

The Messiah

[Announce Text] Please Open your Bibles to Luke 22:63-71. [Page 884](#)

[Scripture Introduction] Good morning, my name is Brett Sweet and I'm one of the pastors here at Grace Christian Fellowship where we exist to glorify God through gospel-centered worship, evangelism, discipleship, and community. We are continuing our series through the book of Luke.

[Prayer for illumination] Please pray with me...

[Illustration] In Mark Twain's *the Prince and the Pauper*, Prince Edward Tudor has taken the position of poor boy Tom Canty who looks just like him. He has claimed, at times to be precisely whom he is. Even telling a gang of thieves that, after the death of King Henry, he will be king and will put an end to unjust laws. But nobody believes him. The thieves think he's crazy and hold a mock coronation. But coronation day is coming. Tom Canty has been living as Prince Edward for a while. As Tom is about to be crowned King, Edward interrupts and declares his identity to all those present. But nobody really believes that this shabby looking boy is the real Prince Edward. Honestly, would any of us have believed him?

And yet, the fact remained that whether people believed him or not, this shabby looking boy really is Prince Edward soon to be King Edward. The way people respond to him doesn't change who he is.

In a similar way, we see a variety of responses to Jesus as he is tried before Jewish authorities. Jesus is the Messiah- that's what He's on trial for. But no matter how people relate to him, whether accepting or rejecting, His identity is sure, certain, and secure. So what should we do?

[Proposition] Believe- Jesus *is* the Messiah.

In Luke 22:63-71, Luke summarizes and blends two or three phases of Jewish trial around the one question of Jesus' identity: is He and does He claim to be Messiah? Luke makes it clear that no matter what is happening to Jesus, Jesus is the Messiah. So we'll notice four things as we follow along with the trial account here: You can mock Him, but Jesus is the Messiah. You can refuse to believe, but Jesus is the Messiah. You may not see Him now, but Jesus is the Messiah. You can reject His claims, but Jesus is the Messiah.

[Main Point 1] You can mock Him, but Jesus is the Messiah.

Let's read vv. 63-65

Now the men who were holding Jesus in custody were mocking him as they beat him. They also blindfolded him and kept asking him, "Prophecy! Who is it that struck you?" And they said many other things against him, blaspheming him.

Here we have Jewish Temple guards. Jews. And the system is so corrupt. It has become so abusive. It has lost all the compassion that God's Word has encouraged. That they are beating Jesus before a full conviction. And this is probably just another day at work. Oh, how normal evil can become. Oh, how we can just go about our day and not think about the person in front of us!

Here we have the Maker of the Universe. We have the Messiah. And they are playing cruel games with him. Verse 65 shows that Luke could go on and on with many other things. Instead of blindfolding someone to play Pin-the-tail-on-the-donkey, the play beat up the blindfolded man from multiple angles and have him guess who did it. They think that by beating Him up, they are proving that He is not a prophet and not the Messiah. But by doing this they are proving Jesus to be a prophet and the Messiah! His parable of the Wicked Tenants pointed to this in Luke 20:9-18. And even more specifically, listen to what Jesus had prophesied in Luke 18:32

For he will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon.

They think they are making a point. But the point they are making is Jesus' point! And we're told that by mocking him, they are blaspheming Him. Which may be understood merely as insulting him- it can have that meaning. But it seems Luke wants it to carry greater meaning than that. It's blasphemy. It's defaming God.

[Illustration] We're too refined to mock Jesus, right? We wouldn't do that! This is 2023. Every human who has ever lived should be treated with dignity. By mocking Him, they are proving He is a prophet! Never mind that *South Park* continues running episodes where Jesus hosts a call-in-TV-show and is the leader of "Super Best Friends" beside Muhammad, Buddha, Krishna, Lao Tse and others. Or that when Prop 8 in California was seeking to eliminate same-sex couples' claims to be married, beloved actor Jack Black dressed up like Jesus to resist that measure. He

implied that Christians who oppose gay marriage are hypocrites if they do that and eat shrimp cocktails. Or the fact that *the Onion* joked around with a false news story about Jesus arriving at His second coming still attached to the cross. So it was hard for him to walk through doorways with his arms outstretched.

