narrative that we encounter this morning in Luke Chapter 20, these were a group that Josephus, the first century historian, Jewish historian, said they were rich, they were wealthy, they were powerful, and of course we learned not only from Josephus but from the New Testament that they didn't believe in all this supernatural nonsense. They didn't believe in the Spirit. They didn't believe in angels. They didn't believe, and most importantly, they didn't believe in the afterlife, no resurrection. And in that regard they'd fit right in with so many in our naturalistic society who are touting the fact that it's dumb for you to have any kind of hope or interest in the afterlife because when you die you're dead and it's over.

I mean they were the college professors, if you will, of the first century. They were the Internet trolls that when you talk about life after death they write things like this, "When you die, you cease to exist, no afterlife, no feeling, no thought, no perception, no existence, your existence, everything that you were, simply disappears like a popped soap bubble." I mean that's pretty much what you would have the Sadducees writing if they had an Internet in the first century and wanted to post things about your verse posting on Facebook or Instagram or whatever you do. They would say, "Oh, that's nonsense, it's ridiculous." Reminds me of Isaac Asimov, he's written so many books, I happen to be reading one of his books this week, a Boston University professor, he died in 1992, but he was a biochemistry professor and he spoke often about the foolishness of you being afraid of death. There's no need. He said, "There's nothing frightening about eternal, dreamless sleep. Nothing. I mean, tell Hamlet, there's no concerns about your sleep in this far country. Don't worry about that. Surely it's better than any eternal torment in hell or eternal boredom in heaven."

Well that is what we have in this group who approaches Christ now. If you would turn in your Bibles, if you haven't already, to Luke Chapter 20. I want you to see how relevant this kind of thinking is. And while you may immediately distance yourself in Luke Chapter 20 beginning in verse 27, you will understand that it may be something you say, "I don't adhere to. I'm a confessional, evangelical Christian. I believe in the afterlife, that's why I trust in Christ." I just am concerned that maybe we share a little bit of the kind of avoidance of this topic, if not in our conversation, at least in our thinking, our mind and our hope.

So follow along as Jesus, after being confronted by the Pharisees, in essence the scribes, the chief priests, the elders of the people, now the Sadducees take their turn at it and it begins this way, verse 27. "There came to him," that is Christ, "some Sadducees, who deny that there was a resurrection." And Luke tells us this repeatedly, not only here but in the book of Acts. Luke, who writes that, makes it very clear that that's one of the reasons they kept objecting to all the teaching of the Gospel because it really



hinged on a bodily resurrected Christ and they couldn't handle that. They certainly didn't believe in the afterlife.

So they asked him a question, which I'm sure was a well-worn question. They had asked the Pharisees this who did believe in the afterlife, they'd asked the rabbis, I'm sure, and they thought, well this is it. This ends the conversation. There's no good answer to this and here it goes. They ask him this question, verse 28. "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, having a wife but no children, the man must take the widow and raise up offspring for his brother." That was this levirate law. Levirate in Latin means "in-law" or "brother-in-law" and that means, and don't think about this too long ladies, but if your husband dies, you'd have to have your brother-in-law step in so that you could continue the heir, which is very important in your land and your tribe and your family and your clan. Certainly for your property and your Social Security to be able to raise these children in the stead of your lost and dead husband.

So that was the law. So they said OK, if that's what it says Deuteronomy Chapter 25, we've got a scenario to pose for you. Verse 29. "Now there were seven brothers. The first one took a wife and died without children." So this is exactly what Moses said. Well, we know what's supposed to happen. You've got to have the second brother come in here and pick up the mantle, if you will, and provide children for that widow. "So there's the second and then the third and all these brothers likewise all the way to seven." They kept taking this widow and "left no children and died." Now this is a hypothetical, obviously. This isn't happening but they're saying it could happen. The Law of Moses and Deuteronomy 25 leaves this open that you could have at the end of all of this family story a woman who's been married to seven brothers, and at the end, when the woman dies, verse 32, we've got a question for you. Verse 33, "In the (snicker snicker) the resurrection," I mean we know you believe in that, right, because you're probably of the conservative, take-the-Bible-literally clan. We just want to know, "Whose wife would the woman be?" The hubris and the arrogance of this group. "I mean, tell us that, because after all the seven had her as wife."

So it's a little confusing. Right? If you are really going to live again after your life, you're going to walk into this place and you've got seven guys who were your husband. What are you going to do? It's going to be hard to set up shop domestically in heaven if you had seven husbands. So how is that going to work?

