

1. *Violent Mockers*: One way to respond to Jesus.
 - a. Mobs: People in groups will often do things that they wouldn't do as individuals
 - i. There is a participation together which hardens the conscience in a desire to compete and compare themselves, outdoing one another
 - ii. When spurred on to evil, these competitions and comparisons becomes mobs
 - iii. Luke reveals Jesus as being victim to this kind of corporate cruelty
 - b. The activity of their "mocking" was the beating (ptc.)
 - i. These actions weren't a judicial act, but come before the judgment by the authorities
 - ii. Thus, this is not legislated punishment, but the actions of hearts calloused to the claims of Jesus and violently hateful to the person of Jesus
 - iii. Men can be cruel to those whom they perceive to be weak
 1. Physical weakness becomes a target for abuse
 2. Emotional brokenness becomes a target for slander
 3. Cruelty makes violence into play through deeds and words
 - c. Luke makes it clear that they "reviled" him, or blasphemed him, speaking irreverent, untrue, defaming, slanderous, belittling things constantly.
 - i. Thus, the mocking had to do with his powerlessness in the light of their power
 1. Like a bully, "What you gonna do about it?"
 2. Demanding that he "prophesy" who hit him while blindfolded
 - ii. They mocked him as a false prophet, shamed him as powerless and incapable, beat him mercilessly.
 1. Isaiah 53:3
 2. This was an ongoing graphic picture of undiluted hatred towards Jesus – this is not an indifferent bully, but that they hated him to strike him and mock him like this
 - iii. Ironically, their mocking of his prophetic power actually fulfilled what he had prophesied back in Luke 18:31-34
 1. Just like Jesus had prophesied of Peter's three denials and it was fulfilled, so also here
 - d. There is a type of opponent to Christ and His Church that is violent and irreverent
 - i. This person doesn't care to know who Jesus really is or what he claimed
 - ii. They see him as weak and His people as weak and foolish, and their blunt, arrogant, violence is brutish and unreasonable
 - iii. Note that Jesus doesn't make a case for his claims, but simply endures such treatment
 - e. This is quite despicable, but Jesus doesn't fight back, though he could have called powerful ministers of the heavens to defend him
 - i. Behold the patient strength of the God-Man!
 1. The lips which were split and swollen at the hands of perverse and violent men were the lips which calmed the raging sea, release a man from the self-destructive torment of demons and made them flee into swine, and commanded lepers to be clean and lame men to walk
 2. The fists that he held within his cloak were the same hands that just reattached a severed ear – what do you think they could do if they unleashed hell?!
 - ii. The patience of God is unfathomable, and we see here this same patience expressed humanly in Jesus of Nazareth
 1. How do you respond to being treated unjustly? What if you had the power to do something about the injustice towards you?

2. Jesus entrusted his condition and his circumstance and his life to the Father, enduring whatever the Father brought his way because it was necessary for him to be so treated in order to redeem humanity
- iii. It was our sins that kept him there! It was our sins that were the reason for his stayed hand! He endured such belligerent violence and mockery and shame for us!
 1. For the faithless deniers like Peter and like me
 2. If we want to honor Him, to be transformed from our affection for that which caused His death (sin), then we must see His great love for us in this suffering

“Consider well of the office, the bloodshed, and the holy life of Christ — His office is to expiate sin, and to destroy it. His blood was shed for it: his life condemned it. Love Christ, and thou wilt hate that which caused his death. Love him, and thou will be made more like him.” — Richard Baxter

- f. Rather than this moment being weakness, behold the strength that Jesus has to keep His power restrained for us.
 - i. He could have saved himself here (Matt 26:53) by crying out to His Father for deliverance
 - ii. It was strength that kept him from unleashing hell in retribution for such injustice, not weakness.
 - iii. This strength to endure injustice, to show mercy when justice cries out to be met with retribution, to trust the Father’s plan more than to love his own life, will burst forth from the tomb in glorious power

2. *Counterfeit Investigators:* Another way to respond to Jesus.

- a. The Sanhedrin in Jerusalem was the highest indigenous court in the land
 - i. There were 71 members of the Sanhedrin, made up of priests and scholars (scribes) of the law
 1. The basis of this court comes from Numbers 11:16, whereby by Moses was told by the LORD to gather 70 elders and meet him at the mountain so that Moses did not have to bear the responsibility of leading Israel alone
 2. Thus, the 70 elders plus the high priest made up the 71 members of the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem
 - ii. Many towns had a type of "sanhedrin" to adjudicate major cases, but only the Jerusalem court was given the authority by the Romans to try death sentence cases.
 - iii. Even with this authority, the Sanhedrin had to get the Roman procurator's approval to put someone to death (Josephus, Antiquities)
- b. The group awaited until daytime to try Jesus, because it was illegal to make judgment at night
 - i. We are told, however, that they did question him, which was illegal
 - ii. They also didn’t wait long, “When day broke...”
- c. Their investigation was counterfeit because they weren’t really looking for the truth
 - i. They didn’t call any witnesses from among the 12, or the lame man who could walk, or the leper, etc.
 - ii. Counterfeit investigators appear to be seeking the truth, investigating truth claims, but really they qualify their investigations with exclusive witnesses and pre-selected conclusions
 1. Note the High Priest’s claim, “We don’t need any more witnesses!”
 2. They didn’t investigate his claims, only whether or not he made the claims, and this is evidence by the fact that both Pilate and Herod find him to be unworthy of a death sentence according to the evidence

