

The Character of Jesus 72
Sadducees and the Resurrection
(Matthew 22:23 – 33, Mark 12:18 – 27, Luke 20:27 – 39)

- Characteristic: If it sounds complicated, it's probably wrong
 - Using the Luke account
 - (27) The Sadducees taught that one lived on through their descendants, and denied that people had eternal spirits. Further, they denied the existence of angels and demons (spirits of any kind). Only God was Spirit.
 - (28) Deuteronomy 25:5 – 10 has the rules about “levirate marriage.” “Levirate” is derived from the Latin word for “husband’s brother.” The prohibition against having sexual relations with one’s sister-in-law (Leviticus 18:16 and 20:21) is easily explained by the fact that the widow is no longer married to the deceased, so is no longer the brother’s wife.
 - (29 – 33) This hypothetical situation was invented to make the idea of resurrection look silly.
 - (35) “To attain that age” is to attain an age where marriage was customary. No Scripture suggests that the residents of heaven marry.
 - (36 – 38) Jesus made the assertion about resurrection first, then proved it with the burning bush scene (Exodus 3:1 – 6, 15). Everyone agreed that God’s name (in English) is “I am.” “Am” is present tense, yet Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had all been dead for centuries when God asserted in the present tense that He is their God. Jesus’ point was that God would not be so inaccurate to establish His name in the wrong verb tense, and continue using it for a thousand years through all the prophets.
 - (39 – 40) Even some of the Sadducees commented that Jesus had answered well. It is unlikely that any Pharisee had even come close to such a reasonable answer, so they anticipated that Jesus would do no better.
- Application: If it sounds complicated, it's probably wrong
 - What afterlife questions are commonly asked? Would this answer help?
 - Where do faithful dead folks go?
 - Are they conscious?
 - If conscious, what do they do?
 - What other “gotcha” questions are common? How can they be answered simply?
 - Father, Son, and Spirit: three gods?
 - Die on the way to the baptistery
 - Unbelieving husband forbids wife to attend or even read Bible
 - Sin, but die before repenting
 - What about those who never heard
 - Why does God allow evil or disaster
 - A loving God could not condemn
 - Love lets people get away with stuff