

**Memoirs of Peter**  
**Jesus Publicly Affirms the Resurrection**  
**Mark 12:18-27**  
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Tonight, I want us to go back to Mark's gospel and to another question that is thrown at Jesus.

There are certain people that it is unwise to verbally joust with. None would be more unwise to joust with than Jesus Christ, and yet that is exactly what the leaders of ancient Israel did on the Tuesday of the Passion Week that we're looking at together. Tonight, we come to an issue, the issue of the Resurrection.

You know there are many things in Scripture that you and I can appreciate, we can understand because we have experienced them. For example, we have all experienced the power of the Word of God in our lives, so when the Scripture says that the Word of God is sharp and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, we get it. Because we've seen it, we've seen its work in us, and the lives of others around us. When the Scripture says that at the moment of salvation God makes a man or a woman new, He gives them a new heart, we can see that and understand that too, because we've seen it in our own lives, we saw what happened, we witnessed the change in us when God saved us, and we've seen that change lived out in the lives of others around us. But there are things in Scripture that we are told about that we have no paradigm for. We have no experience of – we simply must trust our God by faith. We come to one of those tonight.

None of us has ever personally witnessed the resurrection from the dead. And yet that is exactly what the Scripture affirms and tonight we see that Jesus our Lord Himself affirms, that there is coming a day when every human being will be raised from the dead; some to life eternal and

some to everlasting destruction. That is exactly what our Lord taught and what we come to tonight.

We're working our way through Mark's record of the last week of our Lord's life, the Passion Week, and we find ourselves on Tuesday of that week. Just to remind you, briefly context, on Sunday of the Passion Week, that last week of our Lord's life, was the Triumphal Entry and then Jesus had some ministry in the temple; He sort of cased the temple to see what was going on there, for what He planned to do on Monday. He goes back out of the city, out to Bethany, a couple of miles away just over the hill of the Mount of Olives and stays there with His disciples at the home of friends, and then on Monday Jesus comes back over the Mount of Olives, back into Jerusalem. On the way He curses the fig tree that gave every appearance of having fruit, but had none, not even the little green figs that it should have had that time of year, and it was a symbol of the religion of Israel. It had leaves, it had a great show, but no fruit. And so, on the way to the Temple He did that. When he got to the temple, He actually cleansed the Temple. The fig tree was the picture, the cleansing of the temple was the reality.

Later that same day is when John tells us in his gospel that some Greeks came seeking Jesus; that was Monday. We're on Tuesday of the Passion Week. On Tuesday morning Jesus comes back into the city of Jerusalem from over the hill again, in Bethany, and on the way, He sees the same fig tree that he had cursed the day before and it's withered from the roots up. And He uses it as a lesson on the power of faith; not faith in and of itself, but faith in God Who can do whatever He chooses to do.

He then arrives back on the Temple Mount and begins to teach there in Solomon's Portico, in that massive compound that was the Temple Mount. Remember, the Temple was an isolated

building, but it was built on a huge platform that was 30 acres or more in size, and Jesus is teaching the people who gathered. He went early for those who would like to hear His teaching, and He taught them. In the middle of that teaching He was interrupted with a series of questions from His enemies.

The first question was a question about the source of His authority. “Who gives you authority to do these things?” And Jesus counters with a question about John the Baptist. “You tell me first, was the baptism of John from men or from heaven, and if you answer that question, then I’ll tell you by what authority I do what I do.” And of course, they refused to answer, and His counter question was the answer, the authority He had to do what He was doing came because He had been announced by the forerunner that God had promised in the Old Testament. He had all the authority He needed from the Old Testament and from the forerunner. And then Jesus launches into three parables: three parables against the Jews and their leaders.

Then comes another question. We looked at this one the last time we turned to Mark together; the morality of paying taxes. Another group comes up and says, “What about paying the poll tax, the head tax to Rome? What do you think about that?” And Jesus responded of course, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to God the things that are God’s.”

