

Scripture Reading:

Luke 22: "63 Now the men who held Jesus mocked Him and beat Him. 64 And having blindfolded Him, they struck Him on the face and asked Him, "Prophecy! Who is the one who struck You?" 65 And many other things they blasphemously spoke against Him. 66 As soon as it was day, the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, came together and led Him into their council, saying, 67 "If You are the Christ, tell us." But He said to them, "If I tell you, you will by no means believe. 68 And if I also ask you, you will by no means answer Me or let Me go. 69 Hereafter the Son of Man will sit on the right hand of the power of God." 70 Then they all said, "Are You then the Son of God?" So He said to them, "You rightly say that I am." 71 And they said, "What further testimony do we need? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth.""

'Jesus Faces the Sanhedrin'

Luke, in his orderly account for his friend Theophilus, has shown the resolve of Jesus to be in Jerusalem at His appointed time!

- **We saw Jesus hailed with Hosannas as He entered Jerusalem on a lowly donkey**
- **We saw Jesus confronted by the religious leaders as He taught in His Father's House of prayer, the Temple**
- **We saw Jesus instructing His disciples until the very end, including grave warnings about the coming destruction of the Temple and all of Jerusalem**
- **We saw Jesus desire with a great desire, to partake of the final Passover meal with His disciples and how He instituted the Lord's Table that we will celebrate here this morning as the Church has for thousands of years!**
- **In recent weeks we have seen the agony of Jesus in the garden as He prepared to face the wrath of God that was due against our sin**
- **We have seen how Luke intertwined the agony and arrest of Jesus with the final failures of His disciples, individually and collectively.**
- **And now we will see Jesus face the task before Him on the final day of His earthly ministry, alone!**

The disciples have fled and even Peter who followed Jesus to His trials has left in sorrow having denied His Lord with cursing and swearing. After Jesus gives Peter that final look we do not hear from or see the disciples again until Sunday morning, except for the command to John who was with the mother of Jesus at the cross.

- **I believe this is an important lesson that we must all learn about our salvation...**
- **It is Jesus who has come to save His people from their sins, and it is Jesus alone who can do this!**

This is a major assault on and an offence to the pride of men...

- **But it is where we must bow in faith and accept what God has done for us, and even that faith, Paul tells us in Ephesians, is a gift from God**
- **We SO want to help God with our salvation!**

We would have declared with the Disciples that we would fight to the death to be a part of God's Kingdom, but in the end, in our flesh, we would flee and deny our Lord Jesus just as they did!

- **It is Jesus and Jesus alone who can save us and that is what we will see and study in the coming weeks.**

Jesus has come to save His people from their sins and I believe it is Luke in his orderly account who shows how Jesus at the same time confronts and defeats the great enemies that we face in this life:

The world; the flesh ; and the devil himself.

Once again I have included the text from the four Gospel writers so that you can study the full picture of these early trials. This time it is John who gives the order for all that happened as you can see from the portions of His Gospel that I have underlined. Jesus was led from the Garden to an early trial before the former high priest Annas who still seemed to control what was going on. The details of this early trial are given by Matthew, Mark & John and then Annas binds Jesus and sends Him to the current High Priest Caiaphas for a second trial It is during this transfer that Jesus looks at Peter and then Luke alone gives the details of the second trial

On many occasions Jesus confronted these religious leaders with their hypocrisy: Where they would tithe spices and forget the great commands of mercy & justice. We certainly see this hypocrisy here at the end. According to Jewish tradition, there would have been two trials required to convict someone of a capital offense. These trials had to be at least 24 hours apart and nighttime trials were forbidden. As the Jewish leaders rushed to get Jesus before Pilate, they obviously violated their own rules, first having an illegal trial at night and then having the second in the morning just hours after the first.

- **As Luke gives his account, he will demonstrate how Jesus is attacked, abused and condemned by three different courts.**

We will study these confrontations over the next three weeks:

- **I will contend that Luke shows how Jesus confronts, convicts and condemns our great enemies as He presents Himself as the sacrifice for our sin**

This week we see Jesus before the Sanhedrin: Jesus told these leaders they were from their father the devil and John in writing to the Church of Smyrna says the Jews had become a synagogue of Satan!

Next week we will see Jesus before Pilate who represents the world and all of its power.

And finally, the week after that we will see Jesus before King Herod, who represents our own flesh.

