

A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us

An Expository Study of **The Gospel According to Luke**
Chapter 20- Luke 20:27-40

309- What Jesus Believed and Taught about the
Resurrection- Part 3

April 10, 2016

Luke 20:27-40

27 Now there came to Him some of the Sadducees (who say that there is no resurrection),

28 and they questioned Him, saying, "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that *IF A MAN'S BROTHER DIES*, having a wife, *AND HE IS CHILDLESS*, *HIS BROTHER SHOULD MARRY THE WIFE AND RAISE UP CHILDREN TO HIS BROTHER*."

29 "Now there were seven brothers; and the first took a wife and died childless;

30 and the second

31 and the third married her; and in the same way all seven died, leaving no children.

32 "Finally the woman died also.

33 "In the resurrection therefore, which one's wife will she be? For all seven had married her."

34 Jesus said to them, "**The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage,**

35 but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage;

36 for they cannot even die anymore, because they are like angels, and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.

37 "But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the *passage about the burning bush*, where he calls the Lord *THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB*."

38 "**Now He is not the God of the dead but of the living; for all live to Him.**"

39 Some of the scribes answered and said, "Teacher, You have spoken well."

40 For they did not have courage to question Him any longer about anything.

To the Glory of God

Now to be sure, there is an element of mystery surrounding the Resurrection. And it is this mystery that allows for wayward and wrong interpretations of the Resurrection to exist, and even flourish. And that is why it is incumbent on us to struggle *past* the wayward teachings and get to what the Bible actually says, *especially* when the texts are vague or seemingly unfinished.

We have to understand that we see through a glass in a darkened manner, and so our comprehension of what God says in Scripture is sometimes hindered by our still sinful flesh.

Now this is the third installment in this series on the Resurrection. And I hope to complete what Jesus said in this Passage. But it is almost certain that I will not satisfy all of your questions.

Now, let me quickly review what we have already found out. The Sadducees, who laid claim to being the heirs of the great OT priest Zadok, had developed a theology that emphasized the first five Books of Moses at the expense of the rest of the OT. And somehow, over the centuries, they had come to the conclusion that they could worship the one, true, living God by completely *eliminating* any of His supernatural aspects. So by *excluding* or *taking away* from what the OT Scriptures said, the Sadducees did not believe in angels or miracles, and they also did not believe in a Resurrection.

And we saw that the other group of false religious leaders, the Pharisees, *did* accept the supernatural. But one of their problems was that they *added* to what the Scriptures taught. And so their theology about angels and the Resurrection was purely man-made.

And so we saw that the scenario that these men put forth to Jesus here in verses 28-32 had to do with a *rehearsed* attempt at mocking the *fabricated* concepts about the Resurrection that the Pharisees had developed over the centuries.

But as Jesus begins to reveal to us what the Resurrection was and was not, He used this rehearsed scenario of the Sadducees to illustrate how wrong they were about the Scriptures and the Power of God, and, thus, how lost they were.

So, Jesus gives us information here that was not previously known. For example:

- ✓ Marriage is only for this life
- ✓ Children are only for this life
- ✓ Parenting is only for this life
- ✓ In the Resurrection we will be as the angels
- ✓ We will live forever

Now, last time I told you that the term “**sons of God**” that Jesus used here in verse 36 refers to human beings who have become “like” the angels in the Resurrection. Now we don’t exactly understand all that Jesus meant when He used this phrase. So there are some unanswered questions.

So Jesus says we will be like the angels. But in what sense? Will we fly through Heaven like the angels? I don’t know. Will we have wings like the cherubs and Seraphim? I don’t know. But one thing we do know is that this term has to do with becoming “angelic” in the sense of being glorified. So the bodies that we will be given in the Resurrection will be bodies that have been “glorified”. And the glorification of our bodies is the “finality” of Biblical Salvation.

