

Today’s lesson is read from Luke 20:27-38

**Hear from Luke:**

Read Luke 20:27-38

“The Word of God for the people of God.”

**“Thanks be to God”**

Let us pray:

O Lord, let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart be acceptable, pleasing, and perfect in your sight, my Rock and my Redeemer. Amen.

Intro:

- I. So this morning I have a couple of questions or riddles for you, you may have heard some of these already:

Q: Mary's father has 4 children; three are named Nana, Nene, and Nini. What is the fourth child's name?

A: Mary! (You may have to explain!)

Q: How many months have 28 days?

A: All of them! (Some may have 30 or 31, but all have 28!)

Q: What is full of holes but can still hold water?

A: A sponge!

- II. Last question. Are zebras white with black stripes, or are they black with white stripes?

Some people say that since they have a white belly, they are white with black stripes.

Others argue that if you shave all their hair off they have black skin, so they are black with white stripes. This has been a question that has been debated for hundreds of years.

From what I have read, most scientists today believe that they are black with white stripes, but some people would still like to argue about it. To be honest, I'm not sure about it myself. But its fun to ponder it.

- III. Riddles have been around since the time of Jesus. Maybe longer than that. In Jesus' day there were people that liked to argue and discuss difficult religious questions. One such group were the Sadducees — religious leaders who did not believe in the resurrection. One day a group of Sadducees came to Jesus and asked him a riddle in an attempt to trick him into agreeing with them that there was no resurrection. They asked him to answer this riddle: "The law of Moses says that if a man dies, leaving a wife but no children, his brother should marry the widow and have a child who will carry on the brother's name. Well, suppose there were seven brothers. The oldest one married and then died without children. So the second brother married the widow, but he also died. Then the third brother married her. This continued until all seven brothers had married the same woman. Finally, the woman also died. So tell us, whose wife will she be after the resurrection since all seven were married to her! My, that is a tricky question, isn't it? Well, Jesus didn't take the bait!
- IV. Jesus answered, "Marriage is for people here on earth. But in the age to come, those who are raised from the dead will not marry or be married. Not only that, but they will never die again. They will live forever as the children of God."
- V. To the Sadducee, eternity was in the offspring, not in some other world. Jesus responds by saying, "You're comparing apples to oranges and missing the point of eternity." Then Jesus stuns them by saying that even Moses knows about life after death, because God's calling card says on it, "God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" and God's testimonial aren't "used to be God of those former folk." Jesus affirms God is the God of the living, not the dead, not the no longer existing. After Jesus answered them so wisely, no one else dared to ask him any questions.

- VI. But as children of God and inheritors of the resurrection we still have questions to what Jesus has just revealed to us about the resurrection. I know my mom in particular because she can't wait to see my father in heaven and hearing that marriage is not in the age to come, the resurrection age is hard for her to hear. It's hard for me to wrap my head around too. But what are we hoping to find in the life after? Are we hoping to see creation over the creator? as I asked my mom I ask you, why do we hope in the resurrection?
- VII. This is one of the most debated topics in Christianity, death and the afterlife. Ryan Ahlgrim, pastor of First Mennonite Church in Richmond, Virginia, asks, “Is it either you trust in life after death or is it you're committed to living out God's reign now on Earth?” Maybe “these two things that we trust in and do are intimately connected with each other.”
- VIII. We know The Kingdom of God, or Reign of God has begun as seen in both the life and ministry of Jesus Christ on earth, especially in Jesus' death and resurrection from the cross and the Holy Spirit's guidance in the work and ministry of the Church and the community of believers.
- IX. However, God's reign has not yet been fulfilled. In other words, Jesus' resurrected body and his ascension into heaven are glimpses of the “not yet” for the community of believers. Paul explains this as our “future glory” in Romans 8. We are made children of God through an adoption, and have become joint heirs with Christ in the inheritance of new life. This new life, the life of the new creation, is made possible through Jesus' resurrection at Easter and is no longer subject to sin, suffering, and death. Meaning, the full benefits of the inheritance of the Kingdom of God are realized in death as we share in Jesus' resurrection and pass through to a new and everlasting life. So now is the time

to hope and wait and pray with patience and faith, “Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Until Christ comes in final victory at, of which only the Godhead knows the time, and we feast at his heavenly banquet. Undoing all the sin, sickness, suffering, and death in the world and granting us eternal life and peace with God.

- X. So just as the spirit lead Jesus into the wilderness after his baptism and lead him on his journey through Galilee proclaiming repent the reign of God is hear all the way to Jerusalem to die on the cross to be resurrected. So too does the spirit lead us as paul mentions in his letter we hear from this morning:
- XI. The Spirit is working sanctification in you and through you, so cling to this truth, to this hope. And then the glory of the reign of Christ will be revealed in your good works and in your words. This process of sanctification, too, is an “already” and “not yet”; that is what the author is pointing toward—giving thanks for the “already” and encouraging the “not yet.” The preacher could adopt the same strategy, celebrating all the Spirit has brought to life in the midst of the community of faith, even while exhorting to continue growing in faith, not as a way of piling on or adding to the burdens of already burdened people, but as a way of offering hope and of keeping people’s eyes on the prize. Remind everyone that this is not simply us working harder, but allowing the Spirit to abide within and transforming our hearts in love. It is a word of encouragement that we offer.
- XII. The Spirit abides. That’s the message that Jesus offers us in this exchange. When we stumble over questions of how this world folds into the next one, our answer is “God’s got this.” Even when we don’t understand death or life, God’s got this. Even when our hearts break and our vision is cloudy, God’s got this. Even when it seems like everything

is broken and violence rules the day and division is the mode of this life, God’s got this.

The Spirit abides, and we are invited to live differently, to value differently, to hope unreservedly, and to praise constantly. Because God’s got this.