

**RELIGION WITHOUT THE SUPERNATURAL IS A DANGEROUS THING**  
**October 9, 2016 morning service**  
**Mark 12:18-27**

Take your Bible and go to Mark 12 this morning. Thank you, Jamie, for singing for us. That'll probably be his theme song for the next nine months. His wife just informed us that she's expecting her first child, so Amen. Jamie serves as our music associate here. We're grateful to God for he and Meg. They'll be trusting in God alone, yes, sir, for weeks and months and years to come. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Religion. Religious people killed Jesus. Religious people will kill a church. Religious people will kill you. You see, religion in and of itself is not a bad word unless it is pointed in an erroneous way. Religion is an organized system of beliefs, ceremonies, and rules. Oh, religion's big on rules. These beliefs, ceremonies, and rules used to worship a god or gods. Organizing a system of beliefs, ceremonies, rules that are used toward a god or many gods. Religion.

Jesus dealt with religious leaders while He walked on planet Earth and in Mark 11 and 12 we are finding varied religious leaders that came with questions to trick Him. We've looked back in chapter 11 at the chief priests, the scribes, the elders. Last Sunday we looked at the Pharisees and Herodians in chapter 12, verse 13. Today we come to the Sadducees. They come in verse 18 of Mark 12. Now a Sadducee was a Jewish religious leader who did not believe in angels or the resurrection of the dead. It was just this life and that was all. They believed highly in the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. They drilled down deep and lived by the rules and regulations found in the Pentateuch. Most often the high priest was a Sadducee, strong in the first five books, but no emotion, no supernatural. Just rational rules. We find them coming to Jesus in Mark 12, verse 18.

*Some Sadducees [then you see in the brackets] (who say that there is no resurrection) [That's what we know them for best. It's what they didn't believe. No resurrection. They] came to Jesus, and began questioning Him, saying, "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies and leaves behind a wife and leaves no child, his brother should marry the wife and raise up children to his brother."<sup>1</sup> [They're quoting from levirate marriage of Deuteronomy 25, verse 5 and following where the law said that if a man was married to a woman and that man died and there were no children, then the brother was to marry the wife. Why did they do that? There were two reasons really. Number one was to carry on the family name. The other was inheritance because in that culture and that time period a woman could not inherit so she needed to be married to one of the family. For the sake of money and legacy then they were to marry. Then they jumped into a hypothetical in verse 20.]*

---

<sup>1</sup> Scripture quotations taken from the New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

*There were seven brothers; and the first took a wife, and died leaving no children. The second one married her, and died leaving behind no children; and the third likewise; and so all seven left no children. Last of all the woman died also.* [Here's their question in verse 23.] *In the resurrection, when they rise again* [Now remember, they didn't believe in resurrection so they're coming to try to trick Jesus. So, Lord in the resurrection, when they rise again], *which one's wife will she be? For all seven had married her.*" [So they're coming, trying to put Jesus in a mental vice and get Him to say something that is wrong.] *Jesus said to them, "Is this not the reason you are mistaken, that you do not understand the Scriptures or the power of God?* [Now don't miss that. If you want to know why religion is in such a mess today, it's because religion normally does not know the word of God or the power of God. If you don't know what God is saying and truly divide the Bible and if you don't know how to tap in and know the power of the spirit-filled life, you've just got hollow, mean-spirited religion. Jesus said, "This is why you're mistaken. Don't you understand?"]

*For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.* [Now He didn't say they were angels. He said like they are like angels. Angels did not have children, they're not male and female. He said, "We're going to be like angels." We don't become angels. When you die you're not going to be an angel but like an angel. You won't be married to the one you're married to here because if you're saved you'll be a part of the bride that is married to the groom whose name is Christ. We'll know each other. I jokingly say this is Liz's favorite verse in all the word of God. When she gets there she won't be married to me. Blessed be the name of the Lord. But she will be able to say, "My husband is now like an angel. He's close now but he'll really be like one when he gets on the other side." Any other ladies want to give a witness here? Amen. You know, he's almost angelic but over there, hallelujah, he'll be like an angel. Verse 26.]

