

THE PROVOCATIVE PROPHET

+ SESSION OUTLINE

1. Jesus affirms the reality of resurrection (Matt. 22:23-33).
2. Jesus clarifies the centrality of love (Matt. 22:34-40).
3. Jesus claims the authority of the Messiah (Matt. 22:41-46).

Background Passage: Matthew 22

+ WHAT WILL MY GROUP LEARN?

In His responses to the challenges of the religious leaders, Jesus demonstrated His wisdom, authority, and mastery of the Scriptures.

+ HOW WILL MY GROUP SEE CHRIST?

The religious leaders questioned Jesus to trap Him in His words, but each time, Jesus answered them from the authority of God's Word, and they could not respond. Jesus is the Word of God who came to reveal God perfectly to us. He has all authority in heaven and on earth.

+ HOW SHOULD MY GROUP RESPOND?

Because we have experienced God's kindness to us in salvation through Jesus, we live under the Word of God's authority in all areas of our lives with gratitude and joy.

GROUP TIME

Group content found in the Daily Discipleship Guide is included in the shaded areas throughout the session.



SCRIPTURE HANDOUT

Scan this QR code for a reproducible handout of this session's Scripture passages.

INTRODUCTION

ASK: As participants arrive, ask: **How did you respond to a time when you were challenged about something you knew was right?** (with anger at their doubting you; with doubt about your own understanding of the situation; with stubbornness with your own opinion; with humility in trying to understand the other person's point of view)

TRANSITION: Both the Pharisees and the Sadducees challenged the authority of Jesus, believing that they knew more and better than He did. Jesus, in humility, proved them wrong and in every instance left them amazed at His responses. Jesus is the Word made flesh who died and rose from the grave in order to save humanity from sin. Through His life, death, burial, and resurrection, Jesus revealed God perfectly to us, giving us the chance to have life through Him.

SUMMARIZE: Help your group understand the **setting** for this session.

- After Jesus entered Jerusalem with the crowds cheering, Jesus had various encounters with the Pharisees and Sadducees throughout that week. Their goal was almost always to discredit Jesus; His goal was to teach about God and His kingdom. Jesus both answered and asked questions that showed that He had a mastery of the Word of God and that He also stood in authority over the Word of God. Jesus's teaching in Matthew 22 showed that He truly was the Messiah and foreshadowed His death and resurrection for the salvation of humanity.



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POINT 1

JESUS AFFIRMS THE REALITY OF RESURRECTION (MATT. 22:23-33).

INTRODUCE: Call attention to **PACK ITEM 3: PASSION WEEK TIMELINE**, saying, “On Tuesday, Jesus was in the temple, and the Sadducees questioned Him about the resurrection. What do we know about the resurrection?” Invite someone to read the key doctrine (Daily Discipleship Guide [DDG] p. 30).



Key Doctrine #97: Resurrection: Both the Old and New Testaments teach that one day believers will experience a resurrection of the body from the dead (Isa. 26:19; Ezek. 37:12-14; John 11). The promise of the resurrection is found in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and it will take place at the future return of Christ. Because Christ was the first-fruits of the resurrection, Christians can be assured that their resurrection will be similar in nature, meaning it will be both bodily and glorious (Phil. 3:20-21; Rom. 8:22-23). The hope of the future resurrection gives Christians confidence that death has been defeated in the death and resurrection of Christ.

ASK: Jesus was resurrected, and one day we will be too. Ask (DDG p. 30):

What are some practical ways the truth of the resurrection should give believers hope? (knowing our bodies are temporary, we need not struggle with self-image; preparing us for a future hope so we don't have to worry; reminding us that our present sufferings will turn to glory)

READ: Invite a volunteer to read aloud **Matthew 22:23-28** from his or her Bible.

23 The same day Sadducees came to him, who say that there is no resurrection, and they asked him a question, **24** saying, “Teacher, Moses said, ‘If a man dies having no children, his brother must marry the widow and raise up offspring for his brother.’ **25** Now there were seven brothers among us. The first married and died, and having no offspring left his wife to his brother. **26** So too the second and third, down to the seventh. **27** After them all, the woman died. **28** In the resurrection, therefore, of the seven, whose wife will she be? For they all had her.”