Now today we come to a third question. It’s still probably in the morning of Tuesday, and a third question comes to Jesus. His enemies have on that Tuesday tried to trip Him up. The first question was trying to undermine His authority. The second question was to get Him in trouble with the Romans. This third question attacks the very core of Jesus’ teaching ministry; that those who belong to His spiritual kingdom would die but would be raised to life, body, and soul, and

live forever in His eternal kingdom. That was at the core of Jesus' teaching. And so, this question is aimed at the core of what Jesus taught.

Jesus speaks of God destroying body and soul in hell, which implies a resurrection, even of the wicked. In John 5 Jesus says, "an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice and will come forth; some to a resurrection of life, and others to a resurrection of judgment." So, all human beings, all who are in the tombs, will hear the voice of God, will be raised, their souls, their immaterial parts reunited with their bodies, some will face judgment and others life. Now those resurrections don't, we find out from other passages, occur at exactly the same time, but that's just sort of a sweeping statement that there will be a resurrection of all.

This was the ministry of the apostles as well. You remember when Paul gets into trouble before the Sanhedrin, he says, "...there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked." So, when the Sadducees come with this question, understand this, when the Sadducees come to Jesus with this question, it is not a random attempt to embarrass Jesus. Instead, they believe that their question will literally go to the heart of Jesus' teaching. It is the one key thread that if they pull out His whole ministry, His whole teaching ministry collapses. Unravels. So, let's look at it.

Mark 12, and we'll begin reading in Verse 18. Tuesday morning, Passion Week.

Some Sadducees (who say there is no resurrection) came to Jesus, and *began* questioning Him, saying, "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that IF A MAN' BROTHER DIES AND leaves behind a wife AND LEAVE NO CHILD, HIS BROTHER SHOULD MARRY THE WIFE AND RAISE UP CHILDREN TO HIS BROTHER. There were seven brothers; and the first took a wife and died leaving no children. The second one married her and died leaving behind no

children; and the third likewise; and *so* all seven left no children. Last of all the woman died also. In the resurrection, when they rise again, which one's wife will she be? For all seven had married her." Jesus said to them, "Is this not the reason you are mistaken, that you do not understand the Scriptures or the power of God? For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. But regarding the fact that the dead rise again, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the *passage* about the *burning* bush, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC AND THE GOD OF JACOB'? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living; you are greatly mistaken."

Jesus says we can be certain, we can be confident of a future resurrection. Because here He clearly and publicly affirms both the nature and the certainty of that resurrection. And He uses as a teaching platform for this teaching, the foil of a group of first century theological liberals, who absolutely rejected it. Now as we examine the record of this encounter, we can see in the flow of Mark's account in Verses 18-23 a public denial of the resurrection, and then in Verses 24-27, Jesus' public affirmation of the resurrection.

So, let's look first then at the denial of the resurrection. Verse 18 says, "Some Sadducees (who say that there is no resurrection)" Now why would they say that? What was the philosophical basis for their rejecting the resurrection? It's important for you to understand this group and who they were, because this sets the foil for the story and for Jesus' response.

We really know very little about this group called the Sadducees. They're only mentioned 14 times in the New Testament as opposed to almost a hundred times the Pharisees are mentioned. They were a small but very powerful group of men.

The Sadducees probably arose during the period between the testaments, the 400 silent years between Malachi's prophesy and the arrival of John the Baptist. They were primarily priests, and not just everyday priests, not just run of the mill priests, but they were of the wealthy aristocratic families who controlled the office of the high priest. And in first century Israel the office of high priest was not about some spiritual post; it was about a position of political power. You were the power if you were the high priest in first century Israel. And the Sadducees were composed of these wealthy aristocratic families that control the office of the high priest. Most of the political leaders of the nation were Sadducees. They were pragmatists. They didn't really care much about the faith of Israel. They were willing to assimilate with Greek culture; some of them were even Hellenist. They received Greek culture. They said the Pentateuch was God's Word, but they absolutely rejected anything beyond that, including the rest of the Old Testament, as well as the Pharisees' oral tradition. So, all they had was the Pentateuch.

