

Nov 9, 2025 Twenty-Second Sunday After Pentecost- Proper 27- Year C

[Haggai 1:15b-2:9](#)

[Psalms 98](#)

[2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17](#)

[Luke 20:27-38](#)

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of all our hearts
be acceptable in your sight, O God of the living

“Now God is God not of the dead, but of the living; for to God all of them are alive.”

In our passage from Luke, Jesus is talking with the Sadducees, who you might remember, are the group who are primarily found in Jerusalem and associated with the temple, though they were not priests. They were the wealthy elite with power politically for their association with Rome. They also studied the Law of Moses and were known for their interpretations of the law, as were the Pharisees, though the two groups did not always agree. The Sadducees did not believe in a resurrection from the dead, nor did they believe in angels or demons or spiritual matters of that nature, so one might say they were more of a political group because religion and politics were intertwined in that time period.

Since they didn't believe in a resurrection one might interpret their question to Jesus as a making fun of those who do believe in a resurrection. They are using the legality that if a woman's husband died, his brother would marry her to carry on the husband's family line by offering the first-born son as belonging to the husband to carry on his name. And so they ask, to whom would the woman belong in heaven, as if she is a piece of property.

Now this law they reference was designed so that, one, the husband's name was not blotted out of Israel, so as an act of compassion for one who dies. But also, two, so that the woman, who is now a widow, was protected and stayed under the protection of the family and was not left on the streets.

In fact, she was so protected that “if the man [refused] to marry his brother's widow, then his brother's widow [would go] to the elders ... and tell them [how], “he will not perform the duty of a husband's brother.”” And then if he still refused after they question him, “his brother's wife shall go up to him in the presence of the elders, pull his sandal off his foot, spit in his face, and declare, “This is what is done to the man who does not build up his brother's house.” Throughout Israel his family shall be known as “the house of him whose sandal was pulled off.”” *Deuteronomy 25:5-10.*

So not only was it an act of compassion for the husband who died but also for the woman, as a widow to be cared for. The question of the Sadducees misses the spirit of the law as an act of compassion, and as one of caring for one another.

So Jesus addresses this idea of the woman as property from another angle, completely releasing her from the bondage that this world creates. Not only is she freed from levirate marriage and the idea of marriage after death, but she is also liberated from the bonds of death itself, in that those who belong to God no longer die, but are alive in God, for to God all are alive.

I had a bit of a revelation about this verse this week. I had always thought of the people who have died as alive in God, like even now those who have gone before us are somehow somewhere living on in some way, like in another dimension, or in a space known as heaven, but that they are alive in some way and I still think that, but what has shifted for me is that we too are living in that space, we just can't see it because it looks like we are here. Hmm... kind of like the matrix. We are not alive because we have human physical bodies and skin and tissue, but because we know the Lord.

We are alive in God, just as they are alive in God. Our being cannot die anymore because we are children of the resurrection, children of God. God sees us, as God sees those who have gone before. The God of Abraham and Sarah, the God of Isaac and Rebekah. God of the living. And if we could see that, we would live as if the kingdom of God is at hand, as Jesus spoke of it, because to God, all are alive.

So if that is so, how does that shift how we live? If we see ourselves as alive, like the angels, alive like those who have died, how does that transform our day-to-day activity?

Next week you are going to hear the writer of the second letter of Thessalonians reprimand people who are living in idleness, saying those who don't work should not eat. And to some it might sound like the writer is upset about a lack of production for productivity's sake. But what the writer says is, "do not weary in doing what is right." It is not about doing work for work's sake, so everyone is busy serving "the machine" or empire or capitalism or certainly not greed. It is about doing what is right. Do not weary about doing what is right. And what is right?

As we think about living alive in the Lord, this week's passage from the same letter to the Thessalonians tells us, "not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by spirit or by word or by letter," but instead, "stand firm and hold fast" to what you were taught- about Jesus, living as if you know Jesus is real. "Comfort your hearts, that we may be strengthened in every good work and word." To be "beloved by the Lord," we must act in love, in every work and word.

Our work is to do God's will, to love, to know, as our words from Haggai said, to know that God is with us in every moment, in every activity. God's Spirit abides among us and with us, not for our sake, but so that we may act in love for the sake of the world, that all might know and love the Lord, that all might know the love of God, that all might come to flourishing.

As God's ambassador's of love we are to love those who don't feel loved, those who are marginalized, those who are cast aside as unwanted, those who have no one to love them, those who live without hope, without homes, without families to love, the widows, the orphans, the strangers, for all are children of God. This is our call as Christians, as lovers of Christ, as beloved of Christ. And I wonder, if we did that as Christians, and all Christians did that, how amazing our world might be. Amen.

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