CHART: On a board, draw a large table with three rows and three columns titled “The Question,” “The Trap,” and “The Answer.” Invite the group to summarize the Sadducees’ scenario and question in **verses 23-28** for you to write in the table. Then ask them to identify the potential traps for Jesus, and record those.

- The Sadducees referred to the law where Moses wrote that if a man died with no children, his brother was to marry the widow and have a child in order to continue his brother’s name (Deut. 25:5-10). If the woman died after marrying seven brothers, who, then, would be her husband in the resurrection? They believed that Jesus either had to deny the resurrection or affirm polyandry, the idea that a woman can have more than one husband.

VOICES from THE CHURCH

“The important question is, what relationships are important in the afterlife? These decisions are made on this side of death. The doctrine of the resurrection should spur us on to evangelism so that many more people may enjoy the pleasures of a continuing relationship with God, a relationship that is not limited by death.”¹

–Joe Kapolyo

READ: Invite a volunteer to read aloud **Matthew 22:29-33** from his or her Bible.

29 But Jesus answered them, “You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. **30** For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.

31 And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God: **32** ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?’ He is not God of the dead, but of the living.” **33** And when the crowd heard it, they were astonished at his teaching.

CHART: Call for the group to summarize Jesus's answer in **verses 29-33** for you to record. Use the leader content to help explain the nuance of Jesus's answer.

- The Sadducees only affirmed the books of the Law. Since the doctrine of the resurrection is not explicit in the law, they rejected its validity. *(Note in the Key Doctrine statement that the cited Scriptures come from two Old Testament prophets and the New Testament, but not the books of the Law.)*
- Jesus told the Sadducees that their rejection of the full counsel of God's Word gave them a narrow understanding of God's truth and power.
- Jesus informed the Sadducees that men and women aren't married in the resurrection, just as the angels aren't. Since the Sadducees also didn't believe in angels (Acts 23:8), Jesus took the opportunity to affirm their existence. Jesus wasn't saying that we become angels when we die. Nor was He dismissing the significance of the earthly marital relationship in the resurrection but rather highlighting a shift in the way human beings will relate to one another in God's presence. In His response, Jesus affirmed the resurrection and negated polyandry.
- Jesus then pointed back to God's self-revelation to Moses in Exodus 3:6, where He said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” Jesus used God's present tense statement to Moses—“I am,” not “I was”—to show that God is not the God of the dead but of the living, affirming the doctrine of the resurrection from the Law.

SAY: In summary, read aloud the following statement (DDG p. 30):

Belief in the resurrection is valid because it is seen in God's Word.

DISCUSS: The Sadducees picked and chose which Scriptures they wanted to be true, leading to their disbelief in the resurrection. Ask (DDG pp. 27,30):

From Day 3 in the DDG: **Why is it important to affirm the truthfulness of all Scripture, not just the Scriptures we agree with?** (helps us not fall into error; all Scripture is inspired by God; can't add or subtract from Scripture; God tells us not to depart from His Word)

TRANSITION: Jesus debated with the religious leaders about a lot of topics, and many usually left amazed. He always answered with full authority, as we will see.

BOOKS OF THE LAW

The first five books of the Bible, written by Moses under the inspiration of God: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

POINT 2

JESUS CLARIFIES THE CENTRALITY OF LOVE (MATT. 22:34-40).

READ: Invite a volunteer to read aloud **Matthew 22:34-40** from his or her Bible.

34 But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. **35** And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. **36** “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” **37** And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. **38** This is the great and first commandment. **39** And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. **40** On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

CHART: Invite the group to provide the information for the question and the trap for you to record in the table.

- One of the Pharisees' experts in the law approached Jesus about which commandment was the greatest commandment in the law. The Pharisees gave weight to each of the 613 laws in the Old Testament, paying more attention to the commands they considered weightier.² The subjectivity of their practice of dividing laws by weight would have easily caused debate amongst the Pharisees on which laws were more important.

BRAINSTORM: Ask: “What are some ways the world might think the church would answer the question about the greatest commandment?”