*But regarding the fact that the dead rise again, have you not read in the book of Moses* [You see, Jesus is turning – you know, they believed in the book of Moses. They knew the Pentateuch. He said, "Have you not read in the book of Moses?], *in the passage about the burning bush* [This is the third chapter of Exodus], *how God spoke to him* [that is, spoke to Moses], *saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'?* *He is not the God of the dead, but of the living; you are greatly mistaken.*"

So Jesus tells them. You ask this about resurrection. We're not going to be married on the other side. We'll be given unto Christ and we'll be like angels. We're not going to be angels but we'll be like that in certain ways and that you are gravely mistaken because you've not understood really the word of God or the power of God. Then He quotes. He drops this reference of Exodus 3 just like a boulder right in the middle of the lake. "Have you never read Moses?" I mean they're like, "Yeah." "Well did you not read when God spoke to Moses that he said, 'I'm the God of Abraham, of Isaac and Jacob'?" What Jesus is saying is that Abraham's not dead, Isaac is not dead, Jacob's not dead. They're in heaven with God and because He knew them and God said they were alive, He's saying to them, "Hey, listen to me. There is resurrection

power. There is another life.” The Sadducees went away. Some people have said, “You know, they’re sad, you see.” They walked away because Jesus has put His finger right on the heart.

Now listen to me. A Baptist church can be just as dead as a Sadducee when we do not understand and believe the word of God and the power of God. If all you’ve got is a rational mindset you’ll dry up but now listen to me. If all you have without the balance of scripture is that you have the supernatural, you’ll one day blow up but when you put the word of God and the power of God together, you’ll grow up and that is what Jesus is trying to get these Sadducees to see. “I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” Why did He say those three names? Well I believe there are principles that come out of all three of those that I want to give us this morning and then give a gospel invitation for some of you to come and say, “I need Christ today. I need a church today. I’m coming in obedience today. I’m coming to be baptized today. I’m coming in brokenness today.” Let’s see these principles. The God of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob. What is it God is saying to these religious people? He’s saying it to us today. Don’t forget the principal of Abraham. Now what is He saying there? First of all He says in this Abraham principle that He is the God of sovereign covenant. He is the God of sovereign covenant. Now here is the principal. While He’s the God of sovereign covenant, here’s the principal of Abraham. God is the originator of all things. You do not originate. I do not originate. God originates.

Abraham is in the Ur of the Chaldees. He’s not a righteous man. As a matter of fact, he’s a worshipper of idols and God chooses Abraham, the father of our faith, and says, “Leave the Ur of the Chaldees and come with me to a promised land called Canaan. Leave what you can see to go to what you can’t see. Leave what you know to go to what you don’t know and simply follow Me. I am beginning this, Abraham. I will bless you and I will make you a blessing. I originate the blessing with you and I will originate the blessing through you.” You see, God chose Abraham, an idol worshiper. God is the Father. He is the source. He is the fountain and unless God does a thing among us we are of all people most hopeless. We’re hopeless without God. God says “Don’t forget. I am the God of Abraham. I originate all things.”

You don’t start the church. God starts the church. You don’t start a business. God starts it through you. Let me tell you, for a believer that comes to God, you live by faith and the only thing that happens in your life is what God originates. He starts it. He builds it. He chooses us even when we are an idol worshiper in Ur and He’s going to take us to a promised land.

He is the God of sovereign covenant. Are you in covenant with God today? Are you in contract? You come to God in covenant. God says to you, “Here is the plan. Enter into it.” God makes the provision and you walk into covenant. I walked into covenant for the first time when I was a 10-year-old boy but I’m telling you, I’d already walked into that covenant because my mom and daddy had raised me as Bobby talked about his mom and daddy today in his prayer of raising him up. I was walking in that covenant but I moved into the depth of covenant faith when I trusted Christ, when He

drew me unto Himself. God is the originator of all things period. It is the principal of Abraham that God reaches into our lostness and finds us.

