

Remembrance Sunday 2025

10:00am Service of Remembrance – 9th November 2025

Luke 20:27-38

Some Sadducees, those who say there is no resurrection, came to him and asked him a question, 'Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, leaving a wife but no children, the man shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother. Now there were seven brothers; the first married, and died childless; then the second and the third married her, and so in the same way all seven died childless. Finally the woman also died. In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had married her.'

Jesus said to them, 'Those who belong to this age marry and are given in marriage; but those who are considered worthy of a place in that age and in the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. Indeed they cannot die any more, because they are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection. And the fact that the dead are raised Moses himself showed, in the story about the bush, where he speaks of the Lord as the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Now he is God not of the dead, but of the living; for to him all of them are alive.'

<Prayer>

It's remarkable how the field of military conflict matches with the Christian faith. Jesus knew what it felt like to have enemies – a deadly opposition, which sought to kill him and all he stood for.

Many in Jesus's time were against his teaching, especially the ruling class, a group called the Sadducees. **Jesus taught people about how our lives are in God's hands, in what he calls the Kingdom of God, which is both life upon the Earth and life in Heaven.** This is what Jesus meant when he spoke of *eternal life*, and it's what Christians ever since have called *hope*. **Now imagine yourself being sent to a deadly war.** We all know that our lives are limited, even more so for military people, **so to have such a hope of life in Heaven is a precious thing indeed.**

The Christian faith holds to the doctrine that Jesus Christ died upon the cross, by the brutal hand of man, and yet on the third day he rose again from the tomb. Unbelievable as this may seem to us, it is quite appropriate when you accept that Jesus was the Son of God, the Almighty Creator. **This pathway of creation from birth to death, and to heavenly life again, is the definition of what Christians call eternal life, and it is not limited by mortal flesh alone.** Jesus died and rose again, showing that our lives are worth more than our mortal bodies. That was his greatest miracle and his unlimited gift to humankind, that is the reason for the Christian hope in eternal life. It is a belief remembered in history ever since, and it always shall be.

Those who are taken to battle in a time of conflict cannot be certain they will survive, but they should have certainty in the hope that their lives will be valued and remembered also for all history. That is why we are here today. This great need we have to retain the lives of those who fought and died, makes so much sense when it is matched with the Christian faith, where sacrifice and hope will never be forgotten.

<pause>

So, Jesus spoke very often of the *Kingdom of God*, but what did he mean by that? Well, the Kingdom of God is not like a territory fought over or claimed, but rather it is a place where we live such teachings as *'do unto others as you would have them do unto you', to 'love your neighbour', even to 'love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.'* Society *thrives* upon the foundations of good virtue which arise from the very Christian principals of looking out for others *before* yourself - of being people who give, *even their lives*. So many men and women did just that, as we remember today, and still do so even as we gather here now. **Everyone who looks to God and yet faces disaster or death can know that by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, they too can have the hope in a life remembered and a life in the Heavenly places.**

Now I have mentioned that there were those in Jesus's day who challenged him on his claims about the resurrection hope. There were a group of religious leaders called the Sadducees who didn't accept that there could even be a resurrection, so they looked to trap Jesus with logical riddles, such as the one Mayor Jean Arrick has just read – about marriage and inheritance. How can it possibly make sense? It didn't make much sense to me. **But the resurrection does not make sense in the normal world, and you may think to yourself that eternal life in some sort of heavenly kingdom is a bit of a dream.** But then, do you live your whole lives always in such a rational way? Few of us do that, but all of us keep a hope that our lives are worth more than a few years of history.

All of you children and young people here today are laying down the foundations of what it means to be good people, and those who lead you, who run your groups, they are passing on what they have learned

from those who came before. And so, it goes on back through the ages. **We remember those from the great past, those whose names we hold today, because we want to learn from them.** War is an extreme challenge, and every older person here could tell a younger one of how it's the most difficult parts of life where you learn the most, and how at those times you draw most closely to others around you. The stories we learn from men and women who served in the wars, those stories *prime our imaginations* of how it must have been to both suffer and serve in a way we know is awful, and yet provides us such great examples of the best human values of service and sacrifice. **We are at our best in the worst of times.** It's remarkable how the field of military conflict matches with the Christian faith.

<pause>

Every village, town and city has long since set up a war memorial to cast a shadow within which the memories and lessons of our wartime past are all still there to teach us today. It is our common story. These examples of human virtue shall not be lost to the future. **Our Christian heritage supported us at a time of shared struggle and has brought out the best in our humanity - our greatest virtues, and a remembrance of those who gave their lives in the hope that such a *Kingdom* will remain forever, just as their lives do so in the Heavenly places.**

It's why we are still here today, and woe-betide anyone who suggests it's all just history, just a story from the past. **The legacy of all who served is still with us today in remembrance.** For their sakes, let us not lose faith in that hope. **If we remember that such hope first came from Christ, it will surely endure for us all.**

Amen