

Message #115

Luke 22:66-71

Long before we had “say no to drug” campaigns and long before our political leaders decided to declare a war on drugs, there was a lonely, poor police officer who singlehandedly fought his own war against drugs. The man’s name was Frank Serpico, who is now 84-years-old.

Frank Serpico was a N.Y. police officer who was assigned to work in the narcotics division of the N.Y.P.D.. Serpico was an honest cop. He could not be bought. He could not be bribed. He could not be defiled or corrupted. He was as near as you can get to the perfect police officer.

While Serpico was investigating the drug problem in N.Y., he discovered that several N.Y. police officers were involved in the peddling and trafficking of drugs. Many were being paid off for their illegal and criminal actions. Frank Serpico reported it to leading police officials, only to discover that they were not really interested in knowing the truth. In fact, an assassination contract was put out on his life. He had to have special protection and change his identity. He had to relocate and live incognito. To this day no one knows where he actually lives. What Frank Serpico learned was when you stand against what is evil and stand for what is right and true, many people want to destroy you.

Long before Frank Serpico lived, there was a very unique Person who lived far across the Atlantic, whose name was Jesus Christ. He declared war on phony religion and sin. He was the Perfect God/man. He never sinned. He never said or did anything that wasn’t right. Satan tried to bribe Him and He wouldn’t take the bribe. He could not be defiled or corrupted in any way and, as a result, many wanted to kill Him.

As He moved through life presenting the truth and facts of God, He discovered that people in high positions of power wanted Him gone. The high-ranking religious and political leaders were corrupt. They were part of a devilish swamp and they hated Him and wanted to destroy Him. He did not get any protection from anyone in this world. What He ended up getting was executed.

Nowhere is the injustice or misuse of justice more evident than these phony trials. In this text, Jesus is before the Sanhedrin and this is a judicial joke. What glares at us from this text is this:

HYPOCRITICAL RELIGIOUS LEADERS WERE NOT INTERESTED IN KNOWING GOD’S TRUTH, BUT THEY ARE INTERESTED IN DESTROYING GOD’S TRUTH-BEARER.

False, phony, religious leaders are not really interested in what is Biblically right or true. They are not interested in the facts. They are closed-minded and narrow. They are proud. They are only interested in maintaining their own corrupt opinions and their own views.

They were on the take. They would not even defend the Son of God. They saw Jesus Christ, not as their Savior and friend, but as a threat to them and their power. They wanted Him gone and it is very clear from this judicial hearing that they were not interested in the facts or in truth. They wanted to kill Jesus Christ.

To understand this text, we would like to ask and answer four questions:

QUESTION #1 – When did this trial occur? 22:66a

The opening words of **verse 66** inform us that this trial occurred as soon as “it was day.”

Now the group named in this verse, “Elders, Chief Priests and Scribes” are some of the same guys that went out and took Jesus Christ from Gethsemane (22:52).

These were some of the same men who had been involved in beating up Jesus all through the night (Mark 14:55, 65). They had spit on Christ and punched Him with their fists.

So this trial is a judicial prejudicial farce. This council group is holding a mock trial now that it is daytime for all to see. During the night when no one could see, these hypocrites were doing every degrading thing they could, but now that it is daylight they want to put on a good show for the people.

They want the people to think they are fair-minded and they are really doing things according to what is fair and legal.

These guys are a bunch of phony frauds. They were so hypocritical that when they took Christ to Pilate, they would not ever enter a Gentile praetorium because they did not want to be defiled for the Passover (John 18:28).

Do you get this? These are the leaders. They are frauds. These are the same sort of people who are in government and high positions of power today.

Religious hypocrites look good in front of people, but they are wicked behind the scenes. Religious hypocrites put on a good show to impress people, but they have no fear of facing God.

As the people would have seen Jesus come into this Council of the Sanhedrin, they would have seen that He was beaten into a bloody pulp. Some probably wondered who did that. The fact is the very guys on this Sanhedrin did that to Him and now they were going to try Him to kill Him.

QUESTION #2 – Who conducted this trial? 22:66b

It is specifically stated that the trial was conducted by the “council of elders, the chief priests and scribes.”

The elders oversaw all religious matters, the chief priests oversaw all temple matters and the scribes oversaw all instructional matters. This group, along with certain Rabbis, Pharisees and Sadducees, were extremely powerful, both politically and religiously. Together they comprised a 70-member judicial team known as the Sanhedrin. This was the leading religious power of the Jewish world; it was the supreme court of Israel.

This is a sham show legal trial. The only reason these guys want this is so that the people will think this is about following what is legal. But this trial has nothing to do with what is just or fair or right or true.

This trial is a set up. It is all fake. They have already condemned Jesus Christ and now they are just going through the mockery of a trial. They are not interested in truth. Religious hypocrites never are interested in truth. They want to destroy the one telling the truth. Luke has already brought out what is in their hearts: they want Him dead (Luke 19:47).

QUESTION #3 – What were the questions asked at this trial? 22:67-70

Long before ridiculous and stupid questions were being asked in public by attorneys and media, two questions were asked to Jesus Christ.