Not only is He the God of Abraham, He's the God of Isaac. Here while God is the God of sovereign covenant with Abraham, we see that He is the God of miracle provision with Isaac. Oh man, don't miss this principle. We have nothing that does not come from God. We don't have anything that doesn't come from God. Every good and perfect gift in our life comes down from the Father of lights in heaven. Everything we have. We have nothing that does not come down from God. You see, Isaac is just an ordinary guy. Abraham's a father of faith but Isaac, he's just ordinary. He didn't do anything. He inherited everything he had. Abraham gave it to him but he was a miracle baby. Oh yeah. He was just that that God gave.

You know the story. Abraham and Sarah are old, in their 90s and God says, "I'm going to make your people like the sands of the sea and this time next year you're going to have a baby. Isaac means "he laughed." That's what Sarah did. She said, "We're going to have a what? Do you know how old I am?" God gave the miracle. Isaac.

You know the story in Genesis 22. God then told Abraham to take the miracle and go to the mountain and sacrifice it. Well they get to the foot of the hill and Isaac said, "Well, father, we've got wood and we've got fire. Where's the sacrifice?" He said, "God will provide." They go up the hill and God stays his hand. You know the story in Genesis 22. They find the ram caught there in the thicket and they bring and make the sacrifice.

You see, Abraham believed that even had he offered his son and Isaac died, God would raise him from the dead because the baby boy had already been the boy of miracle provision and if God could give him into the womb of an elderly woman He could raise him from the dead if needed. You see, Isaac was just ordinary. He received everything from his father as an inheritance.

Hear me about you. You have nothing that does not come from God. You are a part of the inheritance of God. That that He has put in us is the person of Christ and the person of the Holy Spirit that lives within us and He is the God of miracle provision. A church that is not seeing miracles and not trusting God for miracles is merely a house of dead religion. We ought to be seeing transformed lives, people coming out of sin and into righteousness.

Let me just ask you this. If you were a drunk when you got saved, say Amen. You see, there are people here that their lives were changed. I could go down and name thing after thing but the people who would not say Amen but would be most of us we would say, "How many of you were self-righteous when you came to Christ?" That's the biggest miracle of all, that God gets us over ourselves and what we think is good and we count it as nothing. God is the God of miracle provision. We've got to be trusting Him for that. A church that's not seeing God do the supernatural, not trusting God for the supernatural is again just a house of religious rules and regulations and

ceremonies but you must have the infusion of power. Amen. I've seen the glory of God come, the power of God come, the supernatural. Some people think immediately of physical healing. That's a part of it but let me tell you, it's much more. It's changed lives. That's the supernatural. When God gets you over yourself and changes you, puts love where hate was, puts care where selfishness was, hallelujah, what a God we serve.

He is the God of sovereign covenant. He is the God of miracle provision but now not only is He the God of Abraham and Isaac but He's the God of Jacob. Look at this. Don't miss this. Jacob. For Abraham, He's the God of sovereign covenant. For Isaac, He's the God of miracle provision. But in Jacob He is the God of divine patience. Here's the principle. Man must be broken to walk with God. You must be broken to walk with God. Jacob, oh he was clever. He was gifted. He was able but he was a cheat. He deceived his own daddy and his brother and contrived with his mother to be a thief and God takes Jacob and decides He's going to use him but He's very patient with him. Aren't you glad God has some patience with you? Some of us have been wandering out there in the field for so long and God says, "Come, come. Come to me." One day we're awakened.

