

10 November 2019

Making a difference ... now

BY TAMMY E. PALLOT



Today's gospel is yet another story of someone thinking they have cleverly trapped Jesus with what seems to be a no-win hypothetical. Since the Sadducees didn't believe in resurrection, they were actually asking, "If there really is life after death, how's it going to work?" Not unlike many of us when we are struggling with faith, the Sadducees bogged themselves down in the minutia of logistical complexities and, in the process, the very truth they were seeking eluded them.

Their hypothetical situation referred to Levirate Marriage – the obligation of a man to marry the childless widow of his brother in order to produce a child. I truly love my brother-in-law, but if something were to happen to my husband, the idea of marrying and having a child with him is ... well, just gross. But I don't live in ancient biblical times. And back then, women couldn't own property or even have an income. We were dependent on men for our very survival. Without a husband or a son, a woman was in serious, life-threatening trouble. Levirate Marriage was a way of taking care of widows.

The Sadducees ask, "If seven brothers each marry the same widow and all seven die, whose wife will she be in heaven?" Jesus answers, "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."

Jesus wasn't saying we won't love our spouses in heaven, but instead, he was telling the Sadducees they were missing the point. They needed to do what was necessary to take care of one another here on earth and not worry about the logistics of heaven – God's got that under control.

We are called to make a difference now, here on earth – to look after and care for the widows of our time – the poor, the vulnerable, the disenfranchised, and the forgotten. We are called not only to be God's hands in the world but also to shine our light brightly where there is a need so others may join us.

Tammy E. Pallot is the Chair of the Commission on Stewardship for the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta, where she shares the joy of stewardship as a consultant to parishes and as a guest speaker at workshops, retreats, and various other events. When she is not traveling for stewardship, Tammy attends St. Francis Episcopal Church in Macon, Georgia.

SHINING
OUR LIGHT

For reflection...

- How have you gotten bogged down in the minutia? How has it gotten in the way of the truth you are seeking?
- How are you using your gifts from God to help the poor, the vulnerable, the disenfranchised, and the forgotten?
- How can you shine a light on God's abundant blessings in your life?