

Luke 20: 27 - 38

'Resurrection and Baptism'

Introduction ...

12 blackbirds sat on the branches of a tree. A man shot 1 blackbird with his gun. How many were left on the tree?

None. The rest flew away.

What was the Prime Minister's name in 1992?

The same as it is today.

A lorry driver goes down a one-way street the wrong way and passes at least five police officers. Why is he not caught?

He's walking on the pavement, not driving at the time.

How can you lift an elephant with one hand?

Don't worry about it, as you won't find one.

Why is it against the law for a man living in Yorkshire to be buried in Lancashire?

You shouldn't bury a person who is alive.

In Wales, you cannot take a picture of a man with a prosthetic hand. Why not?

You'd need a camera of some kind.

Trick Questions ...

Jesus was faced with a trick question in today's Gospel reading. This wasn't a 'fun' trick question like we've just had ... it was to try and trap Jesus and to make him say that there's no resurrection – no life after death. And there's a danger that our attention will focus too much on the trick and not on how Jesus dealt with it. Our focus needs to be on verses 34 – 38, and in particular the last two verses.

Just along from me – we have a memorial book and many of the people we know who have died have their names written in it ... and the God that we are worshipping today – the God in whose name Kathryn and William will be baptised – is their God too – in the lives that they now live in heaven.

This belief relates to baptism too. Our baptism includes the faith that we are joined to Jesus in his death ... as we turn away from – or die to sin ... and as we reject evil. The water of baptism symbolises a washing away of whatever is harmful, sinful and a cleansing that leads to us being able to start over again in a new life – just as Jesus did in his resurrected life – we're again joined to him as we turn to him as Saviour and as we trust him as Lord.

But that washing away and cleansing is not a once for all, once in a lifetime occurrence. Every time we repent and ask God for forgiveness – it's like re-entering our baptism ... we're forgiven, washed clean and can continue afresh in a life based on faith in Jesus ... a life lived with Jesus as friend.

Amen.