Jacob had two encounters. The first one, you know it. We call it Jacob's ladder. It's in the 28<sup>th</sup> chapter of Genesis. He goes to sleep and he takes a rock for a pillow. Angels run up and down that ladder. The next day Jacob takes that rock and pours oil on it and he makes it a place called Bethel. Bethel. Two words together, beth, B-E-T-H, house, house; el, God. The house of God, Bethel. God's house. There Jacob goes to God's house and God begins to deal in Jacob's life but He's still not there yet. He's got to go to the 32<sup>nd</sup> chapter of Genesis and he's running scared of Esau. God brings him not to Bethel but He brings him to Peniel. The Bible says that he wrestled all night. Have you ever wrestled with God? Let me let you in on two or three things about wrestling with Jesus because I believe that's who he wrestled with. Number one, when you wrestle with Jesus, you cannot win. You can't win. Nor can you tap out. You don't tap out.

The Bible says from Genesis 32 that Jacob the rest of his days walked with a limp. God broke him. Dear friend, until you come to the end of yourself in God's divine patience, you'll never know the infused power of the Holy Ghost of God in your life. Most people are like me. You'll have more than one experience of brokenness but we most all come to the breaking of our self-sufficiency for the God of divine patience to be the God of miracle provision when we're walking in sovereign covenant.

You see, the greater the anointing on your life, the more pain you will go through because the wicked one will come against you and the deeper you walk – I'm telling you, when grapes are crushed that's the only way you have wine. The only way God uses us is when He breaks us. 1997 was a year of breaking in my life, a year of crushing, coming to the end of some things in my life. Four years ago I walked through a tough, tough family crisis where God broke me. I wet the carpet crying out saying, "O God, I can't fix it." You see, I'm a fixer. The quicker you come to the place to

understand you can't fix it, the better off you are. God's put you in charge of some things. There's some things – but let me tell you, you can't fix everything. There's only one, only one and when you get broken at His feet, He can fix more in a moment than you can do in a hundred years. Thank God for His patience. Watch this. When Jesus calls we see in scripture He first says, "Come and see." He says, "Come look." He says, "Come and see." He moved later and He says, "Now don't just see. Come and follow. Come and follow Me." But He moves to come and die. Come and see, come and follow, come and die.

When you come to the principal of Jacob, of his patience, and we are finally broken and that limp comes and people see it, then Galatians 2:20 becomes a reality that I am crucified with Christ, broken. I'm crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I. It's not me, not I, but Christ liveth in me and the life that I now live I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me. It becomes incarnational in me and through me. It's the Jacob principal. We have to be broken. You can run from brokenness. God'll deal with you but there are times that people just keep running and running.

I'm kind of amazed. Last week I was in Atlanta with 115 pastors, most of them younger guys. I'm around a lot of younger people now. I don't know why. It just works out that way. I'm always amazed, sometimes amused. You know, you can't make people be broken. As a matter of fact, until you get to a place God has to just kind of engineer those circumstances to bring you there. I'll have pastors, they ask me a hundred questions and then they tell me what they're going to do. Thank God for vision. I have vision. Sometimes I chuckle when I walk off. I say, "Here's my number. Call me if you ever need me." I know they're going to because they're going to walk right in it and they're going to walk into brokenness. Sometimes you don't even know it. God'll use those circumstances and all of a sudden you find yourself alone on the floor with tears and wailing and saying, "O God, I cannot do it." That's a good place.

I've spent a lot of years on God's advisory committee. "Lord, let me tell You how You ought to do this. As a matter of fact, I'd love to be the chairman of the advisory council." Friend, you don't advise God. He crushes you. You come to the end of you. When you get to the end of you, you'll find the beginning of God. That's what happened to Jacob and he walked with a limp. Brokenness.

I go back in my little closet. I've got a little new prayer closet. It's been there for several months. I kneel down on that altar and I've got pictures. I've got pictures of lost men. I'm praying for God to save them because I'm telling you, it'll take God to save these people. It takes God to save any of us but I'm telling you, these are some hard-hearted guys. I have pictures in a little book I keep of my kids, my grandkids, in-laws, and parents. I just call their name to the Lord. I say, "God, I can't but You've got to deal with this." I have a picture of a peacock that's on the floor. He that is proud, God's his opponent. He that exalts himself will be brought low so I keep that picture. You know it's my line. Peacock today, feather duster tomorrow. God'll bring you down. So I keep

that peacock. I say, “Lord, don’t let me be like that. God, pluck my feathers. Get me over me. Teach me.”