CHART: Call for the group to identify Jesus's answer to the question: love, specifically, love God and love others. Record this in the table. Then use the leader content to explain from **verses 34-38** (DDG p. 30):

Being tested, Jesus confirms that the greatest commandment is to love God with our all.

- Jesus referenced Deuteronomy 6:5 in His answer: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind—that is, love God with all that you have and all that you are. The word Jesus used for “love” is the Greek word *agape*, not tender affection or erotic love but the highest form of love—demonstrative, faithful, and true. The greatest commandment is to pursue a relationship with God with our whole self and with a pure love that only He can give us first so we can then give it back to Him (1 John 4:19).

ASK: Knowing what *agape* love is, ask (DDG p. 30):

How can we love God with all our heart, soul, and mind? (spend time with Him to cherish the relationship; living in obedience for His glory; studying His Word to know Him more; giving generously of my resources)

HIGHLIGHT: Using the leader content, explain from **verses 39-40** the second greatest command (DDG p. 31).

Jesus said that loving others as ourselves is the second greatest command.

- The law was never meant to save. Both the Pharisees and the Sadducees completely missed the point of the law. The purpose of the law was to show the people of God how to properly relate to God, how to relate to each other, and the need for salvation (Gal. 3:24). No amount of obedience to the law could ever save because no human could ever keep the law perfectly.
- Jesus then gave the answer to the second greatest commandment—to love others as yourself—referencing Leviticus 19:18. Jesus used the same word and idea of *agape* love in the second commandment as He did in the first. Love for God and love for neighbor are so central to the Christian faith that you can't say that you have love for one and not the other. And understandably, this type of love is not possible without God. Much like the Sadducees' question, the Pharisees' attempt to compartmentalize the law into lighter and weightier categories was irrelevant. As Jesus states in verse 40, the ethical teaching of the entire Old Testament could be summed up in two commands featuring one verb: love God and others.
- Just a few days later, the religious leaders demanded Jesus be crucified on the cross. In the greatest act of love the world has ever known, Jesus allowed His own creation to take His life. But Jesus didn't stay dead. On the third day, Jesus would rise from the grave and stand victorious over death. He did that because of the love He had for humanity.

DISCUSS: (DDG p. 31)

Why is loving others like ourselves so difficult? (we are selfish and think of our needs first; we don't fully trust that God is in control; we think we will be hurt or feel loss if we love others; it's easier just to think of ourselves; perhaps we don't love and care for ourselves, forgetting we are made in the image of God)

TRANSITION: Both the Pharisees and the Sadducees tested Jesus to discredit Him. Both were unsuccessful. Jesus—the Word made flesh—knew Scripture better than they could ever imagine. But they refused to believe that Jesus is who He says He is, and they had no desire to submit to His authority, as we will continue to see.

POINT 3

JESUS CLAIMS THE AUTHORITY OF THE MESSIAH (MATT. 22:41-46).

READ: Invite a volunteer to read aloud **Matthew 22:41-46** from his or her Bible.

41 Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, **42** saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?” They said to him, “The son of David.” **43** He said to them, “How is it then that David, in the Spirit, calls him Lord, saying, **44** “The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet””? **45** If then David calls him Lord, how is he his son?” **46** And no one was able to answer him a word, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

CHART: Emphasize that here Jesus turned the tables on His challengers and asked some questions of His own. Call for the group to summarize from **verses 41-44** Jesus’s questions and identify the potential trap for the Pharisees. Using the leader content, explain (DDG p. 31):

The promised Messiah would be a victorious King and a Suffering Servant; He would be a human Son of David and the divine Son of God.