The questions were not in themselves ridiculous or foolish, but what is ridiculous and foolish is that no one wanted to know the true answer to the questions:

Question #1 - Are you the Messiah? 22:67a

This question is still being asked by Jews today. Most who ask this question are not really interested in knowing the answer to the question. If this question were asked by one seeking truth, it is a great question. **But these men at this trial are not asking this question because they want to know truth; they want to destroy Jesus Christ.**

Before we get to Christ's answer, let us dogmatically state that **Jesus Christ is the Messiah**. If you study the Bible, Jesus Christ was the Christ that is He was the Messiah and Anointed One. This very truth has already been clearly established by Luke:

- 1) It was established by an angel—Luke 2:11- there has been born a Savior **who is Christ the Lord**.
- 2) It was established by Simeon—Luke 2:25, 26, 34 - this baby is **the Lord's Christ**.
- 3) It was established by Peter—Luke 9:20 - **“the Christ of God.”**
- 4) It was established by all Apostles—John 6:68-69 - we believe you are “the Holy One of God.”

The men conducting this trial knew full well that Jesus Christ not only claimed to be the Messiah, but He backed it up with Messianic miraculous signs. They are not asking this question to validate truth, they want to kill Him.

Jesus gives three answers to their question:

(Answer #1) - No matter what I say, you will not believe. 22:67b

Jesus knows the full outcome of this trial. Everything is preordained. It didn't matter what He said here, they were not about to listen. They would not believe Him and their goal was to crucify Him and He knew it.

This is still a major issue among the Pharisaical religious crowd. You can show them what God's word says and they still won't believe it. I have personally seen this many times. I showed someone the truth about God's character from verses in the Scripture and they became so angry they threw the Bible down.

I showed a person the truth about a verse of Scripture and the person said I will not accept it; I have my own views.

Many of us have shown people the truth of the Bible that one needs to believe on Jesus Christ to be saved and religious hypocrites say, "Yes, but."

Nothing has changed with the hypocrites. They still don't want truth.

(Answer #2) - No matter what I ask, you will not answer. 22:68

Jesus could have put together questions that would clearly establish truth and they would not answer Him. In fact, that had happened many times (Luke 14:1-6; 20:19-26, 39-40). There was not a thing He could say or ask that would change them. They wanted Him gone. They want Him dead.

(Answer #3) - No matter what you do, you will see Me again. 22:69

This response is a very sober one. Basically, Jesus is saying we will meet again and the next time we meet, you will see Me in My elevated position, wielding the full power and authority of God.

Really Jesus has just answered their question whether He is the Messiah. Because these religious leaders knew full well that the O.T. predicted that the Messiah would be seated at the right hand of God. They knew the inference of this statement as it related to future judgment (Ps. 110:1-7).

Christ says you phonies can know this—we will meet again and the next time you see Me, you will regret what you did.

Based on the authority of God's word, we all need to know we will one day meet Jesus Christ. Give yourself to understanding and applying God's word and it will be a glorious meeting. But arrogantly reject God's word and you will regret the day you see Him.

Question #2 - Are you the Son of God? **22:70a**

Now again this is not a bad question to ask. But they are not asking it to know truth.

This phony group follows up the Messiah question with one as to whether or not Jesus is the Son of God. **Yes, Jesus Christ is the Son of God.** This point has already been well established.

- 1) God the Father testified of this – Luke 3:22
- 2) John the Forerunner of Jesus Christ testified of this – John 1:34
- 3) Christ's own miracles testified of this – Luke 5:24

Now by asking the question, they already knew the answer of who He claimed to be. He never hid that.

When Jesus was asked the question, He answers by saying, “Yes, I am.”

The Greek Text is very emphatic here. Not only does Jesus say “I am” (egw eimi), but the Greek also states “you specifically are saying I am continually.” The “I AM” formula is the same used in Exodus 3:14 in which God revealed Himself to Moses. Jesus says I AM the One involved in the book of Exodus.

So Jesus is emphatically stating “I AM” the Son of God and you know I am the Son of God because you are continually talking about it.

So Jesus reveals Himself to be the Messiah and the Son of God right here.

QUESTION #4 – What was the outcome of this trial? **22:71**

The leaders said we have heard enough right out of His own mouth. What had they heard? They heard the truth.

He is the Messiah. He is the Son of God. He is the Savior of the world. They are not interested in the truth. Religious and political frauds never are interested in the truth. All they want to do is to get rid of Jesus Christ and kill Him.

Now one may wonder why Jesus didn't more directly answer their questions. Why didn't He blast them at this trial and ask them questions that would have exposed them for who and what they were?

One answer is found in Luke 9:22 that says, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and raised up on the third day.” **This was all a fulfillment of prophecy.** Jesus Christ had to suffer and die to pay the price for our sins, and this evil group of frauds were part of the process of making that happen.

Jesus Christ is the ONLY SAVIOR. If you will invite Him into your life, He will come into your life and save you from your sins. That is the truth. The question to you is will you believe it?