And Jesus speaks now just from commonsense here. Jesus says, "Listen, the sons of this age marry and are given in marriage, but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage for they cannot die anymore, because they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection."

We'll try to untangle that in a second. Verse 37. Now he's going to defer to Scripture. "But that the dead are raised," you want to know about that? You're quoting Moses. Let's talk about Moses. "Even Moses showed, in the passage about the bush," the burning bush, "where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." Now, a question for you, Sadducees. "Now he is not God of the dead," since your quasi-religious and you say you believe in God and the Bible, and you believe in this passage, you're quoting this passage as authoritative. What about that same authoritative message from the Bible that speaks of Moses saying, he's the God of all these people. Well, if you know the chronology, you've got 1445, the 15th century, B.C. you got to go back to Abraham, that's about 500



years before Moses, and you've got all the subsequent children there. I mean, they're long since dead and God's not saying, "I WAS the God of these people." Like you saying, you don't say, you know, for someone whose dead, "I am their friend," you say "I was their friend." Well, "God is not the God of the dead, he's the God of the living, all live to him." Of course, when they die they're still conscious and alive. Then some of the scribes, who, of course, did believe in the resurrection, they were standing there, they'd already had their turn to discredit Christ. They go, "Yeah, Teacher, we like that answer. You've spoken well." And even the Sadducees apparently backed down, "For they no longer dared to ask him any question."

Versus 27 through 33 depict a group of arrogant discreditors who want to come to Christ and say, "You shouldn't be listened to. You shouldn't have this crowd. You shouldn't be important. You shouldn't be hailed as king, because you believe in the resurrection and that's stupid and we're going to give you this riddle, this question, and we're going to stump you, because we know that's dumb. So the issue on the table here, though it deals with the authority of Christ, really the issue on the table now is the afterlife. What's happening in this passage is they're saying, "We don't believe any of that and here's our reasons." You may say, "Well, I believe in the resurrection. I believe in life after death. I am confident I'm going to live when I die." And that's great, but I just wonder how much we, in practice, start to look like the Sadducees, who in theory and theology discredited the afterlife when it came to their life. Let me just make this clear, all they thought about is the here and now. They were earthbound, they were worldly in their thinking in the sense that they only thought about this world because this is all that matters.

Now you sit here today and you may say confessionally I believe in life after death, but I wonder this week if I were to take the brain-a-scope, put it on your forehead and just extract all the thoughts, all the conversations, everything you did this week, how much of your thinking, your thoughts, your planning, your activities, your priorities reflected the fact that you are not only thinking, but you're living as though you're going to live beyond the threshold of this mortal life. I think maybe we're practical Sadducees when it comes to the next life.

They were purposefully ignoring it. Maybe you're not purposefully ignoring it, but I'd like you, number one, to not do what they did. Let's flip this on its head and let me tell you to not do what they did. Jesus is about to correct them, number one on your outline, if you're taking notes and I wish that you would, jot this down: "Don't Ignore Your Future." And there's one thing I know about your future and I don't need a crystal ball or tarot cards for this. I can tell you, I know what's going to happen. You're not going to be living here, in this setting, on this planet, in this dispensation, it's not going to continue forever. Matter of fact, it's not going to take very long at all. When it comes to the big picture, we all are people who are, to put it in the words of Scripture, like a vapor, like a breath.

Jot this reference down, if you would, and let me read it to you. I mean, this was a song that Israel sang in the Old Testament, Psalm 39 verses 4 and 5. A few of the lyrics in this old song they used to sing and I wish we'd make more songs like this to remind us of our own mortality. Listen carefully.

The Psalmist writes, "Oh Lord, make me know my end," when my life ends, make me know. "And what is the measure of my days." Remind me just of how long I'm going to live. "Let me know how fleeting I am." It's not about give me the date I'm going to die, this is about the fact that I'm not going to live forever, this life is not going to last. "Behold, you have made my days a few handbreadths," which



is how they measured things like this, the width of their four fingers. Right? They didn't have their tape measures. It's just one little tiny handbreadth in a big scheme of what God's doing here in space and time. "My lifetime is as nothing before you," poetic hyperbole but clearly, I'm just a speck. I mean a handbreadth, I'm not even just a finger nail's width on God's big time line.

"Surely all mankind stands as a mere breath!" We're just here and gone. It's like the breath you could finally see here in Southern California this week, it just comes out and it's gone, poof. You don't see it anymore.