[Application] Do I sound like a self-righteous judge? A typical holier-than-thou looking down on non-Christians? Non-Christians are actually not the biggest mockers of Jesus. “Mock” as it is used here, means

“To make fun of someone by pretending that he is not what he is or by imitating him in a distorted manner.”

If that definition is correct the biggest mockers aren't outside looking in, their in the church imitating him in a distorted manner. But even so, none of those things impact Jesus' identity at all. They do not change whether He is the Messiah or not. His title and office remain outside of the reach of our mocking. Do you mock Jesus? Do you imitate Him in a distorted manner? Only acting like Him and following Him and obeying Him when it benefits you? Do you sometimes treat Him as a joke? Let me tell you how we subtly mock Jesus- by making light of our sin. We act like it's no big deal. It's okay that I engage in this little sin. And then we read the Bible, or hear someone talk about how serious the sin is and, in our minds, we draw a caricature of Jesus. But whereas caricatures normally have big heads, we draw Jesus with a big hand wagging his finger at us. Don't you lust! Don't you gossip! Don't you be bitter. And then we say that a Jesus who says that must be some kind of joke. Even though he did. So we caricature him some other way rather than receiving Him as a true prophet who speaks for God. Never realizing we're mocking Him rather than listening to Him.

The main way we don't mock Jesus is to humble ourselves before Him. You believe in Him. You honor Him as your superior. You honor Him. When it costs you money. Or friends. Or a future wife.

Believe- Jesus *is* the Messiah. You can mock Him, but Jesus is the Messiah. Now, second,

[Main Point 2] You can refuse to believe, but Jesus is the Messiah.

Let's read vv. 66-68

When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people gathered together, both chief priests and scribes. And they led him away to their council, and they said, "If you are the Christ, tell us." But he said to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe, and if I ask you, you will not answer.

The Jewish council of leaders- the Sanhedrin- have probably violated some of their usual procedures here. But that was not totally unheard of. You can easily imagine a group of several Jewish men looking at one another, whispering together, "Ah, we've finally got Jesus right where we want Him." What they want is a speedy trial, conviction, and execution. They don't want a delay that could cause more people- the crowds especially, to start asking questions.

And they start by facing Jesus with the big question: Are you the Christ? Which is the Greek word for Messiah. "Just tell us," they say. But by pressing this issue, they are asking a political question to get Jesus in trouble with as many people as possible- especially the Romans. And if Jesus agrees, then He is claiming a regal title, and the Romans won't like it.

But the fact that they say, "Just tell us." Is a lie. Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus is the Christ. But He knows that they will not believe. We know that because Jesus already posed the question to them about where John the Baptist came from in Luke 20. They will not believe, because they're not really asking the question. Their minds are already made up. So Jesus doesn't play their game.

[Apologetic] Many atheists I've met, are quite honestly, just indifferent about God. At least in how they feel about Him. But a lot of the people who make a name for themselves as atheists. Who are out in public. They think by broadcasting their unbelief they are harming Jesus. They are insulting Him, yes. They are disrespecting Him, for sure. But the fact that they refuse to believe doesn't change who He is. Christians, we need to get this. Sometimes we talk to hostile non-Christians and we feel like we need to have all the answers, and if we don't, we're letting God down. We need to be prepared with answers- 1 Peter 3:15 tells us that, but there is a heart attitude that I want to challenge a bit. I love apologetics. I study apologetics. I think Christians need apologetics too. But let me help some of us.