We must understand that while it is common for people to use the term “Salvation” to refer to almost every aspect of Redemption, the word “Salvation” itself is used in the Bible to talk about the *comprehensive* Plan of God in redeeming fallen Man. So there is the *overarching* concept of Salvation, and then we there are the twelve different parts or components of Salvation that together make up what the Bible teaches about Biblical Redemption:

1. Predestination
2. Election
3. Calling
4. Regeneration
5. Faith
6. Repentance
7. Justification
8. Adoption
9. Sanctification

10. Perseverance
11. Death and the Intermediate State
12. Glorification

Now, due to real lousy teaching, it is common today for people to take these various Biblical terms and use them *interchangeably* to mean the same thing. And what this has done over the years is to confuse the issue to the point where people who have been in Church their whole lives really don't know the difference between them and what all God has done, and is happening in each of them.

For example, it is common today for people to take the terms "Born Again" and "Justified" and "Saved" and use them *interchangeably* to mean the same thing. But they are *not* the same thing and they don't even occur at the same time. Being "Born Again" is the sovereign "giving of life" to lost sinners who are dead in trespasses and sins. This is where God sovereignly gives lost people eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to believe. This is what gives the lost sinner both the desire and the ability to hear and believe the Gospel as it is preached.

The human *response* to being Born Again is that this elected sinner hears the Gospel, believes the Gospel, becomes convinced of the horror of his own inherent sinfulness, and so he *responds* to all that God has graciously and mercifully done in him and for him by repenting and trusting in Jesus for both the forgiveness of his sins and the imputation of Christ's Righteousness and he is "Justified".

So because this occurs in this order, by default: Regeneration or being born again comes first, *before* the individual has either the "will" or the "power" to repent and trust in Jesus. Being born again comes before the individual wants it or asks for it or even desires it. In fact, it is this sovereign "giving of life" that comes first that equips the individual with both the desire and the ability to repent and trust in Jesus in the first place. So being born again comes *before* being Justified. Or as theologians put it:

Regeneration (Born Again) precedes Justification

So a lost sinner does not "believe" in order to be "born again"; he is "born again" so he may "believe".

Now you must also notice that Justification is *not* the result of somebody “asking Jesus to come into their heart” or by “accepting Jesus into their heart”, as is so often taught today. That phrase and concept is a man-made false doctrine that has no bearing whatsoever on true Salvation.

Justification is the result of two very important *responses* that come as a result of already being born again:

1. Repentance of sin
2. Trusting in Jesus and in His finished Work

We must understand that there is no true Justification without genuine repentance. And there can be no genuine repentance without true Holy Spirit conviction. All lost sinners who has been truly born again by a sovereign Act of God will become *convinced* by God the Holy Spirit of his own inherent wickedness, and he will be *devastated* by the knowledge of his own transgressions against a Holy God to the point where God brings him to a place of what the Puritans called “Self-loathing”, or what Jesus called “denying yourself”, when God brings the elected sinner to the place where he knows that he is utterly evil and completely *deserving* of damnation and that no good thing dwells in him.

And until that kind of conviction and devastation occurs, there will be no genuine repentance. All repentance that comes forth without this, is really only repentance about the *penalties* of sin and not the sin itself.

Anybody can get weary over the cost of sin in this life. That doesn't take a sovereign Act of God to bring forth. *Anybody* can wish for a relief from the pain and agony that sin brings to people who engage in it. So they are sorry after a worldly sort about their own personal pain that is caused by their sin. So they are sorry they got caught, they are sorry their wife found out, they're sorry they got the ticket, they're sorry for the fines and the hangovers and the emptiness and the jail time and the sickness and misery that sin has brought them. They're sorry they're broke and they're unhappy about what sin brought to them on an earthly and temporary and selfish basis. And so, that is a human sorrow and a worldly sorrow, and it doesn't take a sovereign Act of God to bring about that kind of sorrow- anybody can manufacture that.

And so their repentance is a repentance that only seeks to relive them from this temporary earthly pain- not a repentance that would cause them to dramatically alter the way they live their lives- to God's Glory. Because unless and until God the Holy Spirit convicts them- they're *not* sorry they sinned against God. They're *not* broken over the fact that they have insulted and offended God. And so their "repentance" is merely an effort to get relief from the pain that sin brings, *not* so they can turn away from sin and serve the living God.

