

## **STAND FIRM**

### **As we Gather**

Throughout His ministry Jesus confronted the legalistic beliefs of the Jewish religious leaders. Paul too, was concerned about false teachings which confused and distressed the Christian community. Today misinterpretation and misunderstanding of the Scriptures are still very real problems for the Church.

**Reading Scripture**      **Psalm 145:1-5 + 17-21**    **2 Thessalonians 2:13-17**    **Luke 20:27-38**

### **Thinking Together**

Jewish religious leaders comprised the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

Pharisees, as a religious body, accepted the Scriptures (the Laws and the Prophets) and the thousands of detailed regulations and rules of the oral and ceremonial law. They believed in resurrection from the dead, and in angels and spirits. They believed too in, and hoped for, the coming of Messiah.

Sadducees, on the other hand were wealthy, conservative leaders comprising priests and aristocrats – the governing class – and they accepted only the Law of Moses (the first five books of the Bible). They did not believe in resurrection from the dead, or in angels or spirits (Acts 23:6-10). Neither did they believe in, or want, the coming of Messiah.

Both groups of religious leaders needed to get their priorities right (Haggai 1:5)

**Where does God come on your list of priorities? Discuss**

**How willing are you to move beyond your comfort zone for Jesus? Discuss**

Luke records that the Sadducees asked Jesus a hypothetical question based on Deuteronomy 25:5, for which no one had an answer (Luke 20:27-33). Jesus answered their question about marriage (Luke 20:34-36), pointing out that their assumptions limited God's power and denied God's Word (1 Corinthians 15). He then went beyond logic to their real question. Basing His answer on the writings of Moses He upheld belief in resurrection (Luke 20:37-38    Exodus 3:1-6).

God is the God of the whole person, spirit, soul and body (1Thessalonians 5:23), because He created the whole person.

**Do you sometimes make God too small by limiting Him to your own ability / understanding? Discuss**

**Do you believe that in eternity you will share the image of Christ? Discuss  
(1 John 3:2)**

**How do you deal with difficult questions about your faith / religion? Discuss  
(2 Thessalonians 2:15)**

