

Luke

Carefully Investigating the Gospel ... Together

SSBC Luke Bible Study #78

Take this Bible Study home and use it to guide your exploration of the scripture passage that next Sunday's sermon will be focused on.

Passage: Luke 20:27-40

Sermon Date: April 1, 2007

Life after Death

Do you believe in life after death? Really? Are you sure? After all, we say we believe in Jesus' resurrection, as well as our own, when we recite the Apostles' Creed.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. On the third day **rose again from the dead**, ascended to heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from thence He will come to judge the living and the dead;

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, **the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.** Amen.

In this week's passage, Jesus challenges the Sadducees' skepticism about life after death. Before you turn the page, ask him to help you to better understand it too.

These studies are produced by South Shore Baptist Church in conjunction with our weekly sermon series. Studies are distributed one week prior to the sermon as inserts in the church bulletin and are also posted at <http://sermonhouse.com/SSBC>. Sermons are also recorded and can be listened to later by visiting that same website. Have feedback or questions? Contact studieditor@southshorebaptist.com

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1. Read this week's Bible passage and use the chart below to note your observations and any questions you have.

Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p style="text-align: center;">Luke 20:27-40</p> <p>²⁷ Some of the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Jesus with a question. ²⁸ "Teacher," they said, "Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow and have children for his brother. ²⁹ Now there were seven brothers. The first one married a woman and died childless. ³⁰ The second ³¹ and then the third married her, and in the same way the seven died, leaving no children. ³² Finally, the woman died too. ³³ Now then, at the resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?"</p> <p>³⁴ Jesus replied, "The people of this age marry and are given in marriage. ³⁵ But those who are considered worthy of taking part in that age and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage, ³⁶ and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God's children, since they are children of the resurrection. ³⁷ But in the account of the bush, even Moses showed that the dead rise, for he calls the Lord 'the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' ³⁸ He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive."</p> <p>³⁹ Some of the teachers of the law responded, "Well said, teacher!"</p> <p>⁴⁰ And no one dared to ask him any more questions.</p>	

2. Read the parallel passage in Mark's gospel, and note the differences you see as well as any other observations & questions you have.

Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p style="text-align: center;">Mark 12:18-27</p> <p>¹⁸ Then the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question. ¹⁹ "Teacher," they said, "Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow and have children for his brother. ²⁰ Now there were seven brothers. The first one married and died without leaving any children. ²¹ The second one married the widow, but he also died, leaving no child. It was the same with the third. ²² In fact, none of the seven left any children. Last of all, the woman died too. ²³ At the resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?"</p> <p>²⁴ Jesus replied, "Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God? ²⁵ When the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven. ²⁶ 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!"</p>	

3. Next, use this chart to **interpret some key observations**.

a. Select a few of your observations & questions from pages 2-3 that you find most interesting or important. Rewrite these below, and interpret and apply them using the columns to the right.

b. For each observation, begin to interpret by asking yourself these kinds of questions:

- What does it mean?
- Why is this important?
- What does this tell me about the Father? Jesus? The Holy Spirit?
- Are there other scriptures that could help me understand this?

Observation What does it say?	Interpretation What does it mean?

4. Now consider how you can **apply** the Word to your life. Look for:

- **S**ins to avoid
- **P**romises to believe
- **E**xamples to follow (remember "SPECK")
- **C**ommands to obey
- **K**nowledge to share

Don't just write things to write them – listen carefully to God's Word and what he seems to be teaching you, and look for relevant things that you're truly stirred to do. Then as you do them, God will help you learn, grow, and help others grow.

Application How do I apply what it means?

Look Closer:

5. This passage is part of a series of incidents where the Jewish leaders were trying to derail Jesus' ministry (Luke 19:47-48, 20:19-20). How are the Sadducees trying to trap or undermine Jesus through their question in Luke 20:28-33?

6. When you think of heaven, what do you typically think of in terms of how you will associate with those you know on earth? Do you think of it in terms of still having relationships with your saved family and friends? How does this passage affirm or challenge your existing notion of the family structure in heaven?

7. Consider the following statements.

a. Jesus is saying that our familial ties will no longer exist in heaven, such as no longer being someone's husband or wife.

b. Jesus is making a relative statement – that our identity in heaven will be predominately as "children of God" (Lk 20:36b), so much so that our earthly relationships and familial ties will be overshadowed.

Which of these statements do you agree with most, and why?

8. How does the account of the burning bush show that there is life after death? (see Exodus 3:6 in particular)

9. What did Jesus teach previously in his ministry about whether there would be life after death? (see Luke 9:22, 14:14, 18:33, John 11:25)

10. Why is one's belief in the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of man important? (Consider Romans 10:9, 1 Cor 15)

11. What metaphor is used to show what our role as the collective body of believers (aka the "eklesia" or "church") will be in heaven? (Consider Mt 9:15, Jn 3:29, Rev 21:2) How does this relate to Jesus' teaching about us not marrying in heaven (verse 20:35)? Note how this event comes right after Jesus' parable of the wedding banquet (Mt 22:1-14).

Christians need to begin to live like a bride expecting a great, cosmic wedding – being less focused on this world and its woes, and more focused on anticipating the celebrations and priorities of heaven. Our work and lives are to be anticipatory, even preparatory, of the new heavens and earth.

Karl Johnson and Mako Fujimura

12. For a broader perspective about life after death and heaven, read Revelation 21:1-8.

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

⁵ He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

⁶ He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. ⁷ He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son. ⁸ But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

How will eternal life in heaven be different than our present life on earth? How, therefore, does an "eternal" perspective differ from a worldly perspective in terms of ... marriage? ... pain & suffering? ... death?