

114 "Children of the Resurrection"!

A few days before Jesus was arrested, a group of Sadducees asked Him one of their silly, aren't-we-just-so-clever?-type questions. These men rejected the idea of any resurrection after death, and thought they had come up with a real poser of a question for Jesus, based on an instruction in the Mosaic Law concerning the need to continue a family line if a husband died with no offspring (Luke 20.27-33 / Deuteronomy 25.5): in the Sadducees' example, the widow of her first husband ended up having to be married to six of his brothers in turn, and there was still no child when the poor soul finally died herself.

Jesus' reply speaks very clearly of the reality of resurrection after death (Luke 20.34-38), a fact emphasised throughout Scripture of course, and proved above all by His own resurrection. In answer to the Sadducees' specific question, "So whose wife is she in the resurrection?", Jesus explains that in the resurrection there is no more marriage (verse 35b), and no longer even the capability of dying any more (verse 36a). Those attaining to this blessed state are "angel-like"; they are the children of God, because they are "the children of the resurrection".

Off went the Sadducees. Some scribes who had been listening, perhaps hoping Jesus would slip up, commended Him for His answer, and there were no more clever questions after that (vv 39-40).

We, by God's mercy, calling and grace, have that status right now - "children of the resurrection". We have been given this status through no merit or worth of our own, but simply through our humble acceptance of the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe Him. We believe He is telling the truth, showing the truth, and indeed that He is the very truth!

This means we are now "justified by faith", and, at this moment and every moment, are in a state of peace with God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 5.1). All the blessings flow! Our eternal destiny is secure and sealed, for we are "children of the resurrection". Whatever the future may hold on our pilgrimage through this earthly stage of our lives, there is nothing at all to fear, and nothing at all to go wrong in the only ways that really matter - that is, those ways on which our eternal destiny depends: "once saved, always saved" as the old saying has it.

Yet we all find there are times in our Christian lives when we like to think God's blessings are rather "thin on the ground" where we are concerned! Thoughts

creep into our heads - "He's not that bothered about me ... He's too busy blessing everyone else What does He think He's playing at? I'm giving up on praying". Such feelings are more common, and even more normal, than we might realise. A good antidote is to "tell the Lord how it is" in our prayers, honestly yet courteously - He can take it - and then to go quietly through one of the Gospels or Epistles picking out just two things - people and their problems on the one hand, and God and His promises on the other. That simple exercise should provoke some rather different prayers when it is over!

God's world is in a sorry mess. There need be no surprises over this for the Lord has repeatedly forewarned in His Word that this would be the case. All the signs are that we are in the "consummation of the age", that period in world history between the ending of the "times of the Gentiles" and the Lord's return for His Church (what is known as "the Rapture", I Thessalonians 4.13-18 - not to be confused with His so-called "Second Coming", which will actually be His third coming, at the end of the seven years of the "Great Tribulation", eg Matthew 24).

Nor do we need to be fearful. We are to carry on day by day with good cheer and Christian concern, thoroughly involved in the world around us, and ready and able to give account for "the hope that is within us" (I Peter 3.15).

That hope is more vital and longed-for than ever. It is Christ-won, Christ-founded, and Christ-offered, and, praise God, those with the sense to accept it become "children of the resurrection" - right there, and right then.

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