So this kind of conviction and repentance brings forth Justification, and Justification leads to Adoption, and Adoption leads to Sanctification, and Sanctification leads to Perseverance.

Now the final component of Biblical Salvation is when we are "glorified". And this is when our saved souls are *united* with a glorified body that has never known and that will *never* know of sin. And there are two main references to this event in the NT- one in **Romans 8** and the other in **1 Corinthians 15**. So let's go to **Romans 8** first.

Romans 8:14-23; 29-30

14 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"

16 The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,

17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be glorified with *Him*.

18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

19 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.

20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope

21 that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

22 For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for *our* adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

29 For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;

30 and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

Now every true believer agonizes at times over the horror of sin in his own life, in the lives of others, and even in the natural world. Because we have **the first fruits of the Spirit**, we are spiritually sensitized to the corruption of sin in and around us.

And because God the Holy **Spirit** now dwells within us, His Work in us and through us is a type of spiritual "**first fruits**". They are a "foretaste" of the Glory that awaits us in Heaven, when our corrupted and mortal fleshly bodies are *exchanged* for ones that are incorruptible and immortal.

Now even though we will not be totally free of sin's power as long as we are in our present bodies, nevertheless, the Lord has given us complete victory over the tyrannical *domination* that sin had on us when we were lost. When we periodically experience the Holy Spirit's Empowerment that gives us both the will and power to joyfully turn away from iniquity and to truly worship, love, and obey God, this is a "taste" of what God will do *in* us and *through* us all the time in the Resurrection!

Every time we see God working His Righteousness in and through us, Paul says here in verse 23 that we groan to be free from our remaining sin and spiritual weakness. That is because the finality of Salvation has not yet been realized.

Paul constantly grieved over the remnants of his humanness that clung to him like a rotten garment that could not be cast off. And that reality brought him great spiritual frustration and anguish. In **Romans 7:24**- he cried out:

Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?

... and in **2Corinthians 5:4** he said,

For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life.

So yes, we rejoice at the finished Work of Jesus Christ and our wonderful Salvation! But it is the reality that we still sin, and that proves that the *finality* of our Salvation has not yet been realized that causes all genuine Christians to suffer periods of deep and profound distress over the debilitating sinfulness that still clings to them. And as truly born again believers, we find ourselves **waiting eagerly in anticipation of our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.**

So the New Testament speaks of believers in two different ways:

- ✓ As those who are *already* the adopted children of God
- ✓ As those whose Adoption awaits ultimate perfection

So, in the same way that there is never true Salvation that is not completed, so also there is no Divine Adoption that is never completed. A child of God should never fear that he might be cast out of his spiritual family or never enter his heavenly home. The Puritan, Thomas Watson, said:

“The godly may act faintly in religion, the pulse of their affections may beat low. The exercise of grace may be hindered, as when the course of water is stopped. Instead of grace working in the godly, corruption may work; instead of patience, murmuring; instead of heavenliness, earthliness... Thus lively and vigorous may corruption be in the regenerate; they may fall into enormous sins... [But] though their grace may be drawn low, it is not drawn dry; though grace may be abated, it is not abolished... Grace may suffer an eclipse, not a dissolution... a believer may fall from some degrees of grace, but not from the state of grace.” (*A Body of Divinity* [reprint, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1974], pp. 280, 284-85)

The idea of a partial or a temporary Salvation completely contradicts the main thrust of Scripture. No genuine believer should ever fear the loss of his Salvation. At the moment of conversion, the human soul is redeemed, purified, and eternally secured in God's family and kingdom.

However, all true believers should be concerned about sin in their lives. Until we are glorified and fully liberated from sin through **the redemption of our bodies**, we still have *unredeemed* bodies that allow sin to harm us and to grieve our Lord. The term "body" that is so often used throughout the New Testament is not limited to a person's physical being-, but relates to the whole of his unredeemed humanness, in particular, to his remaining susceptibility to sin.