Sometimes it’s so heavy you don’t know how and all you can do is just say, “O God, O God, you don’t know.” When you get to the end of you, you’ll find a God of miracle provision and you’re walking in covenant because He cares more about you than you can care about yourself. He’ll engineer that road. He’ll take you where you need to go. You’ll have a few scars but that’ll be good because people will see them and you’ll be able to help them. You might even limp a little. It’ll be alright because they’ll understand that. They’re hurting too. You’ll just cry out to the Lord.

I had a preacher three or four years ago that came to see me on a Wednesday night. I didn’t know that he’d gotten fired on Monday and he came to see me on Wednesday. The first thing he said is – he just fell in the office floor and just began to wail. About nine months later he’s pastoring a church three times the size of the one that fired him because the ones that fired him just were not smart and they’d not done the right thing the right way. God raised that but it all started not in the floor of my office. He’d done this before but he just needed somebody to cry with him. He found the God of miracle provision and He was walking in God’s divine patience with a limp. I guarantee you he’s a better pastor today because he limps. I’m a better pastor today because I limp. I encourage some other people better because I limp some.

Young arrogance gets a lot of good stuff done but it doesn’t get a lot of godly stuff done. Good stuff is alright but after awhile we have to move to a different level. That’s why I love being in a multigenerational church. There are people in every facet. That older crowd, I’m not trying to tell you, don’t do that. They just say, “Well, let him learn. It’ll be alright.” God will just beat him up a little. He’ll bring him along. It’ll be okay. Smack him around. Amen.

We did a song today, “A Mighty Fortress is our God.” Martin Luther wrote that song. Next year is 500 years, 500 years. Some people say, “You know, I wish we’d do some of that old music.” Well how was that? That was 500 years, alright? It was 500 years ago he was 32 or 33 years old, Luther. Religious and he wrote the 95, the 95 pieces of what needed to be – we’re here today because of him. He tacked it to the bulletin board of the church house door at Wittenberg. You think that was easy? Oh no. It was courageous belief in the word of God and the power of God. It takes the supernatural with the scripture to bring us to where God wants us to be and Luther, with his courage, stepped out and it cost him all.

God’s reaching into this congregation today and He’s saying, “I’m looking for somebody courageous enough to stand on the word of God and believe the power of God and go forward together.” You Sadducees, you see, your problem is you don’t understand the word of God and the power of God. A lot of people say, “You know the Bible says don’t believe God for anything.” Other people over here, they just believe God for the miracle but they don’t want to put the boundaries of scripture. You’ve got to bring those two things together. The word of God and the power of God and when you

do, you go forward down the path of God to where He wants you to be. If you don't, it's just dead religion with rules and ceremonies and rituals and a lot of people like that because you feel better about yourself. Then you go out and do your thing and come back in a little while and feel better about yourself again. It's not about feeling good about yourself. It's about being bent toward God for eternity, being used of Him. Christ in me, the hope of glory.

Jon's coming to sing and somebody's here today. The God of Abraham. You need to walk into sovereign covenant with God today. You've never been saved. You need to come. Some of you have never joined this church and you ought to do it today. You ought to come take my hand and say, "Pastor, today's the day." Some of you need to come in brokenness. God's been very patient but He woos you today and He says, "Come." For some of you there's the call of God to take your hands off your life and say, "Lord, I'll do whatever you want me to do," and cry out for the supernatural touch and for the wind of God to blow.

When we sing this song, you be the first one to rise and come and say yes unto Christ. We're on our feet all over this room. We're standing, singing, God's calling. It's your day to come, to come, to come.