

22) The attempts to trap Jesus and thereby eliminate Him continue...

Mark 12:18-27 (NIV)

23) This is an odd incident.

24) The first thing that makes it odd is that the Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection.

- a) They did not accept any but the first 5 books of the Old Testament – the Pentateuch.
- b) They said there was no resurrection because they could not find mention of it in the scripture they accepted.

25) Second, the Sadducees were at odds with the Pharisees.

26) They rejected most of the Pharisee's traditions, rules, and regulations.

27) They were also more inline with the Herodians politically.

- a) They were pro-Herod and favored cooperation with political powers and pursuit of earthly prosperity.

28) Although few in number, the Sadducees had considerable influence.

29) They included many of the aristocratic, wealthy, and influential leaders in Israel, including the high priests, the chief priests (cf. Luke 19:47; 20:1, 19), and most of the Sanhedrin.

30) Holding all the positions of authority over the temple made up for the Sadducees' lack of numbers.

MacArthur, John. Mark 1-16 MacArthur New Testament Commentary Two Volume Set (MacArthur New Testament Commentary Series) . Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.

31) It occurred to me as I studied this that the question (an obvious hypothetical) could have been not only a possible way to trap Jesus but also been a way to show their contempt for him and his teachings – mocking him if you will.

32) Jesus also indicted them because they did not believe in the power of God.

33) Instead of beginning with the answer to their question, Jesus poses a counter question that indites them for the one thing they were most famous for – their knowledge of Scripture – especially the books of Moses.

34) That reply turned the tables on them immediately.

35) In fact, though they probably did not accept it – in His complete answer, Jesus refutes their very core belief that there was no resurrection.

36) The direct answer to their question is in verse 25

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

37) Then comes the shutdown answer.

38) Jesus, knowing their incorrect belief about the resurrection addresses it head on

Gospel of Mark – NOTES

39) Again, the original question was absurd coming from these Sadducees since they did not believe in the resurrection any way.

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!"

40) Simply put, **if** Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were like Rover “dead all over” and not alive and with God, God would have said “I was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” obviously placing them in the past tense.

41) This cuts the legs completely from under the Sadducees position on life after death.

42) However, as we will see next, they did have some further discussion.

Mark 12:28-34 (NIV)

- 1) We begin with one of the teachers of the law overhearing the debate that was occurring.
 - a) We assume it was the debate, regarding Jesus’ last response.
- 2) He basically interrupts with a question of his own.
- 3) At first read, this may appear to be a sincere question.
- 4) However, Matthew in his account clarifies who the person asking the question is and at least the intent:

Matt 22:34-36 (NIV)

- 5) So, we might still ask how is this a test? In essence, they hoped that Jesus would answer by giving a commandment not found in the law of Moses.
 - a) They were likely familiar with Jesus’ teachings when he would say “you have hear it said ... but I say ...
- 6) If He did answer in this manner here in answer to this direct question, He would be elevating Himself above the Law.
 - a) In this case, the obvious right answer is not up for debate.
- 7) Also, this is one area that the religious leaders (Pharisees and Sadducees) agreed on.
- 8) If Jesus did not answer from the Law of Moses, they had Him – blasphemy – and – at the same time, it would tare Him down in the eyes of the people – WIN-WIN!
- 9) Jesus, of course, knew the man’s intent but that did not change His answer.
- 10) However, from the man’s response to Jesus, he may have changed his attitude.
- 11) He answers with the Shema as the first and the second most important commandment from Lev 19:18.
- 12) The Shema is the most basic, foundational Old Testament truth. It is from Deut 6:4-9.

Deut 6:4-9 (NIV)

Gospel of Mark – NOTES

13) Then, from Leviticus ...

Lev 19:18 (NIV)

14) Here are a couple of hard questions for us.

Do we believe the answers Jesus gives here apply to us?

If no then what is the most important commandment for us?

If yes then how do we implement these two commands in our daily lives?

15) I think the LABC cut to the absolute heart of the matter in a series of questions:

a) Listen for these three qualifications as I go through these questions...

Which one if any stand out as particularly *difficult*?

Which one if any stand out as *impossible*?

Which one if any stand out as *easiest*?

The questions begin...

Jesus taught that love for God involves every aspect of our being. As you consider your devotion to God, does he have all of you?

Your heart

- Is he the focus of your affections?
- Is your love for him warm and real?
- Do you take pleasure in his ultimate worth?

Your soul

- Are you willing to give him your life itself?
- Does your worship genuinely reflect your inner desires and intentions?
- Do you love him with your total being?

Your mind

- Does your commitment fully involve your intellectual capabilities?
- Is your faith fully informed or based on blind trust?
- Is your mind trained to think of his moral perfection?

Your strength

- Do you strive to love and serve him energetically?
- Have you devoted all your physical and material capabilities to him?
- Can you sustain intense love for him even under pressure or when doubts arise?

(from The Life Application Commentary Series Copyright © 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000 by the Livingstone Corporation. Produced

Gospel of Mark – NOTES

with permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. All rights reserved.)