

“The God of the Living!”

11-10-13

What does the future hold for you? For any of us? Can we really know anything at all about our future? Some would say absolutely not! Others will tell you all kinds of things, probably more than you want to know about your future if you pay them a few bucks! But what DO we know?

There are certain things about our life here, our earthly future, that we have no idea of what is to come. But as people of faith, we do know what happens when we die. The eternal gift of heaven is ours! The earthly and heavenly are closely related. You see, your eternal future directly affects your earthly future.

Open to Luke 20. Jesus throughout His ministry always had people around Him who wanted to learn from Him. But Jesus also had those who wanted to catch Him in saying or doing something they could use to accuse Him and convict Him! **Look at verses 27-33**, *“There came to him some Sadducees, those who deny that there is a resurrection, and they asked him a question, saying, “Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies, having a wife but no children, the man must take the widow and raise up offspring for his brother. Now there were seven brothers. The first took a wife, and died without children. And the second and the third took her, and likewise all seven left no children and died. Afterward the woman also died. In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be?”*

What an unusual and involved question! Everyone dies don’t they? As the saying goes, *“There are two things certain, Death and Taxes!”* We spend our time, energy and money to deny the fact that death happens! Maybe it’s because we really don’t like to realize that reality. The Sadducees were living for death. They believed there was no life after death!

Angels, heaven, and hell were rejected by them! The Pharisees, on the other hand believed in all these things including a resurrection and eternal life. With these two groups being the leaders of the Church at the same time can you imagine the discussions and disagreements that occurred when they met together?

The Sadducees wanted to try and prove Jesus wrong. As Jesus begins to answer, He starts with marriage but quickly uses God’s Word correctly and shows them how far off base they really are! Because the Sadducees didn’t have “resurrection eyes” they couldn’t see the real meaning of life here on earth. They were all about death, but the true God is all about life.

Open to Exodus 3. Jesus is the God of the Living. Jesus proves this gift of God to the Sadducees by taking them into Scripture to look at Moses at the burning bush. Listen to Jesus’ words from Luke 20:37, *“But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the passage about the bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.”*

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had been “dead” for many, many years. But when God speaks in Exodus 3:6 He uses the present tense as His reference point. Listen, *“And he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.”*

Look how God makes it even clearer in verses 13-15, *“Then Moses said to God, “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel, ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers, the*

God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.”

The God of every generation is your God, and He is your God forever! When Jesus comes, He connects Himself to the great "I AM," proclaiming for all to hear in John 11:25, *“I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live. Jesus is the great I AM!”*

It’s true, we will die. But as a Christian, death isn’t the end. It’s only a door into the ultimate glory of our God! Verse 14 of our second lesson this morning makes the connection between the Holy Spirit and heaven and earth. Listen to what it says again, *“To this he called you through our Gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* How cool is that! You and I get to share in the glory of God Himself. Death is no longer an issue of concern or worry. Death itself is a celebration of life!

We need to live and serve with “Resurrection Eyes!” Our God is the God of the living and He calls us to live! He created us for life, not death! That means our faith needs to be an active, lively faith that seeks to do His Will!

But He also knows our own sin, Satan, and the world are getting in the way of us doing His Will. He knows our suffering and that’s why He sent His One and Only to pay the price! The one thing to remember is, the God of the living, is the living God Who is always with us!

God was there as He sent Moses to Egypt to do a very difficult task. He was there with the disciples when He sent them out in mission. Remember the final words from His Great Commission, *“And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”*

That my friends, is the very same God, the great I AM speaking to you and to me as He did to Moses and the disciples. How will we respond? As individuals? As a church? I am convinced that we must respond and we will serve our Lord with "resurrection eyes." We can’t look at the task before us in light of the past events, past struggles or recent failures.

No, because we believe in the resurrection, we need to live for the future and serve for life. Martin Luther had a great, down to earth way of putting it. He said, *“Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree today.”*

God’s always near to help, guide, and lead. His promises to us are never failing. This forever God isn’t just a God of the past, but He’s a God of the present and the future! He’s the living God! He gives comforting words. He tells you, *“Do not fear, I am with you.”*

Starting this very moment may we see our living God and live and serve Him. May we see Him at our side in every challenge and struggle. May we see Jesus in every opportunity to come! In Him alone we have life following the true God of the Living!