What time you go to bed at night? 10? 10:30? 11? 12? Let's just say it's 11. Let's say you get up at 6:00 in the morning. I just want you to think of your life as one day. Can you think of it that way for just a second? The average person is going to live, what do they say? In America, 78 years-old. You get up at 6:00. Go through all your morning ablutions and do all your things. Right? Well let's just think about that in terms of your life. When you entered the first grade, all that was done. You were finishing up breakfast when you were entering the first grade. I'm looking out there, most of you are high school graduates. Right? High school. Think back to high school.

For some of you that may be a long thought. Think back to high school. When you graduated from high school, picture yourself, a funky little hat, there you were. You were graduating from high school. That was about 10, 10:15 in the morning, the whole morning was gone. That's completely gone. Think about lunch. 28 years-old. I think most of you in this room are older than that. But I want you to think about that, when you were 28, you felt young. Right? Were already having lunch, the whole morning is gone. Everything that you could have done between the time you got up at 6:00 and the time now that it's noon, it's all gone. That whole morning is spent at 28. 40? Your mid-afternoon at this point. If it's a Sunday you're taking a nap at this point. It's mid-afternoon, the morning's gone, midday's gone. I mean, it's almost time to figure out what we're doing for dinner. And at dinner, you're 50. Hey 50-year-olds, the whole day is already gone. Now, the sun is setting, the clouds are turning colors. 65? Hate to even talk about 65-year-olds but I hope your PJ's are on at this point. Get your pajamas on. There's not much time left on this timeline. I mean the average person dies in their mid 70s. I mean this is a quick trip on this day. It's just a handbreadth.

"Teach me to number our days," Psalm 90 says, "so that we can present to a heart of wisdom." This is not about you being depressed that you're not going to last very long. This is about you saying, "I need to prepare for what's coming beyond this." The Bible is all about that. Think about what lies beyond. Don't ignore your future because it's going to be here before you know it. I think most of you, as I look out at you, you know this life is going fast. Here's the biblical word, it is "fleeting." That's the word from Psalm 39. It's fleeting, it's going, it's quick, and all I'm saying is to you is don't be a Sadducee in practice and just say, I'm not even thinking about that. Think about it. Think about it. You will be at the threshold before you know it and that's if, providentially, everything works out well in your life and you live to the normal average lifespan of an American.

Jesus always emphasized this, we don't have time to look at it, but Luke Chapter 12, he told that story of the man that only thought about was his life. He had all that he needed, and his business was going well, and at the end of this prosperous period of time, he said, "Let's build more silos and put more stuff in it. And God says something that I think you'd say, "Oh, don't say that, if your kid said it," he looks at that man and says, "You fool," you are a fool, "for today your soul is required of you. Who's



going to enjoy all these things that you have stored up? So is the man," Jesus said, "who is not rich toward God," he is just rich to himself. You may be doing fine in this life but everything you've got going for you that's good is going to go away. It is temporal.

And Paul said this, "Can you stop looking at the things that you can see?" I know it's an oxymoron but here it comes. Put your eyes on the things you can't see. He says, because the things you can see, I'm quoting now Second Corinthians Chapter 4, "The things that you can't see, those are eternal and the things you can see, transient." They're going away.

I've illustrated this way before, if you lived in Balboa Island there in Newport Beach, you had a beautiful house, expensive real estate, fantastic place to live, and out back, you got a slip out there and you had a nice yacht in it. You had a yacht, you had a house, you had two great places there. But you knew that there was a big flood that was coming. And in time, and it wouldn't take long, like one day, it's just quick, I mean it just a matter of months or years and that house is going to be under water, but you're going to go down to that dock, you're going to get on that yacht, and you're going to live in that yacht after the flood. I think you'd care a lot more about redecorating, organizing and stocking that yacht. Would you not? Than you would about redecorating and remodeling your house. Oh, I understand you have to live here in the world, you have to have a job, you have to put together a 401k, I understand real modern life and you've got to deal with it, but you need not be obsessed with it. Jesus says the Gentiles run after or chase after all these things. All they care about is the house on Balboa Island, they don't even care about the yacht. They say, "Oh, if I got something at the end of the dock, that's fine. I've got a dinghy, I can survive if there's a flood." That's not the way you need to think.