Of course there are other ways to consider what Luke is presenting here and lots of other nuggets that can be mined... After all, thousands of years of study have not exhausted all the Spirit has given here! But I believe it is an important part of Luke's orderly account that can give us important applications for today as we learn to trust Jesus when facing our great enemies: The devil, the world, and our own flesh!

- **We must learn to live believing and trusting that Jesus saves us from both the penalty AND the power of sin!**

As I pointed out, Luke passes over the details of the first trial and is the only Gospel writer to give us the details of the 2nd trial

It is also Luke alone who give details of the appearance Jesus made before King Herod after His first appearance before Pilate.

Luke shows Jesus before the Jews, the Romans and the People, something the Saints remembered as they faced persecution in Acts.

After Peter & John are threatened and told they may NOT use the name of Jesus by these same religious leaders we read this in Acts 4:

“23 And being let go, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. 24 So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: 'Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them, 25 who by the mouth of Your servant David have said: 'Why did the nations rage, And the people plot vain things? 26 The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the Lord and against His Christ.' 27 'For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together 28 to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done.”

Now what had gotten Peter and John in trouble was proclaiming to these leaders what we see Jesus presenting at His trial: Acts 4:9 **“If we this day are judged for a good deed done to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well, 10 let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. 11 This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.' 12 Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”**

In Acts we will see Peter & John boldly proclaiming Jesus before these same leaders who mocked Him and beat Him: The same leaders who at these trials covered His eyes and struck Him demanding that He tell them who did it. Those same leaders who spoke blasphemies against the Lord of Glory. What we see here is not only the trial of Jesus, the innocent one, but also the trial and conviction of these religious leaders who with their hardened hearts had become the Synagogue of Satan

- Luke shows us this clearly in his account of the second trial, which was just a reaffirmation of what had happened at the first.

They begin the 2nd trial by asking Jesus another of their trick questions: **“If you are the Christ, tell us.”**, meaning of course the ‘christ’ they were expecting as the Messiah, one who would empower them and throw off the shackles of Rome.

Jesus responds by saying they would not believe Him if He told them, in part because He had already shown Himself to be the Son of God at the first trial and to expose their deception

And then Jesus adds **“And if I also ask you, you will by no means answer Me or let Me go.”**

- Such is the hardness of man’s sinful heart without the saving work of the Holy Spirit!

Jesus then makes a mockery of their trials by declaring to them, **“Hereafter the Son of Man will sit on the right hand of the power of God.”**

Paul quoting the Prophet Isaiah in Romans 14 tells us...

“11 For it is written: "As I live, says the Lord, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God." 12 So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.”

Jesus said they will see Him at the right hand of power: They will see the one they have mocked and blindfolded and beaten AS the one who KNOWS all the secrets of their hearts and AS the one who will judge them accordingly!

- These religious hypocrites now ask the right question, but NOT because they want to believe:

“Are You then the Son of God?”

- Is Jesus the Christ, the Son of the living God as the Father had revealed to Peter?

Jesus affirms it is true by saying, “You rightly say that I am” These leaders understood what Jesus said, but they did not hear with ears of faith... They hear with rebellious ears which hear only what they needed to put Jesus to death...

- Jesus had claimed to be God
- A capital offense for anyone who was not in fact God come in the flesh!

We should note here that these Jewish leaders did not dispute that there is a Son of God or that the Messiah would come as the Son of God

- The Trinity was not a doctrine or understanding of God that came only with the New Testament

At this time the Jews were seeing through a glass darkly, but they knew something of the one God Jehovah as Father, the Son of God and the Spirit of God, unlike the Jews of today who are more akin to the monotheistic Muslims than they are to Christians.

BUT this is not a theology debate, but rather Jesus presenting Himself before these men as the Son of God. They must choose and they choose poorly when they respond not with saving faith, but human rebellion:

“What further testimony do we need? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth.”

- They are willing to overlook ALL the prophecies of the Old Testament that have been fulfilled
- They are willing to overlook the testimony of all the miracles that Jesus has done in their presence.
- They are willing to overlook the voice of the Father in Heaven who confirmed Jesus as His own Son on two occasions
- They are willing to reject the testimony of the Son of God Himself as He stands in their presence...

Rather they say, “what further testimony do we need? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth” Rather than believe what they have heard, they go on, as we will hear many times in the Book of Acts, to crucify the Lord of Glory!

