

Mark 12.13-34

Life with God: Now and Forever

SUNDAY Morning is my FAVORITE Time of the WEEK > JOY of Worship!  
 ANTICIPATION: WHO is Coming, WHAT will He Reveal, HOW will He Work?  
 NOT SURE if I would WANT Sunday Morning SEVEN Days a WEEK!!?  
 As I Approach FINAL YEARS: Wonder What'll I BE DOING for ETERNITY?  
 How LONG will it take to Learn to Play HARP? > Life with GOD **FOREVER**?

## 1. Enemies of our Lord

### a. Jesus Unites

He has UNITED US HERE today to WORSHIP Him and Listen to His WORD  
 PEOPLE of every CULTURE, COLOR, & CITIZENSHIP will gather Before Him

Text: OTHER Side of Coin) ENEMIES of Jesus UNITED & Will Unite agnst Him  
 First Mentioned EARLY in Gospel of Mark > STORM Clouds GROW DARKER  
 v. 13 Later they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus to catch him in  
 his words.

Pharisees HARD-LINERS who followed OLD WAYS

Herodians MODERN COMPROMISERS to stay in POLITICAL FAVOR

Historic ENEMIES found COMMON ENEMY to SHARE their WRATH

THESE STRANGE-BEDFELLOWS been PLOTTING for MANY MONTHS

Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might  
 kill Jesus.

Mark 3:6

SENT by SANHEDRIN > Clever QUESTIONS JOINT EFFORT of All Leaders

v. 18 Then the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question. > ONLY Time Sadducees MENTIONED in Gospel of Mark

Sadducees > ARISTOCRATIC Party included HIGH PRIEST & Leading Families  
 NATIONALISTIC Pharisees and Sadducees KISSED Up to HEROD & ROME  
 EVIL ALLIANCE: TRI-PARTISON Coalition > UNITED in INTENSE HATRED  
 // KZ Alliance of ORTHODOX & MUSLIMS to Oppose EVANGELICAL Church

## b. Jesus Enrages

v. 14 They came to him and said, "Teacher, we know you are a man of integrity. You aren't swayed by men, because you pay no attention to who they are; but you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth.

Words CAREFULLY DESIGNED to PREVENT any EVASION by Jesus  
 FORCED Him to ANSWER > because of INTEGRITY and FEARLESSNESS

v. 15 But Jesus knew their hypocrisy. "Why are you trying to trap me?"

GREAT TRAGEDY > People come to JESUS and LEARN NOTHING  
 Questioners WANT to HEAR their OWN VOICE > NOT Listen to the MASTER

If they could snare him into making an unguarded statement they might be able to succeed in destroying him. William Lane

UNDERSTANDABLE EXASPERATION on Jesus' Part > Been There, Done That

The Pharisees came and began to question Jesus. To test him...*He sighed deeply and said, "Why..."* Mark 8:11-12

Jesus STILL STANDING after THREE VOLLEY'S of their BIGGEST GUNS!  
 v. 34 And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.

OPPONENTS MARVELED at Jesus' Word > Saw REAL Authority in HIM  
 WARNING > SILENCE does not MEAN they AGREE or SUPPORT Him  
 Exposed, defeated and humiliated, they could only crawl away to regroup on  
 another occasion...Certainly this is a passage which makes every disciple thrill with  
 admiration for his Saviour. Sinclair Ferguson

## 2. Ethics for Life: *Taxes, Death, and God*

a. Render Taxes v. 14 Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?

EXPLOSIVE Topic > 6 AD > 1<sup>st</sup> Imposed by ROME on Province of JUDEA

A Pharisee named Gamaliel... addressed the Sanhedrin: "Men of Israel... Judas the  
 Galilean appeared in the days of the census and led a band of people in revolt. He  
 too was killed, and all his followers were scattered Acts 5:34,37

THEN Judas the Galilean – called it SLAVERY and attack on Sovereignty of God  
 ZEALOTS – REFUSED to Pay Tax because it was Acknowledgement of CAESAR  
 PHARISEES Concerned by MORAL & RELIGIOUS Implications of Roman Laws  
 HERODIANS Concerned by POLITICAL & NATIONALISTIC Consequences

If Jesus says – YES! Pay Taxes to Rome > DISCREDIT Him in Eyes of People  
 NO! Payment of Taxes to Rome > DANGER of being ARREST for SEDITION

No matter how Jesus replied to their questions, He was in trouble with either Rome  
 or Herod! Warren Wiersbe

vs. 15,16 Should we pay or shouldn't we?" ... "Bring me a denarius and let me look at it." They brought the coin, and he asked them, "Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?" "Caesar's," they replied.