Therefore, it is only the **body**, the mortal "humanness" of a believer that remains to be redeemed. The inner person is *already* a completely new creation, a partaker of God's nature and indwelt by God's Spirit.

This means that genuine believers are *already* new creatures possessing the divine nature, and their souls are fit for heaven and eternal glory. They love God, they hate sin, and they have holy longings for obedience to God's Word. But, as we exist on this unredeemed planet our redeemed souls are kept in bondage by these mortal bodies, which is still corrupted by sin and its consequences.

Therefore, Christians eagerly await an amazing future Event that is divinely guaranteed called:

the redemption of our body.

... which is the Resurrection, where we will no longer even be *able* to sin! This is why Paul tells the Roman believers:

Romans 6:12&13

12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, 13 and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

It is precisely because we are still capable of sinning that we should be continually on guard to resist and overcome sin in the Power of the Holy Spirit. Now please turn with me to **1Corinthians 15:**

1 Corinthians 15:35-58

35 But someone will say, "How are the dead raised? And with what kind of body do they come?"

36 You fool! That which you sow does not come to life unless it dies;
37 and that which you sow, you do not sow the body which is to be, but a bare grain, perhaps of wheat or of something else.
38 But God gives it a body just as He wished, and to each of the seeds a body of its own.
39 All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one *flesh* of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds, and another of fish.
40 There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the *glory* of the earthly is another.
41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory.
42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable *body*, it is raised an imperishable *body*;
43 it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power;
44 it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual *body*.
45 So also it is written, "The first *MAN*, Adam, *BECAME A LIVING SOUL.*" The last Adam *became* a life-giving spirit.
46 However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual.
47 The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven.
48 As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly.
49 Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly.
50 Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.
51 Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed,
52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.
53 For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.

54 But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory.

55 "O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?"

56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law;

57 but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not *in* vain in the Lord.

The Apostle's point in the first analogy is that a seed bears no resemblance to the plant or tree into which it will grow. As far as size is concerned, some relatively large seeds produce small plants, whereas some smaller seeds produce large trees. Many different kinds of seed look much alike, and the total variety of seeds has yet to be calculated. If given a handful of seeds that were all different and came from various parts of the world, not even an experienced farmer, much less the average person, could identify all of them. Not until it is sown and the resulting plant begins to mature can the kind of seed be accurately identified. The same Principle applies in relation to our natural and spiritual bodies. We cannot possibly determine what our future spiritual bodies will be like by looking at our present physical bodies. We will have to wait to see.

Paul also points out the obvious fact that animate creatures vary widely in their appearance and nature, and that, without exception, like produces like. The genetic code of every living species is distinct and unique. No amount of attempted interbreeding or change of diet can turn a fish into a bird, or a horse into a dog or cat.

There is also variety in the heavenly bodies, an immeasurably greater variety than people in Paul's day were aware of. The Apostle's point in mentioning the animals and heavenly bodies seems to be that of calling attention to the vast magnitude and variation of God's Creation and to the complete *inability* of Man even to come close to comprehending it.

So even though the Bible discloses very little about the nature of a believer's resurrected body, Paul tells the Corinthians:

42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable *body*, it is raised an imperishable *body*;

43 it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power;

44 it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual *body*.

So because we will ultimately be like Jesus we know that our resurrected bodies will be like His. The Apostle Paul said this in **Romans 6:5**:

For if we have become united with *Him* in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be *in the likeness* of His resurrection,

And then he wrote this in **Philippians 3:20b&21**:

20 ... we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;

21 who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

Now you can get all sorts of ideas in your head about how all this is going to work out, but I want you to remember that during the period between His Own Resurrection and His Ascension Jesus had some interesting characteristics:

- ✓ His Body had the physical marks of His crucifixion (**John 20:20**)
- ✓ He was able to eat food (**Luke 24:30**)
- ✓ He still looked like Himself, yet somehow- even His closest disciples could not recognize Him unless He allowed them to (**Luke 24:13-16,30-31; John 20:14-16**)
- ✓ He could be touched and felt (**John 20:17,27**)
- ✓ He could appear and disappear in an instant and could pass through closed doors (**John 20:19,26**).

