

Mark 12:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God?

Analysis

And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God? (Οὐ διὰ τοῦτο πλανᾶσθε μὴ εἰδότες τὰς γραφὰς μηδὲ τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ θεοῦ;). Jesus' response is devastating: planasthe (πλανᾶσθε, "you are wandering/erring") indicates they're fundamentally lost, not merely mistaken in details. Their error has two sources: ignorance of tas graphas (τὰς γραφὰς, "the Scriptures") and ignorance of tēn dynamin tou theou (τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ θεοῦ, "the power of God").

These twin ignorances remain the source of theological error today: not knowing what Scripture actually teaches, and not believing God's power to accomplish what seems impossible to human reason. The Sadducees knew Scripture's words but missed its teaching; they acknowledged God's past creative power but denied His future resurrection power. Jesus will demonstrate (vv. 26-27) that the Scriptures they claim to honor actually teach resurrection.

Historical Context

This rebuke was shocking: Jesus told the theological experts—priests, scholars of Torah—that they didn't know Scripture or God's power. The Sadducees prided themselves on biblical fidelity (accepting only Torah, rejecting later traditions). Yet Jesus exposed their fundamental misunderstanding. Their error illustrates that religious expertise, institutional authority, and claims of biblical fidelity don't

guarantee sound theology. The early church faced similar errors: Corinthian denial of resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:12), Hymenaeus and Philetus teaching resurrection already occurred (2 Timothy 2:17-18), and later Gnostic rejection of bodily resurrection. Each error stemmed from either misreading Scripture or denying God's power to transform material reality.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does ignorance of Scripture combined with disbelief in God's power continue to produce theological errors today?
2. What does Jesus' rebuke of the theological experts teach about the possibility of religious knowledge coexisting with fundamental spiritual blindness?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ἀποκριθεὶς	ὁ	Ἰησοῦς	εἶπεν	αὐτοῖς	Οὐ	διὰ
And	answering	G3588	Jesus	said	unto them	not	therefore
G2532	G611		G2424	G2036	G846	G3756	G1223
τοῦτο	πλανᾶσθε	μὴ	εἰδότες	τὰς	γραφὰς	μηδὲ	
G5124	Do ye	not	because ye know	G3588	the scriptures	neither	
	G4105	G3361	G1492		G1124	G3366	
τὴν	δύναμιν	τοῦ	θεοῦ				
G3588	the power	G3588	of God				
	G1411		G2316				

Additional Cross-References

John 20:9 (Word): For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.

Ephesians 1:19 (Parallel theme): And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

Matthew 22:29 (Word): Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

Jeremiah 32:17 (References God): Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee:

Hosea 6:2 (Parallel theme): After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.

Philippians 3:21 (Parallel theme): Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

Isaiah 26:19 (Parallel theme): Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

Mark 10:27 (References Jesus): And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

Romans 15:4 (Word): For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

Hosea 6:6 (References God): For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.