

February 7th, 2010

SERIES: The Journey of Jesus Followers

TITLE: Stage I: Resisting/Questioning

TEXT: Matthew 22:23-33

SERIES: "The Journey of Jesus Followers"

Read John 8:12. There is a song and many books have been written about catching a star and putting it in your pocket with the intent to never let it fade away or lose its light. This in and of itself, containing the hidden treasure of light, ultimately leads to the extinguishing of the light. Leaving us without the original joy of light and a lifeless stone in our pocket. Why do you think that the contained light would fade? How have people tried to put the 'light of the world' in their pockets? What has been the result?

BACKGROUND: Pharisees and Sadducees –Who Rules? and Who is Right?

A Pharisee was a respected student and defender of the law; and was considered to be a careful seeker of righteousness through the law given by Moses (the Ten Commandments) and oral traditions (history and truths told in stories from generation to generation). The Sadducees were also a political and religious party in Jewish culture. By Jesus' day, the Sadducees were the ruling party in Jewish cultural life. They were generally wealthy men and got along with the Roman government. The Sadducees were different from the Pharisees in several ways. The Sadducees, for example, rejected the oral traditions that the Pharisees held to and believed that only the five books of Moses (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy) were valid scriptures. The Pharisees believed in the resurrection of the dead and in angels and spirits, while the Sadducees didn't. An easy way to remember the primary differences between the Pharisees and the Sadducees is a fun play on their names. The Pharisees believed that they were righteous because of their good works - and thus were "Phar" [fair] "you see?" And because the Sadducees didn't believe in angels or spirits or in the resurrection, they were "Sadd ... you see?" As Jesus arrived he challenged both of these political groups and wouldn't fit into their 'pockets.'

Read Matthew 22:23-33: What is God's word trying to speak to you about? Stop and pray. Ask God to reveal to you, his challenge as you look through and study this section of God's word and how He wants you to be changed.

verses 23-27 – What were the Sadducees trying to do? Was the answer to the situation they presented valid in their eyes? Why?

verse 28 – What word in this portion of the question reveals something about the Sadducees and their intent (refer to the differences listed above)? How do you think they expected Jesus to answer them? What would make his answer valid to them?

verses 29-30 – What do you think Jesus meant in verse 29? Does this change the way in which Jesus will answer the question? In verse 30, Jesus challenges the Sadducees in two primary areas of their belief what are they?

verses 31-32 – Jesus speaks to these leaders and uses a reference that crosses over into both of the two dominant parties (Pharisees and Sadducees). What they both used to justify their right-ness was that they had 'the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob' as their authority. Jesus' answer comes long after they have been dead. How does Jesus use the present tense to support the theory of the resurrection? Does Jesus then imply that the three heroes are still alive? Why do you think he did this?

verse 33– What was the result of his answer?

CHALLENGE: Read Matthew 5:14-16. What are we doing that hides the light from the world around us? What can we do to let the light shine? Let's look and wait expectantly for God as he challenges our preconceived ideas about Him and rejoice daily in our new understanding of Him. **Read Joshua 24:15** Give in life Completely; Give in life Faithfully; Give in life Sacrificially; Give in life Joyfully. Ask God; Seek it out, and DO IT.