In addition to that they were anti-supernaturalist. They didn't believe in the supernatural, except for God Himself. They didn't believe God intervened in the world He made; they didn't believe there was a spirit world; in fact, Acts tells us they didn't believe there were angels. Josephus said that they rejected the immortality of the soul and future judgments and rewards. These were like Darwinian naturalists. I mean that's really what they were like in many regards. And most of all, and this is how we're introduced to them here, they taught that there was no resurrection. So basically, they taught this life, that's it; no punishment, no reward, no afterlife; you live, you die, you're done.

In fact, turn over to Acts, because Paul interacts with this group and it's kind of humorous, actually. Acts 23:6, He's standing before the Sanhedrin, and there's already been some tension, you can read about that in the first five verses, but Paul perceives that some of the group, one group were Sadducees and the other were Pharisees. And that was typical of the Sanhedrin, you had kind of like we have our Democrats and Republicans, they had the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and they were seriously on different sides of the aisle. And so, he picks this up, and so Paul begins crying out in the Council,

Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees; I am on trial for the hope and resurrection of the dead!" As he said this, there occurred a dissension between the Pharisees and Sadducees, [So he turns them immediately against each other] and the assembly was divided. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor an angel, nor a spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all. And there occurred great uproar; and some of the scribes of the Pharisaic party stood up and *began* to argue heatedly, saying., [This is a good guy], "We find nothing wrong with this man; suppose a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?" [This is, I mean this is like front page news in the States isn't it, and you can see this happening on the floor of the Congress.] "And as a great dissension was developing, the commander was afraid [that] Paul would be torn to pieces by them and ordered the troops to go down and take him away from them by force and bring him into the barracks."

This is how strongly these groups felt about these things.

Now, go back to Mark 12. That's the group we're dealing with. Anti-supernaturalist, no spirit world, no immortality of the soul; you live, you die, you're done. So, that's what they believed. So, in the context of that they come at Jesus trying to help Him understand, trying to teach Him as well as the rest of the people the "ridiculous", and I say that in quotations, practical consequences of believing the resurrection. "We just want you to see," they come at this crowd with, "how silly your position of a resurrection really is." Not only did the Sadducees deny the resurrection, but they saw some of the practical implications of believing it made otherwise intelligent people foolish. Apparently in their debates with the Pharisees they had discovered a specific scenario that regularly silenced all of those who believed in the resurrection. So, after Jesus silenced the Pharisees, they decided that here is a perfect opportunity for them to kill two birds with one stone. They can undermine the heart of Jesus' teaching ministry, which taught there is an afterlife, there is a resurrection, there is judgment, there are rewards, there is a kingdom of the future, and at the same time get in a serious jab at their partners in crime across the aisle, the Pharisees, who had believed in a resurrection. So, this is perfect. Couldn't be better from their vantage point. With the hundreds of thousands of people and undoubtedly several thousand people crowded around Jesus in this venue.

So, Verse 18. "Some Sadducees (who say that there is no resurrection) came to Jesus and [they] began questioning Him, saying, 'Teacher, Moses wrote for us that IF A MAN'S BROTHER DIES AND leaves behind a wife AND LEAVES NO CHILD, HIS BROTHER SHOULD MARRY THE WIFE AND RAISE UP CHILDREN TO HIS BROTHER.'" That is a rough quotation; you can see how we go in and out of capital letters there; the capital letters are a quotation from Deuteronomy 25:5, the other words are not, so it's sort of a rough translation of



the passage, probably shows how little these secularists really knew about the Bible. But regardless, they bring up what's called the Law of the Levirate Marriage.

The word levirate comes from the Latin word for a husband's brother, or brother-in-law. In the Old Testament, in Deuteronomy 25:5, we learn that if a man died and if he had no heirs, and if he had a brother, if all those things were true, if he died, if he had no heirs and if he had a brother, then his brother was to marry his widow. There were two reasons for that, that are given; one was to keep the family name alive, and the other was to keep from dividing the family inheritance and the family wealth; to keep it in the family, literally. This practice actually began before the Law; you can go back to Genesis 38 and find that it was practiced even there, and it was practiced in the nations around Israel. This was a fairly common practice.

