

ADVENT DEVOTION: DECEMBER 1, 2022

A CHANGE OF PERSPECTIVE

LUKE 20:27-40

27Some Sadducees, those who say there is no resurrection, came to him 28and asked him a question, "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, leaving a wife but no children, the man shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother. 29Now there were seven brothers; the first married, and died childless; 30then the second 31and the third married her, and so in the same way all seven died childless. 32Finally the woman also died. 33In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had married her."

34Jesus said to them, "Those who belong to this age marry and are given in marriage; 35but those who are considered worthy of a place in that age and in the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. 36Indeed they cannot die anymore, because they are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection. 37And the fact that the dead are raised Moses himself showed, in the story about the bush, where he speaks of the Lord as the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. 38Now he is God not of the dead, but of the living; for to him all of them are alive." 39Then some of the scribes answered, "Teacher, you have spoken well." 40For they no longer dared to ask him another question.

Most Gospel stories that start with... some people came to Jesus to ask him a question... are stories in which powerful folks are trying to trap Jesus or make him look bad in public. This story from Luke seems to start out that same way. These Sadducees, who don't believe in resurrection, come to Jesus with this pretty unlikely theoretical scenario about a woman marrying a series of 7 brothers, presumably to point out a problem with believing in the resurrection of the dead. Jesus responds by zooming out. He basically says, "It doesn't work like that in the afterlife." He causes them to see that there is something beyond, something bigger that isn't bound by the way we understand things right now. My favorite part of the story is the response by the Sadducees. Instead of them sulking away grumbling and hatching a future plot to take down Jesus, some of the scribes simply answer, "Teacher, you have spoken well." They recognized his wisdom and authority and made a choice not to take another shot at him.

In this season of Advent, when we are preparing for Christ to enter in, I hope that, even in our most skeptic moments, we can open ourselves to Jesus widening the frame of our mind and our heart. In this world it is easy to get jaded, to get cynical. But Jesus has a larger perspective, and engaging in the teachings of Christ we can get glimpses of that wider understanding. When it happens, may we also be able to say, "Teacher, you have spoken well." But unlike these Sadducees, I hope it will lead us to ask him even more questions!

REFLECTION:

1. When is a time when you had your perspective widened or changed?
2. How might God be using you to change or widen the perspectives of others to catch a glimpse of The Kin-dom of God?

~Bill Buchanan