- Jesus asked the Pharisees who they thought the Messiah was. Specifically, He asked, “Whose son is he?” Jesus knew they would say, “David’s [son].” They could have quoted several Old Testament texts pointing to the Messiah as being the son of David (Ps. 2; Isa. 9:7; 11:1; Jer. 23:5). But Jesus knew that they didn’t have a full understanding of what that meant, similar to the crowd at His triumphal entry, who called Him “the Son of David” (Matt. 21:9).
- Two dominant ideas existed in the Old Testament about who the Messiah would be. One was the picture of the Messiah standing victorious over His enemies (Ps. 110:1). The other was the Messiah depicted as the Suffering Servant (Isa. 53). Both are correct as both are verified in Scripture. The Son of God would stand victorious over His enemies, and the Son of David would suffer and die in the place of sinners.
- Jesus responded to their answer with another question, quoting Psalm 110:1. In doing so, Jesus posed two dilemmas for the Pharisees. First, the Pharisees couldn’t deny that Jesus was showing respect for Scriptures, contrary to the Sadducees, because He affirmed the Holy Spirit’s inspiration of Psalm 110 through David (Matt. 22:43).
- Second, David referred to the Messiah as “my Lord.” The Hebrew word for the first “Lord” in Psalm 110:1 is *Yahweh*, the name of God (“LORD”). The second “Lord” is *adonai*, which could mean “my master or lord” as a term of respect for a human (Gen. 18:12), but it also was often used to refer to Yahweh Himself, “the Lord.” The Greek translation of Psalm 110, from the Septuagint, uses the word *kurios* for “Lord” in both places, implying a shared deity between the Lord and His appointed Messiah. If the Scripture is inspired and true, then the promised Messiah must be a literal, divine Son of God.

DAVID

Succeeded Saul as king over the united kingdom of Israel. A man after God’s own heart (1 Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22), though not sinless, David was the benchmark by which every other king was evaluated for their faithfulness to the Lord. David received the promise of a royal Messiah on an eternal throne through his lineage (2 Sam. 7:11-16). David himself ruled from about 1005 to 965 BC.³

CHART: Highlight from **verses 45-46** that the Pharisees had no answer to Jesus's question regarding Psalm 110:1, a conspicuous blank for the table.

- Jesus stated His concluding question simply in verse 45: "If then David calls him Lord, how is he his son?" The Pharisees had just answered that the Messiah is a descendant of King David, and thus the Son of David, an identity the crowds had publicly and favorably attributed to Jesus. And yet, Jesus emphasized that David said the Messiah is his Lord, which logically required the Messiah to be divine. Which was right: human or divine? The answer is both. Jesus is David's Lord as the divine, pre-existent, and promised Messiah, and the Messiah is a man born from the lineage of David as David's son.
- Jesus's question presented the Pharisees with irrefutable truth drawn faithfully from the inspired Scriptures, but He had trapped them into silence, whether from ignorance or stubbornness. They were neither expecting a divine Messiah nor prepared to affirm one. And to agree with Jesus's premise and reasoning from the Scriptures would affirm Jesus as a teacher and likely embolden the crowds that presently held Jesus to be the Messiah on account of His teachings and miracles. So they remained silent, unable to answer.

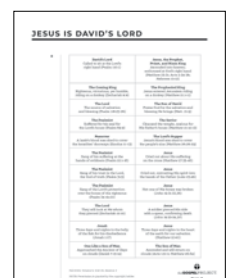
EXPLAIN: State and explain the following statement (DDG p. 31):

Jesus fulfilled the prophecies about the Messiah, teaching the Word of God with authority, because He is the Messiah.

- Jesus presented the Pharisees with a truth they may not have understood but one they couldn't escape because He is the promised Messiah. He is the Word made flesh, so He teaches the Word of God with complete authority. And on top of that, He fulfills the Word of God, both in its parts and as a whole. All the signs of the Law and the Prophets point to Jesus as the human and divine Messiah, the victorious King and Suffering Servant. The Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah find their fulfillment in Jesus, and the Old Testament storyline culminates in the person and work of Jesus. Being both God and man, Jesus was able to be tempted and never sin, He was able to be killed on the cross to satisfy the full wrath of God, and He rose from the grave, defeating death.

ASK: Pass out copies of **PACK ITEM 6: DAVID'S LORD**, highlighting how the Old Testament points to Jesus as the Messiah. Then ask (DDG p. 31):

Why do you believe Jesus is the Messiah? (Scripture says so; history gives evidence of it; Jesus has worked and is working in my life; He has worked and is working in the lives of my friends)



MY RESPONSE

SAY: The religious leaders questioned Jesus to trap Him in His words, but each time, Jesus answered them from the authority of God's Word, and they could not respond. Jesus is the Word of God who came to reveal God perfectly to us. He has all authority in heaven and on earth. Because we have experienced God's kindness to us in salvation through Jesus, we live under the Word of God's authority in all areas of our lives with gratitude and joy.