So, there's the biblical text they're using as a foundation of their argument. Now they're going to move from the biblical text to a specific case and ask Jesus to explain how it would work, and how it would work out, if in fact there were a resurrection. What I want you to see and really get is they're not interested in Jesus' answer. They don't even think there is a satisfying answer. The question is simply posed to make Jesus and His position of a future bodily resurrection look absolutely ridiculous. It's interesting, by the way, that Matthew quotes them as saying, "there were seven brothers with us." They actually presented this as if it were a true story and they knew this guy. I think it's likely they were lying, and the story was fiction, but that's how they presented it to Jesus.

But regardless they explain the circumstance; look at Verse 20. "There were seven brothers; and the first took a wife and died leaving no children. The second one married her and died leaving behind no children; and the third likewise."

You know, you'd think if you were brother number four, you might begin to have a little misgiving about this arrangement. But apparently, according to the story and they said it was true, all seven did the same thing and left no children. "Last of all the woman died also." Now here's the punch line, verse 23: "In the resurrection, when they rise again" now remember they don't believe in the resurrection, so this is all tongue-in-cheek, "which one's wife will she be? For all seven had married her." To show how ridiculous a bodily resurrection is they ask Jesus to explain what will happen when a woman dies having had seven different husbands. Which one's wife will she be? By the way, we know from Pharisaic writings from the writings of the Rabbis, that the Pharisees opted for husband number one. That was their answer. So, they pose this question to Jesus.

Now folks, you and I don't get questions exactly like this one thrown at us. But we do encounter people, all the time, who are skeptical about our faith and frankly are every bit as skeptical about the resurrection as the Sadducees were. Don't be surprised by that. Satan is about denying a future bodily resurrection. Why do you think? Because he wants people to be deceived, he wants them to live in this relative comfort and peace of, "yeah, you live this life, you live it however you want, and it doesn't really matter because you're going to die and that's it. So, live it up." And so, Satan even brings false teachers into the church to deny the resurrection; he did it in the first century. Paul in 2 Timothy 2 had to talk about two of them, "Hymenaeus and Philetus, men who have gone astray from the truth saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and they (have) upset the faith of some." Listen, you don't need to worry about the resurrection, it's already happened, so you're out of luck, just live the way you want. Live in antinomianism.

So how do we respond to such denials? Well let's sit at the feet of our Lord and learn. So, let's look secondly, that's the denial of the resurrection and it's all too common in our day, just as it

was then. By the way, what is the primary way people in our day deny it? Where does that come from? It comes from Darwinian evolutionary naturalism. There's just matter, that's all there is. The world matter is eternal, there's no spiritual world, they're very much like the Sadducees were. There's no spiritual world, so it doesn't matter, you just do the best you can, live and enjoy life and then you live, you die, you're done.

So, let's see how Jesus responds to that. Jesus' public affirmation of the resurrection. Now He begins His response with an explanation of why people reject the resurrection, and specifically why the Sadducees did. Look at verse 24; "Jesus said to them" and you got to figure this is a serious dig; He's on their territory, and He says to them "Is this not the reason you are mistaken, that you do not understand the Scriptures [ouch] or the power of God?" You just don't get it; you're mistaken about the reality of the resurrection. By the way, the word mistaken can also be translated from the Greek text as "you have deceived yourselves". That may be what He's saying. You've deceived yourselves. Why? Two reasons. "You do not understand the Scriptures." This is about as harsh a criticism as a priest could receive because we think of the priest's chief duty as making sacrifices at the temple; not true. Even in David's time there were 24 courses of priests, so you only served a short time each year at the temple or the tabernacle sacrificing animals. Most of the year the Law laid down the responsibility for priests to teach the Word of God to the people. That was their primary task. So, Jesus here takes these guys on, on the Temple Mount during Passover season with thousands of people gathered around and He says, "You don't really understand the Scripture, do you? Your real problem is you just don't understand the Scripture," and Jesus answers this problem in Verses 26 and 27.