Life is short, eternity is long. There's the dumbest statement of the morning. But that's true! Master of the obvious. Life is really short, certainly when you compare it to how long eternity is. Hey, you can say, "I'm not a Sadducee." But are you a practical Sadducee? Have you thought about it? Have you given attention to it? Do you seek to store up treasure in heaven and say, "I am thinking about eternity?" Don't ignore your future. It's coming.

Versus 34 through 36. Jesus now just gets them thinking, that's all. Matter of fact, this may be hard to follow in the short amount of time we have, but versus 34 through 36, these three verses, Jesus does not quote Scripture, although there are some Scripture underpinnings here. He just talks about thinking about the difference between eternity and the temporal realities here on earth. And he's basically saying, you're rejecting eternity and you're using a dumb excuse about whose wife is this girl going to be when she gets to heaven and you're not even giving thought to why that argument doesn't make any sense. Because even intuitively, let me speak theologically now, even in general revelation, natural theology, it ought to tell you that there is no correspondence between what you're trying to use as the linchpin against eternity, that there's this marriage thing that won't work out in eternity. And Jesus is trying to get them to say, what is that all about?

Now in their day, they maybe understood in the cultural norms much more obviously the connection between marriage and what the Bible says than we do today. But it would be good for us to step back and say, whatever my objection is to eternity, I just need to stop and let natural theology, let even our conscience, let's just start there, start to mitigate against this nonsense that you're going to live until the soap bubble pops and then you're going to cease to exist.



Number two, I'll put it this way in your outline, as Jesus leads us in this thought. Let's "Think Sensibly About the Afterlife." Let's not just think theoretically and try and build a case that it's not going to happen because I'm going to either be, as Asimov says, I'm either going to be bored in heaven or I'm going to be tormented in hell, and I don't like either of those options. So let's just opt for the fact that we cease to exist.

The Sadducees have been saying it in one form or another for 2,000 years, and you can go back beyond that, but let's just look at the last 2,000 years since the time of Christ. The push to try and get you, as you sit here today with an iPhone in your pocket, to say, "You know what, there is no afterlife. Only what I can see is real. If I can't see it, if I can't touch it, if I can't taste it, if I can't smell it, then it's not real." I mean, that's what's been told to us by the cultural elites for thousands of years.

Well here are the stats in the most progressive, modern culture that we've ever had in the United States of America. 82% of Americans still believe. Oh, they're not as religious as they used to be, they don't defer to the Bible, they don't read the Bible. 82% say, "I am confident, I have a strong belief that there is an afterlife." Let's just start with that. And the Bible speaks to that. God has placed eternity in our hearts. There was something about the reality of the afterlife. And if I think about that and you say, "OK, this makes sense. God has not created me like a tree or a rock to have an existence that's temporal. There's more to me than biology, there's more to me than that corporeal kind of tactile thing that I look at when I cut my fingernails. I am more than the sum of my parts. There's something in me, made in the image of God, who is the real me, the spirit that animates this physical body and that is something that I can't get away from. And even if I'm taught by the best of the most intellectual elites in our country, I can be a really smart guy and still say, "I reject all that. I'm not going to cease to exist and pop like a soap bubble when I die." And if you're now going to ask the question, how is it, one dumb little argument, that marriage is going to work out in the next life, Jesus says, "Just give it some thought. Think about it."

Now again, I'm going to bridge the gap between what they understood about marriage and what we understand now, but let me inform you when today we think it's just the expendable part of our culture. This might be worth jotting down, Malachi Chapter 2. It's the last book of the Old Testament. Malachi Chapter 2 speaks of marriage in verses 13 through 15 and it speaks very clearly about something that I think was common knowledge to everyone in the first century. As a matter of fact, Jesus' answer gives us clarity about this. I mean when you see Jesus talking about the fact that in this age we marry and are given in marriage. What does that mean? We look now at two generations. "I got married" and now for me, June the third, I get my first "to give in marriage." He's going to start his own family. He's going to get married. So that's "marriage" and "given in marriage." There is this sequential, generational institution, this construct in society called family. It's based on a covenant relationship, and here's what God clearly says, to what should speak to everyone's conscience if you give it enough thought, and that is that marriage becomes the building block for succeeding generations. In other words, family, marriage being its glue, sticks two people together in a home so that we can deliver a whole other generation of human beings. That is what it's there for: "marriage - given in marriage," "marriage - given in marriage," "marriage - given in marriage."