BRING Coin: WHY NOT Have One? Jesus POVERTY? or Jesus' PRINCIPLES?

Jews in PALESTINE > COPPER COIN withOUT IMAGE of Emperor

Jesus ENEMIES have NO PROBLEM finding a ROMAN SILVER COIN

Roman DENARIUS – Only Coin Acceptable for TAXES –

Small Silver Coin – 20 tenge SIZE and COLOR – 50 tenge in VALUE

ONE Side > PORTRAIT of Emperor TIBERIUS – Semi-god son of AUGUSTUS

Inscription: "Tiberius Caesar Augustus, Son of the Divine Augustus"

OTHER Side > "Pontifex Maximus" – IMPERIAL CULT

v. 17 Then Jesus said to them, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's." And they were amazed at him.

Jesus MOVES Discussion from POLITICS to PRINCIPLE

PORTRAIT on COIN reflected RIGHT of SOVEREIGN over Territory of its USE

Common Idea > Emperor OWNED the Coins that bore HIS IMAGE

CARRYING and USING COINS of CAESAR > Sign of SUBMISSION to him

Word for "GIVE" > **"to pay a debt, to pay back"** > **OWE for SERVICES**

Modern State > Roads, Mail, Utilities, Protection, Fire Safety, Gov't Workers

STATE Institution ORDAINED by God: Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established.

Romans 13:1

Jesus did NOT come to Establish THEOCRATIC STATE

NOT come to OVERTHROW Existing POLITICAL ORDER

NOT come to END World THEN > set up HIS ETERNAL KINGDOM Yet

Clear DISTINCTION between God and Caesar > CONTRA IDOLATROUS Claim

There is always inherent in civil authority a tendency to reach beyond its appointed function...The temptation to self-glorification which always accompanies power was particularly clear in the extravagances of the imperial cult, with its deification of the state and its civil head. Jesus emphatically rejected this insolent confusion between man and God; divine honors belong to God alone. William Lane

## b. Ready for Death

BEFORE Jesus can RECOVER from 1<sup>st</sup> Attack > Enemies LAUNCH Another POLITICAL Attempt to SNARE Jesus FAILED...Now THEOLOGICAL TRICK

v. 18 Then the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question.

(The Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, and that there are neither angels nor spirits, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.) Acts 23:8

NO RESURRECTION – NO FUTURE HOPE – that’s WHY they’re **SAD U SEE!**

Vast MAJORITY of Jews Believed in RESURRECTION

“Blessed be thou, O Lord, who raises the dead.” Second Benediction of the Shemoneh ‘Esreh

“He will cause you to arise. Blessed be he who keeps his word and raises the dead.”

Doxology to be pronounced in a Cemetery

Sadducees Accepted ONLY PENTATEUCH as AUTHORITATIVE Scripture

Believed idea of RESURRECTION a LATER INVENTION of Jewish Innovators

They had refused to accept God's further revelation in the Old Testament: now, they would refuse to accept God's final revelation in Jesus. R. Alan Cole

v. 19 "Teacher," they said, "Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow and have children for his brother.

Common Rabbinic Method > SCRIPTURE and an ILLUSTRATIVE STORY

If brothers are living together and one of them dies without a son, his widow must not marry outside the family. Her husband's brother shall take her and marry her and fulfill the duty of a brother-in-law to her. The first son she bears shall carry on the name of the dead brother so that his name will not be blotted out from Israel.

Deuteronomy 25:5-6

LEVIRITE Law > from LATIN word 'LEVIR' = Brother in Law

INTENDED for ECONOMIC PROTECTION of WIDOW

LAW Applied in Book of RUTH > BOAZ was Kinsman Redeemer

ONE Woman eventually has SEVEN Husbands! > Idea from book of TOBIT

vs. 20 - 23 Now there were seven brothers. The first one married and died without leaving any children. The second one married the widow, but he also died, leaving no child. It was the same with the third. In fact, none of the seven left any children. Last of all, the woman died too. At the resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?"

Crowd must have SMILED and LAUGHED at this FOOLISH Picture

REDUCTIO AD ABSURDUM > REDUCTION to the ABSURD

ie. HOW RIDICULOUS it is to BELIEVE in this SUPPOSED Resurrection

The kind of question every Sadducee's son asked every Pharisee's son in primary school! No one had ever found an answer to it.... Sinclair Ferguson

v. 24 Jesus replied, "Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God?"