Do you feel the need to prop up Mt. Spokane? Do you need to chain yourself to it to keep it from tipping over? You don't. Whether you live or die, that mountain is

not going to collapse based on your actions. You do not worry about it. The eternal, all-powerful, all-knowing God is even more firmly fixed than Mt. Spokane. His Messiah, Jesus, is more firmly fixed than Mt. Spokane. You don't need to prop Jesus up. You don't need to keep Jesus from tipping over. Others may refuse to believe, but Jesus is the Messiah. So rest. when you catch a view of Mt. Spokane, I want you to look at that mountain and remind yourself that Jesus is fixed as God's chosen Messiah regardless of what others think. More fixed than Mt. Spokane.

[Gospel] The elders in Jesus' time refused to believe. They had motives and plans for themselves. And Jesus got in the way. So they made a move to get Him out of their way. Out of sight out of mind for them. But they had to remove Him from their sight by force. But if you are one of those people who do refuse to believe, like these elders. Know that there are answers if you are really, honestly, sincerely, humbly, willing to accept them. And know that Jesus ain't movin'. He is the Messiah. And you must deal with Him. Some of you think, "out of sight, out of mind" by just ignoring the Jesus in the verses in front of us. But what you think and believe about Jesus is the most important thing. Your eternal soul faces either Hell for refusing to believe, or Heaven for believing His claims and bowing to His rule. He's come to save sinners like you. But if you refuse to believe please hear this warning: He will condemn and judge you.

Which actually brings us to the next thing you should know when you see that Jesus *is* the Messiah. And part of that Messiahship is His authority to judge. So believe- Jesus *is* the Messiah. You can mock Him, but Jesus is the Messiah. You can refuse to believe, but Jesus is the Messiah. And now, thirdly,

[Main Point 3] You may not see Him now, but Jesus is the Messiah

Let's read v. 69

"But from now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God."

Jesus uses His favorite self-designation. He calls Himself "the Son of Man" which in Daniel 7 points to His claims to deity, power, and authority. But He says that in a short time He will be out of sight. You won't be able to see Him with your physical eyes. Because He's going to die as a substitute. He's going to defeat

death in His resurrection. And He's going to ascend and sit down at the place of honor. At the Father's right hand.

So the fact that you can't see Him now is actually evidence that Jesus is the Messiah. Here's why. Because Jews would have thought that no one could be this close to God. To actually sit with God. At His right hand. It's one thing to stand near God the Father and be ready to serve Him like a waiter. But to be seated, as if He's an equal. As if He has the same sort of power. As if He is an equal. Like the resurrected Jesus arriving in God's the Father's presence and the Father saying, "Here you are. Let me pull out this chair for you. Have a seat."

Some of us are a bit flippant about Jesus. Maybe we'll worship today. Maybe we'll pray. But here we hear the Messiah say that He has the real power. He will judge.

[Illustration] Marissa Mayer, the former CEO of Yahoo, put in 130-hour weeks when she was there. She told one person that she managed that schedule by sleeping under her desk and being "strategic" about her showers. Even her critics acknowledged that she will literally work 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Claiming to be a Lutheran, she said that her priorities are "God, family, and Yahoo!, except I'm not the religious, so it's really family and Yahoo!"

But what would that sort of work ethic look like in an agrarian society? Where there are no computers or phones? It would look like you are on your feet all the time- working. On your feet in the fields. On your feet repairing your house. On your feet delivering things to the market. On your feet preparing your meal. On your feet hauling water. On your feet doing what your master says. Always working.

So when Jesus says that He's going to be at the Father's right hand. And seated. He's telling us that He's an equal with God. And He's telling us that when He sits down, His work is done. Sin will have been fully atoned for. There will be nothing left for Him to do.

[Application] Jesus is headed to His death here. But for us, that has already happened. And now He is seated. His work is done. Maybe you were breaking your back to try to appease people this week. Cook the right dishes. Wear the respectable clothing. Avoid certain topics of conversation. And the pressure was stressful. Always, at least in your heart, on your feet. And you relate to God that

way. You need to perform. Give to charity. Volunteer in the nursery. Bring snacks to Community Group. Read through the Bible in a year. Trying to make up for that dumb thing you said. You're always on your spiritual feet.