It is the context, as it says Malachi 2, to produce offspring. Because that's where our children thrive, within the context and the barrier, if you will, the protective fence of a covenant relationship to which mom and dad are faithful to one another and stay faithful, not just until they have kids, raise them and



send them on, but even as they look back on their parents and see this is how the progeny, the future of humanity, sustains itself in a healthy way, we have marriage. And if you don't think that's the case and you wonder why all the junk is happening in our society today, you take a look at the breakdown, and I hate to sound like some social commentator right now, but the breakdown of that marital covenant. When you got all these children being born without that foundational context, you've got the problem of a modern society, at least here in America. But the Bible says, if you want to think about eternity, all of us recognize eternity in our hearts and now we think about that eternal state, why would there even be a construct of marriage? There would be no marriage or giving in marriage, because at that point you become ageless and, if you're ageless and timeless at that point, not that you don't have the sequence of time, but you no longer are subject to decay, to disease or to death, then why would we have a construct to foundationally nurture children and send them into the next generation. We wouldn't. In that sense we become like angels. Why? Because we don't die.

Do you see the logic here? He says, "The sons of this age," verse 34, "they marry and they're given in marriage. But those considered worthy to attain to that age," those are those who have repented of their sins and put their faith in Christ, "and to the resurrection of the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage." That social construct goes away. Why? "For," here's the rationale, "they can't die anymore." If you can't die, then there's no need for us to procreate. There's no need for another generation of people, "because they're equal to angels." What does that mean? Not that I become some kind of see through being, it's that angels don't procreate. The same angels that we had there at the beginning of creation are the same angels existing now. Same angels. There's no life insurance policy on angels. They all exist eternally and that's the point. They had a temporal beginning and they live on from that point. And so we'll be like them and we "are sons of God," in a relationship with God, being "sons of the resurrection." At one point, when I leave my body, I get my body back, a remanufactured body and it lives forever, it's ageless says First Corinthians 15.

And so I realize there's no need for the construct of marriage anymore. Now before you cheer or cry, depending on the state of your marriage, you married people... "No marriage in heaven. I don't know if I can handle that." Or maybe it's YES! I don't know what your response is to that. But let me make a few things clear about what Jesus is not saying. OK?

If you're thinking sensibly about the next life, you'd immediately know there's no need for labor and delivery. There is no need for the procreation of the human race because now we're all steady, we're all stable, we all exist from that point on. The natural theology should tell you as much. But I am being very clear, that if there's no construct of marriage, it does not mean that there is no longer gender, let's make that clear. From the very beginning when we had in the Garden people that were going to live forever, at least in theory, that's what they were there to do. God made them male and female. So we're not saying there's not male and female. I'm not saying there's not femininity and masculinity. There will be femininity and masculinity in eternity in the creatures that we are, even in our resurrected bodies, we will be male and female, and only, by the way, male and female to a very progressive culture. I guess I've got to say that footnote. Only male and female, that's all we got.

And it's set, and even in the, you know, the X Y of the future, the chromosomes, that is set in a perfect state without any kind of corruption or genetic problems, we exist as male and female. So we're not saying they're not male and female. In a very complimentary way, we have these two genders and it's going to continue. Jesus is not saying, just because there's no construct of marriage, that there'll be no



companionship. Let me make this clear. In the perfect state, in the Garden, Jesus said to these people who were, in theory, and I guess, even in their equipment at that point, they were without the curse, they were intended to live forever, God still looked at Adam and said it's not good for man to be alone.

So we know that in that perfect state, even in that state to live forever, there was this sense of we need to connect people in teams here. There needs to be companionship, there needs to be love, there needs to be friendship, there needs to be this thing that completes our lives by other people being in that contextual fellowship. So because there's no construct of marriage as we know it, a covenant relationship of you and me til death do us part, there is no death, for the sake of really, ultimately, at least in theory, theologically to raise children and populate the next generation, I still recognize that God says it's not good for me to be alone. So we're not all going to retreat to our studio apartments in the kingdom because we will need the kind of connections that we have, in the kind of constructs that we enjoy now, in kinds of relationships that bring us that kind of completeness and fulfillment. Just as in the Trinity, it's a Trinitarian fellowship that will exist in some way, I'm sure, in eternity.

Thirdly, I can't say there'll be no physical intimacy, whatever that means, the fulfillment and joy of connection in some way. There will be no, if I can be really crude and transparent here, there's no need for copulation for the sake of reproduction, you understand. There will be no need for that. The sex organs as they're designed to populate another generation, we won't have that or need that. But what it is that drives people to want to have, if I can be brash at 9:00 o'clock in the morning on Sunday, want to have sex, I'm not saying that those kinds of attractions and connections are going to be gone. I can't go to the Bible and say well that's going to be gone. I can only guess with conjecture that it'll be different. I know it won't be for the purpose of reproduction and it won't have that capacity, but that doesn't mean that there won't be some kind of fulfillment or joy in the connection that we have with other people. I don't know how that's going to work.