The second reason He gives in Verse 24 is, "you do not understand the power of God." And Jesus deals with this issue in Verse 25, and He deals with it first. So how have they been

mistaken about the power of God? Well, they don't understand what the nature of resurrection life is like. They don't understand. By the way, Luke tells us that Jesus began by saying this, "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage." Marriage is a part of this age; it's part of life now; men choose to marry, and parents give their daughters in marriage, but it was going to be different, Jesus says, in the time of the resurrection. Verse 25, "For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven." You see the Sadducees didn't understand God's power, and specifically they didn't understand that God has the power to completely change and reshape life in the eternal state. It doesn't have to be, in fact it won't be, like life here, exactly. In fact, when it comes to marriage, we will neither decide to marry nor will parents give their children in marriage, but instead, in this way, and in this way only, we will be like the angels. Hmm. By the way, this is a little dig as well, because remember what else the Sadducees don't believe in – angels. Huh!

So, Jesus gets in two points, touché here. He says there will be no marriage. Now those couples who have troubled marriages love this verse. It's like their life verse; "No marriage in heaven, that will be heaven." But for those of us who as believers have good marriages and we love our spouses, this verse can seem a bit like a downer, can't it? What? No marriage? But all Jesus says is that marriage as we know it with the sexual relationship will not exist in heaven. But that does not mean that all relationships will be exactly the same in heaven, and all have exactly the same level of intimacy.

I've thought about this because it's something that's troubled me. But think about this; when Jesus was here on earth He had perfect love – is that true? He loved everyone perfectly, in fact John 13:1 says that. But was the nature, the depth of the intimacy of the relationship He had with everyone He came across exactly the same? No. Absolutely not. The crowds, it was

different than those who were His committed followers, than the 70 He trained and sent out or the let's narrow down to the 12. But even among the 12 it wasn't exactly the same. There was one group and specifically three guys in the 12 that He had the closest relationship with and who He gave special privileges to and who went with Him at special times: Peter, James and John. So, what I want you to see is that perfect love does not mean that all relationships are therefore exactly the same. There can be different levels of intimacy, even when there is perfect love.

I can't prove this to you, but I believe in light of that, that we will continue to enjoy a deep level of intimacy with our spouses and the deep friends of this life in heaven. But marriage as we know it here, and especially the sexual relationship in marriage which was the real issue at the foundation of the Sadducees question here, will not be in the future as it is now. Not because it's not a pure and holy creation of God for marriage in this world because it is. The author of Hebrews 13:4 says, "Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge." It is a holy, pure, honorable thing, the physical relationship in marriage. But God has decided that the sexual relationship doesn't fulfill its purpose that it does here, in eternity. So at least that aspect of marriage will change, and marriage as we know it here will not exist, but I do believe that we will have differing levels of intimacy in the relationships even in heaven, even though our love for everyone will be perfect, even as Jesus' love was perfect here on earth.

So, Jesus says, "Listen, you don't understand God's power to completely change life so the fact that a woman had seven husbands here is not going to be a big issue for God to deal with." But in Verses 26 and 27 Jesus addresses the main reason they didn't believe in the resurrection; and it was that they didn't understand the Scriptures. Look at Verse 26. Here's why Jesus believed the resurrection. "But regarding the fact that the dead rise again, have you not read?" again I love

that, “have you not read in the [Pentateuch, you know the five books you claim to be the only Bible], in the passage about the burning bush, how God spoke to him, saying, ‘I AM GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC AND THE GOD OF JACOB. He is not the God of the dead but the living.’”? Jesus immediately affirms the resurrection, the dead rise again. And He says, “I can prove it to you from the book of Moses.” The book of Moses is just another name for the Pentateuch. By the way Jesus here affirms what many liberal scholars deny and that is that Moses wrote the first five books of our Bible. And He refers to a specific passage, and He calls it “the passage about the burning bush.” Before chapter and verse divisions this is you indicated the passage you were referring to. “Oh, that passage!” And specifically, it is Exodus 3 and part of Exodus 4.

Now why did Jesus believe the resurrection? Out of this text He quotes there are several reasons and let’s look specifically at why He believed the resurrection. First of all, because the Scripture clearly teaches a future resurrection of the body. You see this in so many texts. Turn over to Job 19. Job 19, this was Job’s hope and expectation. Job, the events in Job occurred in the Patriarchal period, the time of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And notice what Job, even at that time, was hanging on to. Verse 25, “As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last He will take His stand on the earth. Even after my skin is destroyed [in other words after my body has rotted, after I have died and I have returned to dust] yet from my flesh I shall see God, whom I myself shall behold, and whom my eyes will see and not another. My heart faints within me!”