Well, Jesus is seated. He atoned for that sin. He's done the work. He gets the glory. We can't see Him because He's seated at the Father's right hand. Where His conversation is one that is always cooperating with the Father for our best. Father, let's do this for him- it will make Him see us more clearly. Father, she needs to grow in holiness, we need to let her struggle just a bit, so that she doesn't ruin her life with that sin. Father, let's use this suffering for their good. Only the Messiah can do this. He's seated because His atoning for sin is done. He's seated and interceding for us. But this is out of our sight.

Believe Jesus *is* the Messiah. Even if you mock Him. Even if you refuse to believe. Even though you may not see Him now. And we get to the culmination of this trial in our fourth point.

[Main Point 4] You can reject His claims, but Jesus is the Messiah.

Look at vv. 70-71 with me

So they all said, "Are you the Son of God, then?" And he said to them, "You say that I am." Then they said, "What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips."

The elders and leaders ask another question, but again, it's not a sincere question. Because they don't really want to accept the answer. It's more of an accusation. And Jesus refuses to deny the question. When asked if He's the Son of God, and claiming to be the Son of God. Jesus responds, "You've said it. You're onto the truth now."

It's been said that we live in a "post-truth culture." But that statement itself statement of truth. It's saying, "The truth about our culture is that we have moved beyond truth." The truth is ultimately unavoidable. And Jesus values the truth so much that He is ready to die for the truth. In a sense, there is not enough evidence to convict Jesus until He speaks. And He does speak. He makes a claim. And He confirms His claims- which His accusers reject.

He claims to be the Son of God. Now the claim to be the Son of God is not exactly identical to claims to be Messiah. But this claim is even more outrageous. The Sanhedrin ask if Jesus is the Son of God, and John 8 shows us that they took claims to being God's Son as claims to equality with God. And when we read the Old Testament, we find hints in Psalm 2, Psalm 110, and elsewhere, that the Messiah will be a divine figure. But they don't accept Him. They don't humble themselves before Him. They don't ask Him to teach them. They reject Him. And want Him dead.

[Apologetic] We need to get this through our heads. Jesus wasn't ultimately crucified because He was a sort of disruptor to the status quo. Though He was. Jesus wasn't ultimately crucified because He was a religious or ethnic minority in the Roman Empire. Though He was. Jesus wasn't ultimately crucified because He taught about love and was an example of toleration while under the rule of a tyrant. Though, in some sense, He was. If you are an honest person, you must accept that Jesus was crucified because of His claims. He claimed to be the Messiah. He claimed to be the Son of God.

[Application] Are you going to reject His claims this morning? If so, you'll be like the people in these verses. People who clearly do not love the truth. People who are clearly not good people. Is it just another boring day for you where, in the scheme of things, you do nothing. No profound thoughts or ideas or actions? If Jesus is the Messiah, then God has kept His promises! He'll keep promises to you! If Jesus is the Messiah, then there is a higher plane of existence than mere survival! If Jesus is the Messiah, then there is Someone out there who has power and will use it for good! If Jesus is the Messiah, then sin has been atoned for and you are free. If Jesus is the Messiah, then He will come again and judge evil and make all things beautiful and good and new. If Jesus is the Messiah, then He can take the life that you feel to be so mundane and make it have eternal significance. If Jesus is the Messiah, then He must be of more value and worth than anyone who's ever lived. And He must deserve unending, soul-rapturing, joy-amplifying praise forever.

[Conclusion] In *the Prince and Pauper* the people of the palace are concerned because they can't find the Great Seal of England. The royal stamp. It's missing and Tom, the imposter prince, knows nothing about it. But just as Tom is about to

be crowned king, Edward interrupts the coronation and produces the Great Seal which he had hid before leaving the palace. Everything became apparent. Edward, despite what others thought, was always the prince- now they believe. For countless millions or billions of people, they've gone from people who rejected Jesus to believing. I hope and pray that's you this morning.