ROOT of Error was IGNORANCE in God's SCRIPTURE and God's STRENGTH  
Deny God's PROMISES and POWER / Neglect God's WORD and God's WORK  
We need BOTH Scripture AND God's POWER in HEALTHY Interaction  
POWER of God: Able to CREATE UNSEEN and VISIBLE World / Lord of BOTH

God has COME in Christ to VANQUISH Death and GRANT LIFE  
...our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and  
immortality to light through the gospel 2 Timothy 1:10-11

MODERN Day Sadducees PROFESS Jesus but DENY His WORD & POWER  
Jesus BLUNTLY and FIRMLY says, "You are WRONG!"

vs. 26,27 Now about the dead rising-have you not read in the book of Moses, in the account of the bush, how God said to him, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. You are badly mistaken!"

Jesus ROOTS His belief in RESURRECTION in TORAH Itself  
KNOWS Sadducees TEXT BOOK better than Them > HE WROTE It!

It would be a tawdry salvation which lasted only for this life...Deny the resurrection and you become a practical atheist. Sinclair Ferguson

LIVING God is FOREVER Faithful to His PEOPLE who LIVE in Him  
 If DEATH has LAST WORD > COVENANT Promises of God are SHAM

c. Right with God v. 17 Then Jesus said to them, "Give to...God what is God's."  
 IMAGE of CAESAR stamped on COINS / Image of GOD on HUMAN BEINGS  
 Sees ENEMIES > IMAGE of God STAMPED on their Lives > BELONG to Him  
 OBLIGATIONS to State do NOT VIOLATE OBEDIENCE to SOVEREIGN God

v. 28 One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"

SCRIBE great IMPRESSED with WISDOM of our Lord > Pharisee? Sadducee?  
 THAT Day were 613 LAWS for Jews: 365 NEGATIVE / 248 POSITIVE  
 IMPORTANT Question > WHICH Laws were MOST IMPORTANT?

vs. 29–31 "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself' There is no commandment greater than these"

LINKS 2 Laws from DEUTERONOMY and LEVITICUS

Jesus goes to FOUNDATION of ENTIRE LAW > LOVE for GOD & Neighbor

vs. 32,33 "Well said, teacher," the man replied. "You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."



Behind QUESTION Idea of HUMAN MERIT: Which ones MOST IMPT to KEEP  
Thought > RIGHT about LAW – THEN you're RIGHT with GOD

Jesus' answer underlined the fact that any man's attempt to measure himself against the law for his own reassurance is bound to lead to disaster, because the very first law requires comprehensive, universal, undiluted love for God with every ounce of one's being. And, it carries with it a clear implication – we are to love our neighbors as we love ourselves!  
Sinclair Ferguson

RELATIONSHIP trumps RITUAL > LOVE More Important than SACRIFICES

The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."  
Galatians 5:14

To do what is right and just is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.  
Proverbs 21:3

LAW NOT given to BIND and BURDEN but to BLESS and LIBERATE

True RELIGION NOT for LEGALISM but LIBERTY to LOVE God & Man

Love and do as you like.  
Augustine

### 3. Eternity is a Long Time

a. How about the Mrs.?

v. 23 At the resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?"

1) Muslims: "You want her?"

". . . I stood at the gate of the Fire [Hell] and saw that the majority of those who entered it were women." When a women asked Muhammad why there were more

women in Hell than men, he replied, "You curse frequently and are ungrateful to your husbands. I have not seen anyone more deficient in intelligence and religion than you. A cautious sensible man could be led astray by some of you."

Prophet Muhammad

Islam: Man may have 4 "Permanent" Wives, any number of "Provisional" Wives  
Muslim Man LEGAL Right to NEVER HAVE another LONELY NIGHT Again!

"Marry such women as seem good to you, two, three, four; but if you fear you will not be equitable, then only one, or what your right hands own; so it is likelier you will not be partial... your women are a tillage for you; so come unto your tillage as you wish "

Prophet Muhammad

AFTER DEATH > Men enter PARADISE and get 72 BEAUTIFUL NEW WIVES  
"The smallest reward for the people of paradise is an abode where there are 80,000 servants and 72 wives..."

Prophet Muhammad

Once again, the man has all the advantages and pleasures, while the woman must be perpetually used for his purposes. His is the pleasure - hers the disturbance, in this world and the next.

Ibn 'Abbas

"A woman who gives trouble to her husband in this world will hear the pure-eyed virgin ones [one of the 72] say to her: 'Do not give him trouble. May Allah destroy you, He is only a passing guest with you and it is very near that he will soon leave you to come to us'...No woman should give trouble and anxiety to her husband. She is to give him ease and comfort in the household. If she acts otherwise, she will not be able to be his mate in Paradise. There the pure-eyed virgin girls will be his consorts."