This is the message of the Old Testament in various places. Psalm 16:10, primarily about Jesus but about David as well. In many regards, “You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.” The first half of that verse about David, the second half of that verse about Christ. Psalm 49:15, “God will redeem my soul from the power

of the Sheol [grave], for He will receive me.” Isaiah 26:19, “Your dead will live; their corpses will rise. You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy, for your dew is as the dew of the dawn, and the earth will give birth to the departed spirits.” Daniel 12:2, “Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.” Hebrews 13:14, “For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come.”

There’s a future, and a real place. But Jesus doesn’t use any of those. Instead, Jesus uses a text from the Pentateuch. Because the Pentateuch was the only portion of the Scripture the Sadducees accepted as Scripture. And they claim the resurrection wasn’t taught there, that it was an invention of the Pharisees. So Jesus quotes Exodus 3:6. But it’s not just a quotation; Jesus also believed in the resurrection because of His exegesis of that Scripture. He doesn’t merely quote a verse which He sometimes does; Jesus here argues on the basis of exegesis an explanation of the text, that the Scripture in Exodus 3:6 affirms the reality of a future bodily resurrection of the saints. And notice how He puts it in Verse 27; “He is not the God of the dead, but of the living”

How does this text affirm the resurrection? It’s interesting because in Hebrew back in the Hebrew text, Exodus 3 there is no verb “am”. Some people, “Well, He said ‘I am the God’ versus ‘I was the God.’” But there’s no verb in Hebrew in Exodus 3. When the Septuagint was translated just before the time of Christ, they added the verb to capture the meaning of the original Hebrew, they understood Moses not merely to be describing a relationship God had with the Patriarchs in the past, during their lifetimes - remember Abraham lived about 2,000 BC, 2,066 BC; Moses lived in about 1400 BC. So, we’re talking 7-800 years later, and God’s saying, “I am the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob.” In Moses’ day God was saying, “I still have an abiding relationship with the Patriarchs; I made a covenant to enter into a relationship with

them and I'm not going to abandon that covenant at their deaths. I am still their God as I promised them, I would be." He would not allow their deaths to nullify the covenant He made. They would continue to live, not just in soul, but in body. So, Jesus argues that God will keep His covenant promises to the Patriarchs and nothing, not even death, will keep Him from doing so.

Jesus then affirms the principle of antithesis. Since the text affirms the resurrection, and you deny the resurrection – look at the end of Verse 27, "you are greatly mistaken." If the Scripture teaches the truth, its opposite must be error. The two contrary views can't both be true. This is an answer to the post-modernist.

Now there were a couple of interesting responses to Jesus here. Matthew tells us that when the crowds heard this they were astonished at His teaching. Luke tells us that some of the scribes some of the Pharisees said, "Amen." They're on board with Jesus taking their position. "Teacher, You have spoken well. For they did not have courage to question Him any longer about anything." They're going to regroup, and we'll see them again.

Now, what do we do with this text? Very quickly let me give you some applicational thoughts. It's so important. First of all, have confidence in the reality of the future historical event of the resurrection. If you believe in Jesus, if you believe in the resurrection of Jesus, then believe in your own resurrection, because the two go together. Read, and I don't have time to take you there, but read 1 Corinthians 15:12-20, where Paul says Jesus' resurrection proves that we will one day be raised. If you believe Jesus was raised from the dead, if you're in Christ, you will not stay dead. Your body will be raised, and your soul will be reunited with it. The teaching of Scripture, the affirmation of Jesus, and Jesus' own resurrection from the dead, all guarantee that



we will experience a bodily resurrection, even though we've never seen it, we've never experienced it; it's as certain as death itself.