HEAD:

We don't stand over the Word as if it were subservient to us, we stand under the Word in submission to God's self-revelation. If we attempt to make ourselves the authority over God's Word, we will neither understand the Word nor know the power of God. Jesus is the authority, and through the Word, He perfectly reveals the Father. If we desire to love God with all our being, we must approach the Word with humility and a willingness to learn.

What are some of the dangers of making ourselves the authority over God's Word?

HEART:

There is simply no comparison between our knowledge of truth and Jesus's. Jesus has a complete understanding of truth because He is truth. Our knowledge compared to His is like a 30-watt light bulb versus all the light emitted by every star in our galaxy and the sun. Understanding the perfect and complete authority of Jesus over the Word should give us a deeper desire to know Him through His Word. As that desire grows, our worship of Jesus will become more vibrant and passionate in all areas of our lives.

How do we let Scripture have authority over our worship?

HANDS:

Living under the authority of the Word of God doesn't just mean agreeing with everything that the Word says. Living in submission to the Word also means doing what the Word calls us to do. Jesus came to this earth on a mission—to bring salvation to all humanity. He did so through His sinless life, death on the cross, and resurrection from the grave. He now calls us to take the salvation we've received to the world through both our words and actions.

How can you live in submission to God's Word this week so that others may see Christ in you?

PRAY: Jesus, Your Word is truth and we submit to it. Help us love You more and love others more. Thank You that we love because You loved us first. Amen.

VOICES from CHURCH HISTORY

"I want the whole Christ for my Savior, the whole Bible for my book, the whole Church for my fellowship, and the whole world for my mission field."⁴

—John Wesley (1703–1791)

EXTRA

POINT 1: JESUS AFFIRMS THE REALITY OF RESURRECTION (MATT. 22:23-33).

+ COMMENTARY

“Appealing to the Pentateuchal commandments about levirate marriage (in which a brother is responsible for marrying a deceased brother’s widow who has had no offspring in order to try to perpetuate the family line), the Sadducees loosely cite Deut 25:5 and Gen 38:8. They envision an extreme situation in which a woman has gone through seven husbands, all brothers, because she has failed to conceive by any of them. . . . The Sadducees could have made their point just as easily with the story of a woman who had had only two husbands, but they want to make the situation look absurd. So they pose the question, Who will be married to whom when the woman and all seven men have new bodies in this supposed resurrection life?”⁵

+ ILLUSTRATION

Something well known about Thomas Jefferson is that he didn’t accept the whole Bible as relevant or true. In fact, Jefferson cut out the portions that he didn’t agree with. He didn’t like the portions of the Bible that he didn’t consider morally and ethically sound. He also didn’t like the supernatural. So he cut those pages out of his Bible. He came to the conclusion that those portions had to have been added to the Word of God by someone else who didn’t have the authority to do so. All Jefferson liked was the moral teaching of Jesus, so he took the moral and ethical teachings of Jesus, pasted them together, and created what we now call the Jefferson Bible.

Jefferson showed that he assumed that his moral thoughts and beliefs were correct and perfect. But they weren’t. Most people, thinking logically, know and believe that there is no such thing as a morally perfect person except for Jesus. Another problem is that Jefferson assumed himself to be in authority over the Word of God. This is the error that the Sadducees fell into. We don’t have the authority to pick and choose what is true. When we do that, we create a moral and ethical code that is ever-shifting because we find that we can’t even keep our own laws.

Jesus, however, not only affirmed the truth, but He believed it and lived to its standard perfectly. Because of Jesus’s authority and perfection, we now have salvation available to us. There is absolutely no hope in creating our own moral code because we will always fail in executing it.

EXTRA

POINT 2: JESUS CLARIFIES THE CENTRALITY OF LOVE

(MATT. 22:34-40).