Al-'Ouaza'i

"Watch how you treat your husband for he is your Paradise and your Hell."

Prophet Muhammad

With 72 Beautiful Virgins waiting for MAN there > Does he Need her?

Some OLD Muslim men – born before VIAGRA - wondered about 72 Women?

"A man in paradise shall be given virility equal to that of one hundred men."

Prophet Muhammad

What HORMONE-FILLED Teenage Muslim Boy would NOT Want to

Strap on SUICIDE Bomb & be BLASTED into BED with 72 Voluptuous Virgins?

2) Mormons: *Of Course you Need her!*

Both MORMONS and MUSLIMS teach MARRIAGE TRANSCENDS Death

MORMONS > Marriages SEALED for ETERNITY in their TEMPLES

Perhaps the greatest promise of Mormonism is the doctrine of celestial marriage. Celestial marriage refers to a type of marriage which Mormons believe is intended to last beyond the grave and through eternity...It is part of the full authority of God, or the priesthood. Lost to the earth after the death of the early apostles, the priesthood was restored to Joseph Smith, the first Mormon prophet. By heavenly decree the priesthood and constituent sealing power were passed from Joseph to others, including the apostles, in the Mormon Church...If a man and woman have been married only by a civilly recognized authority (such as a government or religious representative), their marriage will end at death. They can, however, work towards gaining permission to enter a Mormon temple and be sealed together so that their marriage will be "bound" on both earth and in heaven... Truly, the Mormon Church is the very restoration of the full gospel of Jesus Christ in these modern times.

Rick Satterfield

"The doctrine of plural and celestial marriage is the most holy and important doctrine ever revealed to man on earth, and that without obedience to that principle

no man can ever attain to the fullness of exaltation in celestial glory...In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees; and in order to obtain the highest, a man must enter into this order of the priesthood through the everlasting covenant of marriage; and if he does not, he cannot obtain it." Doctrine and Covenants

For those who wish to be married and want the blessings of family life, it can be tough to be surrounded by lots of families and to see all the emphasis that the Church puts on families and temple marriage... Those who desire the blessings of eternal marriage but have not found the right person or cannot marry for whatever reason will find that God is just, merciful, and loving. My understanding is that God will provide the blessings of eternity for those who are now single. Perhaps it means being sealed to someone after this life is over, or perhaps it means being patient for unexpected blessings in this life. Jeff Lindsay

Mormon Message to SINGLES > MARRIAGE will make you COMPLETE  
ONE Way or ANOTHER > You WILL get MARRIED – on Earth or HEAVEN  
WITHOUT Marriage > you NEVER Attain the HIGHEST Level of HEAVEN

REASON > Wife Needed – Faithful Mormons become God's of Own Universe  
Need WIFE – Many WIVES – to POPULATE their New UNIVERSE

Founder Joseph Smith married 34 WIVES: 10 teens, 11 taken from living husbands

3) Master – *All you Really Need!*

v. 25 When the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.

Sadducees MISTAKEN about CHARACTER of Resurrection Life

Popular Jewish Idea THEN: Heaven is basically CONTINUATION of Earthly Life

EARLIER > Mark 10 > Marriage should NOT be Broken in LIFE

**NOW Jesus Teaches > Marriage IS BROKEN by DEATH**

By law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but *if her husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage.* Romans 7:2

Resurrection is transformation, not just re-animation. P.S. Minear

Someone may ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?" ...There are heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another...The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. 1 Corinthians 15:35-44

Resurrection is not the restoration of life as we know it; it is the entrance into a new life that is different...our resurrection bodies will be sexless like the angels; and therefore marriage will no longer exist. In the eternal state, where our new bodies are perfect and there is no state of death, there will be no need for marriage, procreation, and the continuance of the race. Warren Wiersbe

Does NOT mean Husband & Wife will NO Longer Know Eachother in Heaven

MARRIAGE – FULFILLS Temporal HUMAN Needs

NOT Good Adam was ALONE > Saints in HEAVEN will be NEVER LONELY

Even NOW – No BELIEVER should be ALONE > FAMILY of God in CHRIST

AS Teaches about MARRIAGE > Paul reveals its DEEPER REALITY

"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." *This is a profound mystery - but I am talking about Christ and the church.* Ephesians 5:31-33