Secondly, let Jesus' teaching motivate you to share the gospel. Look with me quickly at John 5. John 5:28. This is both an encouraging text and a frightening text at the same time. John 5:28, Jesus has just said that the Father gave Him authority to execute judgment. And He says, "Don't marvel at this..." Verse 28, "...for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice," the voice of the Son of Man, "...and will come forth..." Some day in different times, for the at the rapture for believers, and in the future at the end for unbelievers, all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and they will come forth. Their souls will be reunited with their resurrected bodies, and there will be those who go to a resurrection of life, and those, who by their committing of evil show they don't belong to God, to a resurrection of judgment. Folks, that is certain. Do you understand that everybody in your life, every single person you know, and love will be a participant in one of those resurrections? This should drive us to share the gospel with others. All of those you love and all of those whom you interact with will experience the future reality of the resurrection, many in the resurrection of the unjust, to be damned body and soul to the Lake of Fire where they will be tormented day and night forever. It's not something we like to think about, but it is reality according to Jesus.

Thirdly, meditate on Jesus' teaching about the resurrection, for comfort, regarding either the past death or impending death of those you love. Many of us have family members or friends who are facing death, if they're in Christ we can find hope and encouragement. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, where Paul rehearses the coming resurrection of believers in the rapture, and he says, he ends that passage with these words; "Therefore comfort one another with these words."

Meditate on these things, to gain comfort. Death is not final for a believer.

Number 4, meditate on the teaching of Scripture to overcome the fear of your own death. And we all have that fear of death. Mankind is universally afraid of death, but in Christ we don't have to be afraid. The writer of Hebrews says, "Jesus partook of flesh like we have, that through His death He might defeat Satan, render powerless him who had the power of death, that is the devil, and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives." People live in slavery to the fear of death. But as believers we don't have to. That doesn't mean we look forward to the process. Doesn't mean it's like a warm and fuzzy thing. Paul says death is the last enemy to be destroyed. Death is an enemy, and yet its stinger has been removed. Meditate on these realities. Meditate on what our Lord taught here. God is the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob today. That means their death didn't end His covenant promises to them. They have a future and so do you, and so do those you love. Look at texts, meditate on texts like Job 19 that we read a few minutes ago. "Even after my skin is destroyed, yet from my flesh I shall see God; whom I myself will behold, and whom my eyes will see and not another." Meditate on John 6:39 and 40. "For this is the will of Him" Jesus says, "who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day." Think about that, when the fear of death comes into your mind, for yourself or those you love. Seize these texts, these promises of our Lord.

My personal favorite, though, is John 11. Those times when my own soul is chilled with the thought of death, I come to John 11. Look at John 11; you know the interchange, the death of Lazarus. But I love what Jesus says to Martha. Verse 23, Jesus says, "Your brother will rise again," and Martha says, "I know, I know that he's going to rise again in the resurrection on the last day. I have confidence in that." But Jesus wants to take her confidence in the event of the

resurrection and put her confidence in the Person of the resurrection. Look at what He says in the next verse; “Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life’” Listen, your confidence and my confidence is not in a future event; my confidence and yours should be in a Person who is in Himself the resurrection and the life. That’s where my hope is, and that’s where your hope is as well. Think on these things and let them comfort and encourage your soul. Jesus made it very clear that there will be a future bodily resurrection. Death is not final for the Christian. Let’s pray together.

Father, thank You for Your Word. Lord, how we praise You, that You Who put eternity in our hearts, that this life is not all there is. Lord, it flies past, it seems like a sigh, a moment gone, but Father thank You that we were made for eternity and its eternity we will enjoy, because You have made covenant promises to us, and our death can’t change those promises. And that like Job, though our skin is destroyed, though we return to dust, yet in our flesh, not only our immaterial souls in Your presence but You will raise our bodies to new life in the likeness of Jesus Himself, and in our flesh, our glorified flesh we will see You. Father, when we are faced with the fear of death, that the people around us are in slavery to, Lord don’t let us be enslaved, but let our minds come to these texts, let our hearts find their anchor in the promises and affirmations of our Lord. We thank You, O God, that when that day comes for each of us, our hope is not in a truth, it is not in an event, but our hope is in a Person Who said, “I am the resurrection, and I am the life.” Father, we bless You and thank You that you have defeated, already really, and yet in the future You’ll crush the curse of death entirely. We bless You and thank You in the name of Jesus our Lord. Amen.