

Ah those Sadducees – yet another group of religious authorities trying to trap Jesus. They come to him with a rather ridiculous story - - hypothetical but based on their laws of marriage. If a woman's husband dies leaving no children, then his brother should marry her. In their story, the woman has married seven brothers as every time she marries one, he dies leaving no children.

Then the woman dies and their question is – In the resurrection whose wife will she be because she has married seven. Since these Sadducees don't believe in resurrection, the question is designed to bring out that there is no such thing.

Jesus responds that in the resurrection, people neither marry nor are given in marriage. Marriage is for this age. I find this worrisome. I want my relationships from this age to continue in the resurrection. I love the thought of being gathered around a heavenly banquet table with those I love around me. In just about every funeral sermon, I say that you will see you loved ones again.

If we are honest, we are not unlike the Sadducees. We too want to know what the resurrection is going to be like. We want to know how it will work. Will Aunt Sadie be with her first husband or second husband? How will I recognize my parents? What will my body be like?

In Jesus' answer, I hear that these things don't apply. We are like angels, children of God. Our God is not a God of the dead but of the living. Marriage is not something that is in play. We cannot bring our way of thinking to life after death. It is beyond us.

I found a great example of having something be beyond us in the movie, Dr. Strange, which was recommended to me by one of our young people. Dr. Strange is a brilliant neurosurgeon who is in a terrible accident which ruins his hand leaving him unable to operate. His whole life is defined by being a surgeon and he seeks out operation after operation to repair his hands with no results. Finally, in desperation, after talking to a man, whose back has been miraculously healed, he travels to Asia where he is introduced to a world of sorcery and alternate dimensions.

As a powerful sorcerer called The Ancient One introduces these concepts, he is extremely skeptical. She tries explain to him, *"You're a man looking at the world through a keyhole. You've spent your whole life trying to widen that keyhole, to see more, to know more. And now, on hearing that it can be widened in ways you can't imagine, you reject the possibility."*

Now I am not advocating that we believe in sorcery or the multiverse (you'll have to watch the movie for an explanation of that last word), but it seems to me that trying to know what resurrection is like is like looking through a keyhole at what God has in store for us.

I think we get glimpses in our life here on earth and have to trust in Jesus' promises. Our God is a God of the living and has an amazing life for us. We will be children of God.

Dr. Strange eventually widens his outlook. It was not easy for him, but I noted that experience played a big part. He had to see and experience this new world he was not able to believe in and little by little, he came to understand. Perhaps it is the same with resurrection. Commentator Debie Thomas¹ points out that the Sadducees want to know about resurrection without suffering death. They want to *know* Jesus without walking *with* Jesus.

Jesus has always been clear. We must be willing to take up our crosses to experience new life. We have to walk with Jesus. "We have to take up the practices of God's people. We have to enter into the joy, the loss, the sacrifice, the wonder, the mystery, the grief, and the challenge of life in Christ. Resurrection knowing is a *lived* knowing"

Last Thursday and Friday, we had our Confirmation Class retreat – a 2 day intensive time to learn about just this – walking with Jesus. We learnt about prayer and prayed. We talked about scripture and then read it and reflected. We talked about helping others and then volunteered at a day shelter for the homeless. We have more to do – learning about worship and experiencing worship among other things, but I realized how important it was not just to know about these things, but to do these things. There were some wonderful moments during those days. I heard some amazing questions and some amazing answers and together I believe we experienced glimpses of what heaven might people – God's people working together and living life in Christ.

I don't think we can know fully what resurrection is like this side of heaven We probably can't even come close. So If you want to know about resurrection and if you are curious about this new life Jesus promises, spend time in conversation with God. read scripture and see how it speaks to your heart and your life. Go out to the poor, the lonely and the downtrodden and walk with them. Gather in worship with other Christians join as we gather around the altar to receive the body and blood of Christ. As you walk with Jesus, keep a look out for the glimpses of resurrection that will come.

¹ <https://www.journeywithjesus.net/essays/2440-children-of-the-resurrection>