But I can say this, if you don't want to go to heaven because there's no sex there, I'm not even sure that I'm saying that. And I will say this, even if that's your thought and we end up finding out there is no equivalent to that, let me just tell you whatever you're missing will be replaced with something far better, you do recognize that I assume. Well, you say, "Well, I just don't want the Lord to come back before I get married and have the joy..." Stop with all of that. OK? Whatever it is that's going to be replaced with, it will be love, it will be intimacy, it will be joy, it will be the complimentary genders, all of that is going on for eternity. This is about the construct of marriage as an institution for the procreation of children and that goes away.

Thirdly, he says you are like angels and let me make this clear. He's not saying that that you're going to be Casper the Friendly Ghost and see through. Right? You cannot die.

But let's read the grammar of this. Why is there no marrying and giving in marriage, end of verse 35, verse 36, "For they cannot die anymore because they are equal to angels." You see what's going on there? We're not equal to angels in that we have all the same characteristics, ontologically, as angels. We're not saying that. What we are saying, in the fact that I no longer die and there's no need for procreation, I'm like angels in that regard. Angels are, the way we would see it, disembodied spirits. They never had bodies. But we will be embodied, encased, enmeshed spirits, just like I am now, only with a body that is perfect before God. That is the difference between me and angels and it will always exist as the difference between the resurrected sons of God, sons of the resurrection, and the angelic



class. Different. We have different roles, we have different purposes and we have different constitutions. We are both physical and spiritual. They are not. They are only spiritual. But the reality is we won't die.

And I don't have time for this either, but you might want to jot down, First Corinthians Chapter 15. Look carefully at verses 35 through 49 what the Bible says regarding the physicality of the body and there's only one passage, there's only one phrase in that passage that will give you trouble and that's this, when it says in verse 43, "what sown in dishonor, raised in glory." Not a problem. "Sown in weakness, raised in power." Verse 44, "It is sown a natural body, it is raised the spiritual body" and right there you get back to this passage and you say, we're like the angels because we're spirit. No. That can't be what it means, just like when you said that someone you know in your Bible study is a really spiritual guy. You didn't mean that when you try to shake his hand your hand goes through his torso. Right? Spiritual doesn't mean he's see-through, doesn't mean he's spirit without physicality. No. It means that he has a real connection to God, he has a deference to God, he has a bent to serve and walk with God. That's what you're saying. And so it is with our bodies now. They're natural, they're earthly, they're fleshly, they're sinful, they have impulses that are against the will of God.

Then though, our bodies will have an impulse that's only godly, only spiritual. And I know that's what it means because it ends this way, verse 49, First Corinthians 15:49, "Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust," yeah, we know what it is to be fallen and fall to temptation, "we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven," Jesus Christ. And I know this about Jesus Christ, in his resurrected state, Luke Chapter 24 verses 38 through 43, we have a picture of Jesus, in the resurrection, coming to his disciples who are freaking out thinking they're seeing a ghost, a spirit, a disembodied spirit, and Jesus says, "No. Look, look, look. Touch, touch, touch, touch me." And they're still flabbergasted and God stopped and he says this, "Give me a piece of broiled fish." No, he didn't ask that. He says, "What do you have to eat? Do you have anything to eat?" They said, "Yes, we've got broiled fish." They brought him broiled fish. And he started to eat it. Why?

Because in the middle of this theological discussion he got hungry? Is that what you're saying? No. Because there they can't believe that he's tactile and real and physical. And he says, "Give me fish." Casper can't play this trick. Right? And he starts eating. And then it's like, I'm physical. He ate the broiled fish, because you need teeth for that, you need a tongue for that, you need an esophagus for that, you need a digestive tract for that. So when it says in this passage, "You're going to be equal to angels," don't take that phrase out of context. "Equal to angels, I'm equal to angels." No. You cannot die anymore "because you're equal to angels," who don't die, "and are sons of God, rightly related to God, being sons of the resurrection." That takes me back to that physical, resurrected body.