Now does this mean that we will have all or even *some* of these characteristics when we are resurrected? I don't know; the Bible

doesn't tell us. So we won't know the fullness about the Resurrection until we meet our Savior, Face to face.

So Paul's *primary* purpose in giving us this information from **1 Corinthians 15** and **Romans 8** is to emphasize that our resurrected bodies, regardless of our appearance and capabilities, will be *completely* sinless, *completely* righteous, and *completely* immortal.

So even though God gave us a lot of information about the Resurrection, there are still aspects that we don't know. For example, the Bible does *not* give a large number of details concerning what happens right after we die. This is the condition or state of being called "The Intermediate State" which is the time frame between the moment we die and the time of the Resurrection.

It is certainly safe to say that we will enter a reality that is far beyond anything we could ever imagine. So there are at least five concrete things the Bible does say about what we should expect at the moment of death and beyond.

1. All genuine believers will be taken into the Presence of Christ in Heaven immediately at death. Jesus Christ is in Heaven right now (**The Acts 1:2; 3:21; 1Thessalonians 1:10; 4:16; 2Thessalonians 1:7**), and believers will go to be with Him when they die. Jesus said to the thief on the cross:

Luke 23:43

Truly I say to you, *today* you shall be *with me in Paradise*

... and on two different occasions, Paul spoke of death as ushering us into the very Presence of Jesus Christ:

Philippians 1:23&24

23 But I am hard-pressed from both *directions*, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for *that* is very much better;

24 yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake.

2Corinthians 5:6-9

6 Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord —

7 for we walk by faith, not by sight —

8 we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.

9 Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him.

So, when we die, our immortal souls go to be immediately in the Presence of Jesus. And we will enjoy that, until the *finality* of our Salvation is realized, the moment when our immortal souls will be joined to a glorified body.

For some reason, the Bible reveals that it pleased the Lord to set a specific time in the future when all of the saved who have died will be united with a Body, rather than allow them to have that glorified body immediately. **1 Corinthians 15:52** gives us a glimpse into exactly when that will be:

... in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet...

And so, that time frame, the time between our deaths and the Resurrection, where we will be in the Presence of the Lord and yet our Salvation still awaits our full redemption, is called "The Intermediate State".

2. Heaven is a place of unspeakable Glory, and being with Jesus in that Glory will be *infinitely* better than *anything* we could ever attain here on earth.

Philippians 1:23

But I am hard-pressed from both *directions*, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for *that* is very much better;

2Corinthians 5:8

we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.

... one of the things that will make Heaven so amazing is that we will finally feel that we are in our "true home".

3. Immediately after death, when we are in Heaven, we will continue to look forward (as we do in this life) to the Resurrection of our bodies from the dead.

“Disembodied existence” (The Intermediate State) is *not* God's ultimate or final or even His greatest Purpose for us. As great as it will be to be in Heaven after we die, God has something even *greater* in store for us:

being resurrected from the dead so that we will live soul *and body*
forever in the new heavens and new earth.

We must remember that while he was alive, Paul said that he was waiting eagerly for something called **“the redemption of his body” (Romans 8:23)**. This eager anticipation for our resurrection doesn't stop when we die, but when we receive the fullness of our Salvation in the resurrection of our bodies. And understanding this should greatly increase our desire for the full coming of God's kingdom.

So I am sad to tell you that from what I see, it seems to me that the hope of the resurrection that is so prevalent throughout the NT does not have the same place of power and centrality for us today that it had for the early Christians. And I think one of the reasons for that is that we have a man-made understanding of the age to come.

When we talk about the future and the “eternal state” we tend to talk about Heaven, and Heaven tends to imply a place that is far away and that is characterized by non-material, ethereal, disembodied spirits.

In other words, we tend to assume that the condition that the departed saints are in right *now*, *without* their bodies, is the way it will *always* be. And that is simply not true and is *entirely* unbiblical. And we have encouraged ourselves so much with how good it is for them now, we tend to forget that the way they are now is an *imperfect* state and *not* the way it will be when Salvation is finalized by our Glorification.