+ COMMENTARY

“It is not unlikely that Jesus’ hearers were expecting one or other of the Ten Commandments, those that had been written by the finger of God and that, as a group, stood out over all the other commandments. But Jesus did not select one of those. Instead he chose the commandment to love God, the commandment that must have been most familiar of all to his hearers, for it was recited every day by the pious Jew: ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.’ Thus far the words are identical with those in Deuteronomy 6:5 (cf. Deut. 11:13), but whereas that passage goes on ‘and with all your might’ Jesus proceeds, ‘and with all your mind.’ We should not make too much of this difference, for both ways of expressing it make the point that love for God should be wholehearted, involving all that we have and all that we are (the threefold all is important). Mark interestingly has the three expressions in Deuteronomy, but he inserts ‘with all your mind’ before the third. ‘This is the first and great commandment,’ Jesus says (in Mark’s version the questioner asked, ‘Which is the first commandment of all,’ so that Jesus’ summary includes the expressions used in the two Gospels).”⁶

+ ILLUSTRATION

In the summer of 1777, British general John Burgoyne led an army of almost 9,000 soldiers to the Hudson River Valley to split the American colonies in half to weaken their efforts in the war. The situation was bleak for the Continental Army led by General Horatio Gates. They were outnumbered, outgunned, and outmatched. All hope seemed to be lost in the fight for independence.

Despite the odds being stacked against them, the Continental Army was able to overcome the British forces. They inflicted heavy casualties on the British and were able to take supplies from them when they desperately needed supplies. In the end, John Burgoyne and the rest of the British Army surrendered to the American troops sparking a rise in the morale of the Continental Army and forcing the British to realize that the Continental Army was a formidable opponent. Their victory also sparked the confidence of the French, as they chose to join in and help the American colonies after the victory at Saratoga.

The Battle of Saratoga was a major turning point in the Revolutionary War. The victory at Saratoga was something of a resurrection of the morale of the Continental Army. Had General Horatio Gates and the Continental Army chosen to give up when all hope seemed lost, the American colonies may have never won their independence.

In the war against sin, the resurrection of Jesus wasn’t just a turning point in a war that it seemed like He lost, but it was also the guarantee of victory for the people of God. By the Sadducees’ refusal to validate the resurrection, not knowing the Scriptures or the power of God, they stripped the law of all its meaning and purpose, effectively removing the very thing that guaranteed God’s victory over sin and death.

POINT 3: JESUS CLAIMS THE AUTHORITY OF THE MESSIAH (MATT. 22:41-46).

+ COMMENTARY

“Jesus was careful to point out that David’s psalm was written under the inspiration of God’s Spirit, so there was no mistake in what he had written. Jesus was drawing attention to the fact that by the phrase my Lord, David was referring to someone other than himself. He was referring to the Christ or Messiah, whom the Pharisees had just said was a son of David. Jesus’ final question for the Pharisees was, ‘How can the Messiah be both David’s Lord and David’s son?’

Jesus’ implication was clear: The Messiah, the Son of David, was more than a special person. He was also Yahweh the Almighty himself. It followed that Jesus himself was this Messiah. If the Pharisees answered his question they would have to acknowledge his true identity. Once again, Jesus claimed deity for himself.”⁷

+ OPTIONAL TEACHING ACTIVITY

Use the instructions below to play a favorite childhood game, “Red Light, Green Light,” with a twist. The twist is that two different people will be it, but one of the two is a decoy, and the group doesn’t get to find out who the decoy is until the first person crosses the finish line.

- Choose two people to be “It” and have both stand at the same end of the room. Whisper in one person’s ear, “You’re It,” and whisper in the other’s ear, “You’re the decoy.”
- The remaining players must choose whose instructions they will listen to for the entirety of the round. They can’t switch.
- Both “It” and “the decoy” call out red light or green light at the same time. Players can only move when the person they chose says green light.
- If a player is caught moving after their authority says red light, they must go back to the starting line.
- The first player to reach the finish line ends the game. If he or she were following “It,” that person wins. If following “the decoy,” then nobody wins.
- Repeat the game if you have time.

Use this activity to illustrate the importance of following the correct authority. The Pharisees and Sadducees were following their own authority when it came to the Word of God instead of Jesus’s authority. If they chose to follow their own authority until their lives were over, then they crossed the finish line without the chance at gaining the true victory—eternal life.

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