Christ expected them to do more than clearheaded, rational, sensible thinking about life in the afterlife. And I think part of the problem with people in their false doctrines about the afterlife, is they just don't think about it enough. But it goes beyond that. If you really want clarity about this you can't just sit on a rock and think about it, although that would help because natural theology will give you some insight and clue. But if you really want to know what's going on in the afterlife you've got to talk to the one who's been there, the one who is the Lord of the afterlife. And talking, I should clarify, is not the real point, pray to him, clearly, asked for illumination to the book that he wrote about it. You need the Scripture to guide you and that's where Jesus goes next, versus 37 through 40. "But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed this." Now, if you're just going to look at the Pentateuch, which some



people believe the Sadducees only believed in the first five books of Moses, which may or may not be true, that's debated. But he says, if you're going to give me a quote from Moses, let me quote now Moses for you. "He calls the Lord, the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob." Present tense, not past tense. Just like you wouldn't say, "So and so is my friend. Yeah, he died in 1992." No, he was your friend. "Was the God of Abraham, was the God of Isaac was the God of..." No. "And God is the God of the living." Not going to speak that way about people who don't exist anymore, who popped like a soap bubble. And they said, "That's a good answer teacher, spoken well," the scribes said that from the back row. And no one wanted to ask him any more questions to try and trap him and that's what this, wasn't entrapment of questions.

Number three on your outline, I hope this would be your pattern. You need to "Let Scripture Define Your Hope." Right? Let Scripture define your hope. Not the Boston Bio-Chem professors. Not the, you know, the Hitchens and Dawkins of our day, not the skeptics. And by the way, not the best-selling New York Times books about boys who go to heaven and come back and tell their parents about it. Can you stop reading those books? They're not helpful. They're not helpful at all. They are filled with heresy. Can I tell you that? It may warm your heart and you may hold it out to your friend and say, "Here, this is not a mean, bad Bible that tells you all about sin and judgment and Hell and kind of scaring you into repentance. It's a book about a boy going to heaven and seeing his grandmother."

And there are all kinds of these books, we're not just picking on that one, there are several of them. And they always do well in the New York Times bestseller list. And you know one of the reasons? Because they're so nice. They're so nice, by the way, that they're filled with this rank heresy: universalism. I've read a lot of them and if you read them most of them will leave you with the impression that it really matters not where you stand with Christ. As a matter of fact, many of them don't even mention Christ, and those that do, look for the concepts of repentance and sin and conviction and all the things that we heard about in the testimonial tank this morning that the Bible says it takes to get right with a living God. It's not there. Stop reading those books. And please don't pass them out. Don't get your information from the testimonials of people who claim to be there and come back. We've only got one that we know for sure, the living God. And by the way, stop, if you would too... This preaching... We really got some preaching here this morning at Compass Bible Church.

Stop with all the Long Island, medium, James Van Praagh, you know, the old school people if you don't know who those names are, the Shirley MacLaines of our generation. Can you stop trying get information about the afterlife, or people who have died, from that? The Bible calls that in the Old Testament, an abomination to God, for us trying to seek the information through the mediums and those people who are trying to speak to the people on the other side. Stop with all that. Most of these are just carnival tricks, you understand. Just like the Witch at Endor, that's what she did to try and make a few bucks at the Irvine Spectrum. That's what that was all about and the day that Samuel actually showed up she freaked out. Because Saul went there trying to contact him and the reality is God, in a very rare exception, says, "Fine, I'll give you the truth," and the person trying to take the shekels of the Israelites freaked out the Witch at Endor. The only place we've got sure information about the afterlife is the Word of God. If you'd look at the passage here even that Jesus is referring to, which is the passage about the bush, which by the way, a little side note here, if you're a little concerned that Jesus didn't do well in Awana, that's why he doesn't know the reference to this, can you understand the references didn't exist back then? You understand that, right? It wasn't until the 13th century we got chapter divisions, it wasn't until the 15th century, during the time of the Reformation, we got the



verses.

Matter of fact, the Geneva Bible is the first one we actually got verses in. So it's not like, "Oh, where was it? I don't know, somewhere in the story about the bush." That's what we say when we don't know where the reference is, but Jesus knew exactly where this was, and he says in this passage you need to look at a text that is not even about the afterlife and you can see it in the tense of the verb. And that's very important for us to realize. You get to read your Bible very carefully, thoughtfully.