3. Some people don't care about evidence – they only accept what fits their paradigm
- iii. There are many ways in which people approach the question, "Who is Jesus?"
 1. There are those who genuinely want to see what Jesus claimed, taught, and did
 - a. Jesus engaged these people with the truth
 2. There are those who want to grab some contextual saying or claim of Jesus in order to dismiss him, or at least to dismiss the claims that are offensive and costly
 3. This intellectual arrogance is what the Sanhedrin had entered into, judging Jesus' claims not by the evidence, but by their own judgment and their own wisdom
 4. How are you approaching this question today? Will you believe what he claims about himself, or will you consider yourself a better judge of the human heart, the condition of the world, and the character of God?
 - a. Tread lightly when investigating Jesus and His Word, for He is open to genuine investigation, but counterfeit investigations attain nothing
- d. See how Jesus responds to Counterfeit Investigators
 - i. He doesn't evangelize them – He questions their motives and willingness to believe
 1. "You wouldn't believe me, so I will not tell you."
 2. When we are faced with counterfeit investigators, defending truth claims will not convince them.
 - a. This is different than giving a defense, a reasonable account and conclusion, to those with genuine investigative questions.
 - i. In fact, Peter tells the church to always honor Jesus as Lord in our hearts and by doing so to always be prepared to give a defense for the hope that is in you..(1 Pet 3:15-16)
 - ii. Thus, the work of apologetics, or defending reasonably the veracity of the gospel, is a proper work for the Christian
 - b. But entering into debates with those who aren't asking genuine questions, in order to understand, but rather whose prejudiced purpose is to demean and destroy you, is unfruitful and worthless
 - i. You are never admonished to convince anyone!
 - ii. In fact, the Holy Spirit is the only one who can regenerate a heart to believe the gospel and be added to the Church, so don't fret if you are rejected or the gospel is rejected by some.
 - iii. Reveal the claims of Jesus and leave it there – the Holy Spirit sinks the seed
 3. This is condemnatory language – dangerous proclamation that their arrogance is damning them because they are rejecting the promised Messiah

3. People Reject Jesus for Three Specific Claims

- a. Note that Jesus makes the leadership admit that they understand what he claimed about himself
 - i. See how Jesus keeps saying, "You say so."
 - ii. What he is doing is making it very clear that they are not confused about what and who He is claiming to be.
 - iii. Their rejection is not due to any confusion, but rather outright denial, and he is forcing them to take responsibility for that.
- b. Christ – Messiah – the promised King & holy Redeemer who comes to make all things new
 - i. Luke's gospel has left no doubt that Jesus is the Christ (Messiah), used 25 times
 1. Birth: "Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a savior who is Christ, the Lord"

2. Ministry over demons: “You are the Son of God!’ And he wouldn’t allow them to speak because they knew that He was the Christ.”
3. Peter: “You are the Christ of God.”
- ii. Yet, in Jesus’ day the interpretation of what the Christ was to do consisted of overthrowing Rome and setting up an earthly kingdom
 1. Thus, claiming to be the Christ was to claim to be a warrior-king who would overthrow Rome would get you killed
 2. They knew this and they wanted Jesus killed, not to believe that he truly was the Christ – they already denied that
 3. Again, even though they are rejecting Him as the Christ, in their ignorance and arrogance they are fulfilling what the Christ truly came to do – to die a vicarious atonement to set his people free from the oppression of sin and death, not Rome
- c. Son of God – the divine person who comes from heaven according to Daniel 7:13-14, the “Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven” who was given an eternal kingdom and dominion over all things
 - i. What is interesting here is that Jesus is not answering a question with this statement, which means that he wants this claim to be known boldly
 - ii. They recognize this quotation from Daniel as alluding to a divine figure from the presence of the Ancient of Days
 - iii. “coming on the clouds of heaven” indicating a heavenly origin though a “son of Man”
 - iv. This one was the receiver of the eternal kingdom of God who stands before God, seated at His right hand of Power (Psalm 110)
 - v. See how the Sanhedrin understand this title to be divine as they ask, “So, you claim to be the Son of God?!”
- d. King – the Christ and the “Son of Man” from Daniel 7 and Psalm 110 receives a kingdom from God that is eternal
 - i. Jesus uses the phrase, “You say that I am.”
 - ii. It is the “I am” which claims to be the Messiah and a divine one at that, and this is particularly troubling to the Sanhedrin, bringing charges of blasphemy towards God
 - iii. Thus you see that Jesus didn’t want to be mistaken for a mere earthly king to sit on an earthly kingdom amongst other earthly kings
 - iv. His kingship is absolutely superior, unique, and divine who would build and rule over the new heavens and new earth for all eternity
 1. Thus, “my kingdom is not of this world” to Pilate (John 18:36)

We are not called to convince anyone into faith in Jesus Christ, we are only called to testify to His word and to His works. You see, we behold the masterful control which Jesus displayed in these moments. He was not executed for charges against him that were false! He was not a victim of mistaken men or accusations. He IS the prophetic word of God! He IS the Christ! He IS the Son of Man! He IS the Son of God! He is the King! He was executed because it IS these things, and He, by His words and actions, made sure that everyone knew it, from the Temple guards, to the highest Jewish court, to the Roman procurator, and to the puppet King Herod.

We didn’t reject God because we didn’t understand who He was (Romans 1), we rejected God because we didn’t *want* God as he is. And people don’t reject Jesus because they don’t understand who He is, they reject Jesus because they do not *want* Him to be who He is.

To the genuine investigator, we prepare an answer for our hope. To the counterfeit investigator, we bear up the mockery, the false scrutiny, the dismissals, with patient mercy; For, we know that the Father must draw a person to believe in Christ, the Spirit must regenerate a heart to see Him and receive Him as Savior and King, and that we simply testify as fools to the world but beloved by Jesus.