

# Jesus and Modern “Scholars”

Joe Slater

One day in Jerusalem some Sadducees confronted Jesus about His doctrine of resurrection (Matthew 22:23ff). Had Jesus been of the same mind as certain modern left-leaning religionists, He would have answered them far differently. An altered Jesus might have said something like this: “Now, brothers, let’s not get into a debate. After all, doctrine really isn’t that important. I know we disagree on the resurrection, but it doesn’t really matter, because we’re all God’s children. If I’m right, then on resurrection morning you will just be in for a happy surprise! And if you’re right, then none of us will be around to worry about it. Now, let’s have a big group hug!”

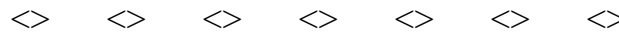
Sounds mushy and sick, doesn’t it? Yet this mindset dominates much of the religious scene. Try being militant like Jesus was; see how long it takes until you are called a Pharisee, bigot, narrow-minded, legalist, extremist, or some other insulting names.

Jesus never downplayed the importance of believing the truth on any subject! To the contrary, He said, “*You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free*” (John 8:32). Jesus did not allow false teaching to go unchallenged. He plainly told the Sadducees that they were wrong! “*You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God*” (Matthew 22:29). Do you suppose that they liked being told that they were both wrong and ignorant? By modern standards, the only thing that is wrong is to tell someone, “you’re wrong.” Jesus certainly would not fit in very well with modern proponents of “acceptance” and “toleration.”

Jesus countered the Sadducees’ error with Biblical truth, reminding them of what God had said to Moses at the burning bush: “*I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and*

*Jacob*” (Matthew 22:26, quoting Exodus 3:6). Then Jesus used sound reasoning (logic) to make His point: God said, I **am** (not **was**) the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. Therefore, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were alive at the time God spoke to Moses. Now, it was common knowledge that they had been physically dead since long before Moses was born. So, they must be spiritually alive rather than physically alive; thus life survives the death of the physical body, and resurrection is, therefore, totally plausible.

Both quoting Scripture and using logic are out of favor with many in religious circles, including some within the Lord’s church. They call it “proof-texting” and “human reasoning.” But I think I’ll follow the lead of Jesus rather than that of modern “scholars.” How about you?



## Thirsty?

Our physical bodies demand water. That shouldn’t surprise anyone since 55% of the male body mass is water (51% in women). Our blood is 83% water, and muscles are 75%; even our bones are 22% water. Our survival depends on getting enough water, and just a 2% deficiency means we are dehydrated.

Thirst is a sensation all experience, but few can explain. All we know is that when we’re thirsty we begin searching for something to drink.

How’s your spiritual thirst? Jesus pointed to this reality: “*If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water*” (John 7:37-38).

Do you crave the righteousness of God found in the pages of Scripture? How long has it been since you’ve had a drink?

Tom Hall (via Bulletin Gold)

## Snatched Out Of The Fire

**And have mercy on some, who are doubting; save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh** (Jude 22-23).

Two of my uncles owned a sporting goods store in Dallas. This store had a very vicious guard dog protecting it at night. One night the store caught on fire. When the firemen opened the door a totally changed dog came out. He loved the rescuer who snatched him out the fire.

Think about Jesus on the cross suffering the wrath of God in your place. He cried out in heart breaking agony, “*My God, my God, why have you forsaken Me?*” (Matthew 27:46b) “*He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him*” (II Corinthians 5:21). You were saved from the wrath of God through Jesus (Romans 5:9).

Do not be fooled by the current teaching that eternal punishment does not exist. We are clearly told that there is a place where the fire does not go out (Mark 9:43). It is a place of torment and agony in flame (Luke 16:19-31). Jesus also calls it being “*cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth*” (Matthew 8:12, 22:13, and 25:30). Imagine a place of total darkness constantly in flames. That is what Jesus saved you from!

Unlike that guard dog, we haven’t been trapped with the flames licking at us. Perhaps that is why we do not appreciate what Jesus did for each one of us. There doesn’t seem to be a feeling of urgency in carrying out Jude 22-23 and Matthew 28:19.

God through Jesus was reconciling the world to Himself. He has given us the message of reconciliation. We must snatch people out of the flames!

--Ed Wittlif (Denver, CO)