And while we don't have time for a long exposé on the afterlife, I'd love for you to turn over your worksheet and look at that box of books, and I give you more than I usually do when it comes to books about good, decent, readable books about the afterlife. At the top, and I know I quote this one often and, you know, this kind of a standard tome on the afterlife, biblically thinking through it, I can't say I agree with every conjecture in the book, but Alcorn's book is a good place to start. If you want some simpler reading there's Jeremiah Jeffers, those guys write to the popular audience. Some decent, helpful, biblical, here's what it's like in the next life, this is what God said about eternity. Ron Rhodes. I put two of his books because they're helpful, very biblical, scriptural about what you can expect in the next life and you ought to be thinking in those terms. If you want something motivational, something devotional, Moody's book "Heaven, How To Get There." I mean it's a short little book. Even, I put our friend, Chris Morgan's book on there, "Heaven" a theological look at the afterlife. That's helpful on another level. Let Scripture define your hope. If you haven't spent your time thinking about where you're going with an open Bible it's time to start. Time to start.

If it wasn't just a yacht in a slip in Balboa but if it were a cruise ship that I said we're going to get on. Matter of fact, Friday we're going to take the entire church and it's just our church and we're going to get on the best, the biggest, the most awesome cruise line that's ever been built. And it's all for us and we're all going to be there and it's going to be great. Friday. So get ready. At noon we're going down on a bus to San Pedro there, to the Port of Los Angeles, we're going to get on that thing. We're going to have a world cruise you've never ever... It's going to be the greatest thing ever. If I said that's what's happening on Friday.

If you heard that news, believed that news, and knew that was going to happen. And then I said something like, "Oh, and by the way, Friday afternoon the United States is going to flood, the world's gonna flood, but we're going to have a great time on a cruise ship. You'd say, "Well, that's a weird juxtaposition of concepts." But if I said, "Well, this is how it's going to work." Sounds a lot like Noah's Ark. If I said if that's the reality, I just wonder what you would do this week.

I wonder how you would think about what's going on in terms of what's happening. I bet you'd concern yourself whether or not, if I said some kind of big tour, if you had your luggage packed properly, if you had everything that you needed, if you took all the things that you need to bring for this. If it was something, and it wasn't the end of the world, and you needed a passport, I think you'd want to make sure you had a passport and you got it and you were ready. That you didn't end up at the dock and get turned away. Those would be things you would concern yourself with.

The Bible says that we as Christians ought to be thinking about where we're headed because it will change everything about the priorities of our lives now. The Bible says you need to think about where you're headed, because it's going to change everything about your priorities and decisions now. The



Bible says, "Set your mind on things above," Colossians 3:2, "Set your mind on things above not on things of the earth." Jesus says, listen you can all concern yourself with the next few years, you can be a practical Sadducee and really not think about where you're headed. That's going to lead to some really poor living. That's going to lead to a kind of stewardship that, at the end, you're going to sit there and say it to yourself in the mirror, "You fool, all you lived for was this life." And if you're a non-Christian it's time to let that shake you up, though this passage is very positive about us, who are sons of the resurrection and sons of God. But if you're not a son of God, it's time for you to see that your life is fleeting. I know you can sit here and roll your eyes at me and you have all your conversation with all your friends this week, and say, "Those Christians at church, they really believe all that stuff, they are crazy." Look me up in 100 years, because 100 years is going to come, but you won't be here anymore. Make sure you're ready with the living God.

If that sounds harsh, it's not harsh because parked at the end of the dock is a beautiful cruise ship called the New Jerusalem and it is completely available and open to you. You just got to turn from the values of this world and say it's time for me to get on that boat.

The Lord Jesus Christ wants us to focus on where we're headed. Jesus puts them in their place by thinking sensibly and defining things scripturally. May we do the same this week.

Let's pray. God, help us in a day when we're filled with people like the Sadducees questioning, mocking, maligning, not only the clear teaching of Scripture but, really, what is fundamental to our constitution that you've set eternity in our hearts. That even the cultural elite may have looked at the stats this week, sometimes into double digits, that the atheists and the agnostics believe in the afterlife. What a foolish contradiction of their philosophy. And yet still, in their heart, they can't get away from the fact that we're not a soap bubble that's going to pop and cease to exist. So God help us to prepare, as our bodies decay, let it be like the Apostle Paul where the inner man is being renewed day by day. Strengthen us. We know that happens. We get our hopes set on what it ought to be set on and that is where we're headed. So prepare us for that God. And I pray you dismiss us with a new set of priorities and a passion for eternity that's sure to come. Thank you so much for this day.

In Jesus name. Amen.