So I think it is proper to ask here, who was really on trial? Who was really convicted?

But this was not the final judgment...

We will hear Jesus say, Father forgive them from the cross and He had taught the disciples that sins against the Son would be forgiven, even the sins of these rebels.

- **BUT**, sins against the Spirit will not and that is what we will see in the Book of Acts and down through history

Thousands of Jews were saved at Pentecost and the weeks following and I am sure that some present here at these trials were among them.

- **Others as we will see in Acts continued in their rebellion refusing to hear the testimony of the Son or the Spirit!**
- **Truly they will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the power of God and it will not be a pleasant experience!**

So we see the first of three trials for Jesus, where in fact Jesus puts on trial and convicts, Satan, the world and the flesh... Our great enemies of the faith that we see discussed throughout the New Testament

- **What is proclaimed after the resurrection is that they have been defeated, REALLY defeated by the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus!**

The important lesson for us is that we must allow Jesus to defeat them in our lives and not try to help Him along like the disciples had done

- **To do so, would mean that our failure would loam as large as those of the disciples when they tried to do so in the power of the flesh!**

Hebrews declares that Jesus is our great High Priest who has gone before us and that is what we see here in the Gospel accounts.

Although Jesus had prayed for and instructed His disciples until the very end, even giving Peter that final convicting look, He knew the time had come to go on alone and face the wrath of His Father as it was poured out against our sin. Jesus would confront, convict and defeat all the forces of sin and evil that are arrayed against His sheep.

- **That is why we remember His death at this Table until He comes!**

For the application of our lesson this morning we will turn to the 1st letter of Peter: A Peter who learned these lessons well!

“13 Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, 14 or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good. 15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men-- 16 as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God.

-- Peter now explain this submission

17 Honor all people.

Love the brotherhood.

Fear God.

Honor the king.

- **Note that Peter says:**

To honor ALL people... [kids, what does all mean?]

To love the brotherhood, meaning all the Saints not just those like us!

To fear God... NOT the devil the world or our own flesh

To honor the King and that does not mean just the good kings!

- **These are NOT things we like to hear, but Peter continues...**

“18 Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh.”

- **We get no credit for submitting to a master who is good & gentle! We are commanded to submit to those who are harsh.**

“19 For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully.”

- **Even IF we are doing all these things, we must be doing it for the right reason as well!**

“20 For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently?”

So children, you cannot look for praise from God because you behaved nicely when you parents corrected you:

You are being corrected because you did something wrong: God is looking for repentance

We cannot expect credit for being patient when we don't have the money we need to pay all the bills when we spent irresponsibly!

Again God is looking for repentance!

- **So, what do we get credit for?**

“But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God.”

So to use the same examples:

Children there will be times when you receive a correction for something a friend or brother or sister did wrong: If you are patient in taking that correction, God is pleased

If we have worked hard for someone doing all that was asked and they then refuse to pay us what we are owed, then we get credit IF we endure patiently!

21 “For to THIS you were called,”

- **[the ‘this’ here is ALL those unpleasant things that Peter just reminded we are to do!]**

21 “For to THIS you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:

22 “Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth”;

- **Jesus did not deserve to be before any of these trials!**

23 “who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; 24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness--by whose stripes you were healed. 25 For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.”

- **Those who confess Jesus as their Savior have returned to the great Shepherd!**
- **We respond by living as He has shown us: Not just following the letter of the law, as those hypocrites loved to do, but rather by following the letter & the spirit of the law as Peter has challenged us:**

Peter tells us Jesus is our great example as we have seen in the first trials before the Sanhedrin

Let us keep our eyes on Jesus & in the power of the Holy Spirit learn to:

- **Honor all people**
- **Love the brotherhood**
- **Fear God**
- **Honor the King**
- **Submit for the Sake of God**
- **To be patient even in suffering**

That should keep us busy this week!

Communion Meditation: Psalm 110:

“1 A Psalm of David. The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." 2 The Lord shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies! 3 Your people shall be volunteers In the day of Your power; In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth. 4 The Lord has sworn And will not relent, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek." 5 The Lord is at Your right hand; He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath. 6 He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill the places with dead bodies, He shall execute the heads of many countries. 7 He shall drink of the brook by the wayside; Therefore He shall lift up the head.”