In other words, simply dying and going to Heaven is *not* the final thing. There is a moment coming, a time that is in God's Own Plan, where all the redeemed will be clothed upon with a new glorious body,

and *that* is the finality of Salvation. And until that happens, even those in heaven are not finalized.

So, yes to die is gain, and yes, to be absent from the body is to be at home with the Lord. Yes! Yes! Yes! But *no*, that is *not* our ultimate hope. That is not the final state of our Joy. There is a time coming that has not yet been, when we will not only be in God's Presence in Heaven, but we will receive new bodies and we will be glorified! And *that* is our final and best and main Hope and Joy!

4. At the moment of death, all genuine believers will be made perfect and cleansed from all sin. This follows from the above point that believers are taken to Heaven immediately at death. Heaven is fully pure and free from all tarnish and sin, and therefore, when God takes us to Heaven He makes us fit for the experience of it by making our hearts perfect in holiness.

This accords with His Purpose to make us completely like Jesus (**Romans 8:29**) and, at the return of Christ, He will present us to Himself without spot or wrinkle or sin (**1Thessalonians 5:23; Ephesians 5:27**).

5. Those who did *not* trust Christ in this life will be separated from God and enter a reality completely devoid of His Common Grace and Blessing. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, Jesus speaks of Lazarus as being taken to heaven when he dies, but the rich man, because he did not heed the Scriptures, immediately entered into great torment and was *excluded* from the blessing of heaven (**Luke 16:22-26**). Scripture speaks often of the painful reality that awaits those who do not place their faith in Christ to be rescued from sin (**Matthew 13:30; 25:41; Luke 12:5; John 3:36; Romans 2:8-9; Hebrews 10:29**).

So we see from all these things that death is *not* the end of our existence. We have bodies *and* souls. Death is the separation of body and soul, but *not* the end of our personhood. When we die our bodies become lifeless and are no longer the place where we "reside," but we continue to exist as souls, either with Christ in glory or separated from Christ in shame.

So knowing that death ushers us directly into the realities of either heaven or hell should make us look to Christ as our Refuge and Salvation and should make us strive, as Paul, to "**have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to him**" (**2Corinthians 5:9**). Even

for believers, the prospect of death is sometimes a fearful thing because death is enshrouded in great mystery as the realm to which we have never gone. But we may take courage and lay aside our fears in the confidence that we have a God Who, time after time, says to His people, **"Do not be afraid"** (**Joshua 11:6; Isaiah 44:8; Matthew 14:27; 17:7; 28:10; The Revelation 1:17**). God wants His people to be comforted in the face of death:

Isaiah 43:1-3a

1 But now, thus says the Lord, your Creator, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel, "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine!

2 "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, Nor will the flame burn you.

3 "For I am the Lord your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior...

And so then, Jesus goes for the final push in His discourse with these religious hypocrites by showing them that their supposed faithfulness to the first five Books of Moses, to the exclusion of the rest of the OT, was a sham. And He did that by quoting from what God told Moses in those first five Books. Look again at **Luke 20:37&38**:

37 "But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the *passage about the burning bush, where he calls the Lord THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB.*

38 "Now He is not the God of the dead but of the living; for all live to Him."

Here Jesus is quoting from **Exodus 3:6** where God is speaking to Moses out of the burning bush. And by using this quote Jesus is showing the fallacy of the Sadducees' theology of emphasizing the first five Books of Moses to deny the Resurrection because He is proving that all three of the Patriarchs were very much alive right then, even after they had been dead for many centuries.

And so as Jesus completely dismantles the false and man-made theology of the Sadducees, they could see the "rightness" of His argument and they could behold the pristine Purity of Jesus' Person and they were left with only one thing to say,

Luke 20:39&40

39... Teacher, You have spoken well.

40 For they did not have courage to question Him any longer about anything.

Amen. May we all be speechless before the Lamb. Let's pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.