Everyone in heaven will be so head-over-heels in love with everyone else as to render unthinkable an exclusive relationship such as marriage. In heaven you will have unbelievable closeness with people of both genders...The warmth, intimacy and depth of eternal relationships will be literally out of this world....Heavenly relationships will be so much more fulfilling than earthly ones that for anyone in heaven to want marriage would be like an adult wanting a pacifier...There will be marriage in heaven – our marriage to the Son of God. It is then that our love for Jesus will be consummated in eternal bliss, bringing us to realms of exquisite joy and never-ending fulfillment...Do you think the Creator of sex has reached his limit in his ability to give us pleasure and fulfillment? Do you suppose that in the infinity of the Almighty's loving wisdom he has reserved for our heavenly reward that which is second rate relative to what he has already given fallen humanity?... Pinnacles of pleasure beyond our dreams all revolve around loving and adoring Almighty God. Every Christian is destined for them. All we need do is remain faithful in this life, allowing ourselves to be captivated by the beauty of Jesus. For anyone to lament there being no sex in heaven is like lamenting that there will be no Barbie Dolls.

Grantley Morris

"Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.) Then the angel said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!'" Revelation 19:6-9

**OTHER 2 Religions > THEIR Heaven SO HUMAN – Almost KINKY!**

**HIGHEST GOAL and JOY is MARRIAGE > NOTHING about Marriage to JESUS**

**BIBLE – JOY of those who Make It to Heaven – JESUS!**

"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"

1 Corinthians 2:9

**HEAVEN will be BEYOND anything we have Every SEEN or KNOWN**

The idea that we will no longer be married is disturbing to some people. Personally, I like to be married. From an earthly perspective, the dissolution of marriage in heaven doesn't sound like a good thing. However, in heaven, we will be "married" to Jesus, who will be our spiritual "husband." If you are not currently a follower of Jesus Christ, you cannot understand what this will be like, and it will probably not have any appeal for you. However, if you have experienced the "highs" of following Jesus as He leads you, you will have a glimpse of how awesome this experience will be. God would not take away something good if He did not replace it with something better... Although marriage is good and represents the most intimate relationship we can experience on earth, it should not be idolized. If you love your spouse more than God then he/she has become an idol... We will be "married" to Jesus. This is not the description of a sexual relationship, but a description of an intimacy that is only approximated by what exists between a husband and a wife. Marriage on earth is merely a glimpse of the relationship God intends to have with us in heaven. It is the purpose for which we were created. Religion that substitutes marriage, sex, and family as an idol in place of God is a false religion.

Rich Deem

## b. Begins Now

Jesus affirmed that the resurrection life is comparable to the life enjoyed by the angels. Its great purpose and center is communion with God. William Lane

ALL of Life should be CENTERED on COMMUNION with God NOW

So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 10:31

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

Colossians 3:1-2

Seeking a SPOUSE?? They should LOVE JESUS MORE than they LOVE You!  
 Anything LESS is NOT LOVING GOD FIRST > Danger of IDOLATRY

v. 34 When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, *"You are not far from the kingdom of God."*

ONLY Teacher of LAW Viewed POSITIVELY in Gospel of Mark  
 AMBIGUOUS Affirmation > INVITES further THOUGHT and DIALOGUE

“not far from the kingdom”...means a person is facing truth honestly and is not interested in defending a ‘party line’ or even personal prejudices. It means a person is testing their faith by what the Word of God says and not by what some religious group demands. People close to the kingdom have the courage to stand up for what is true even if they lose some friends and make some new enemies. Warren Wiersbe

Are YOU NEAR the KINGDOM? Are you IN the KINGDOM?

God’s KINGDOM is where JESUS is WORSHIPPED as KING!

As More Important than JOB, FAMILY, NATIONALITY, CHURCH, SPOUSE

Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you.  
 My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.  
 Psalm 73:25-26

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## Mark 12:13-34

13 Later they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus to catch him in his words. 14 They came to him and said, "Teacher, we know you are a man of integrity. You aren't swayed by men, because you pay no attention to who they are; but you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not? 15 Should we pay or shouldn't we?" But Jesus knew their hypocrisy. "Why are you trying to trap me?" he asked. "Bring me a denarius and let me look at it." 16 They brought the coin, and he asked them, "Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?" "Caesar's," they replied. 17 Then Jesus said to them, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's." And they were amazed at him. 18 Then the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question. 19 "Teacher," they said, "Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow and have children for his brother. 20 Now there were seven brothers. The first one married and died without leaving any children. 21 The second one married the widow, but he also died, leaving no child. It was the same with the third. 22 In fact, none of the seven left any children. Last of all, the woman died too. 23 At the resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?" 24 Jesus replied, "Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God? 25 When the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven. 26 Now about the dead rising-have you not read in the book of Moses, in the account of the bush, how God said to him, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'?

27 He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. You are badly mistaken!" 28 One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" 29 "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' 31 The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." 32 "Well said, teacher," the man replied. "You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. 33 To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices." 34 When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.