

Luke 22: 63-71; Isaiah 53:1-9; The Confession of Truth I. The Abuse Received II. The Identity Revealed
Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who are you? I mean, how do you see yourself- in what ways do you introduce yourself to others? Well- my name is Nick Alons- I am a Christian, a husband, a father, a son, a brother and a Pastor. That is how I identify myself- and how people see me. Today we find the identity of Jesus Christ- in that Jesus gives a true confession in the midst of this sham trial. There is a contrast here between Peter of last week and Jesus- where Peter denies the truth in fear, Jesus speaks the truth with boldness. Peter covered and concealed his identity- while Jesus proclaims His identity by speaking clearly. So today we consider the question- who is this man on trial? We see this theme: Jesus Christ reveals His identity in His true confession before His enemies.

I. The Abuse Received

In our first point we consider the abuse that Jesus received at the hands of His enemies- here in v. 63 and following. Remember that Jesus could not be officially charged and examined before daybreak- so they hold Jesus in their custody until the morning breaks. But it is not enough to hold an innocent man without grounds- it is not sufficient for these men to imprison this healer and teacher without being charged. No, they immediately got to work abusing him. Now remember that we are still in the realm of Jewish Law at this point. Jesus is being held in the courtyard of the High Priest Caiaphas. So these soldiers would be the soldiers who were appointed and paid for by the religious leaders. They were the Sanhedrin's thugs- they were not Roman soldiers- these were the biological descendants of Abraham- the kinsman of Jesus Himself. And they begin in v. 63 by mocking Jesus. Now the way in which they mocked Him is clarified in the next verse- as 64 reads- they blindfolded Him and told him to prophesy. Now to mock a person is to make fun of them- to ridicule or deride them. To make sport of them- to jeer or sneer. But here the focus of this ridicule is on the office of prophet. Was Jesus a prophet- was He someone who knew the future or who was attuned to the Word and will of God? To test this, these soldiers covered the eyes of Jesus- and proceeded to hit him with their open hands. As a test to see if

Jesus could identify those who hit him. It is sort of like the game kids play like Marko- Polo- where they blindfold someone and everyone else tries to disguise their location or their identity. But this is a cruel game here- these soldiers are playing with Jesus. Who hit you- tell us the name of the one who slapped you and we will believe you! Added to this, they beat him as v. 63 continues. This beating was done with either the fist, a stick or even with a whip. The word to beat here indicated the breaking of skin- so this could be a reference to a whipping of some sort or even a striking with a rod. They continue to abuse a man who was bound- unable to block these blows. Now remember again- Jesus has not been charged with anything- He has not been convicted of any crime! In today's language we would call this Police Brutality and it would be a cause for the case to be thrown out. The charges dismissed because the soldiers were beating him- and worse. But the physical abuse continues. Added to this physical abuse, Jesus also suffers their verbal attacks. Words like swords pierce him threw- as v. 65 states- they said many other things against him. They abused him with their words. Of note, we find that they blasphemed him. Or they were blaspheming against him. To blaspheme is to speak contemptuous- to undermine the reverence that is do to God or to sacred things. To treat holy things as common and debased. It is instructive to note that in Mt. 26, these accusers say that Jesus should be killed because He blasphemed! The very sin that they use as grounds to kill Jesus- they now themselves commit! Now how do they blaspheme against Jesus? Well, remember who Jesus is and what He has done! Instead of praising Him- they curse him. They curse His name in the name of God! They give him an evil name- or say that He has done evil things. By the power of Beelzebub, he is able to cast our demons they said back in Luke 11. They make Jesus out to be the son of Satan- and not the Son of God! They take it upon themselves to curse the Son of God in the name of God! Such is the rebellion of these men! They gave Jesus an evil name- and made the Holy One into something common and despised. All in all, they refused to listen to Him- hardening their hearts. Any question they asked was asked in deceit! They already made up their minds to kill- to crucify this man- now they only needed to come up with charges

to fit their scheme. As Jesus knowingly states in v. 67- you will not believe. They say- tell us who you are in v. 67- not that they might learn, listen and believe- but only to give them grounds to kill Him. They were baiting Him- trying to get Jesus to make some claim or statement so that they could have their way. If Jesus would only claim to be king- then this mob could take their case to the Romans- for Jesus would make himself king in the place of Caesar their claim would be. But Jesus knows their intent- He knows their plan- and He sees into their heart. Isaiah 53 will be fulfilled. As a sheep is silent before its shearers, Jesus will not raise His voice. He will be led like a lamb to the slaughter. A man of sorrows- despised and rejected. Wounded, oppressed and afflicted. All alone he faces his accusers- none stand with him – none to defend His cause. He will be rejected by men- despised by the people he came to save! But in this suffering, He also reveals His identity as well!

II. The Identity Revealed

Children, do you always speak the truth? For example, do you confess the truth when you know that truth will get you into trouble? If you know that speaking truthfully will likely lead to your being punished because you have done something wrong- do you still speak the truth? Or do we tend to smudge the truth- twisting it to make ourselves look better? Well, Peter from last week did not speak the truth because he was afraid. Speaking the truth could have led to his suffering. But Jesus must always speak the truth- and by speaking the truth we find Him declaring His identity! And praise God- when we know the truth, this truth is what sets us free! By this suffering He is making it clear! Here is the suffering servant of Isaiah 53! Coming with gentleness- humble and lowly. Willing to suffer for His people- willing to take the cup of wrath- willing to be beaten and abused for the sake of His own. But do not let His humility hide His glory. For He is the Christ as v. 67 states. Although the council will ask- are you the Christ- Jesus will not deny it! Rather, He points to their unbelief! But do not miss the point- He is the Christ! He is the anointed one- the Messiah! He is the Perfect Prophet, Priest and King! He knows whose hands were laid upon Him- but His wisdom is not in the service of some parlor tricks! He will not

forsake His calling- nor will He use His power to get out of this situation! Here again Satan is tempting Him- if you are the Son of God throw yourself down- if you the Christ prophesy for us- if you are the Christ come down from the cross and then we will believe! Satan is still tempting- trying to get Jesus to forsake His calling and deny the cup of suffering- but He will not! His love is too deep- His affection too strong to give up now! Yes, He is the Christ- He is the King who will one day sit at the right hand of the Father as v. 69 concludes. But the path to glory leads through Calvary- the way to the crown comes through the cross! So Jesus remains the steadfast Priest- the final sacrifice will be offered- the perfect Lamb's blood will be shed! He is also the Son of Man as v. 69 says- from now on the Son of Man will be seated in glory. To understand this title- the Son of Man- lets read from Daniel 7:13-14. To call Himself the Son of Man- that you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of God- is a claim to His power and authority. In this name we see His dominion. The Son of Man comes in the clouds and approaches the Ancient of Days- to Him is a kingdom, dominion and glory- that all people should serve Him. In this Jesus is taking up the concept of His right of rule- and His reigning over all. He will conquer over all- defeating every foe. And this Son of Man you will see when He comes on the clouds to judge the living and the dead! In other words, one day you will see me when I return as the judge of all the earth. It is ironic, isn't it! That the One who will judge all the earth is here on trial- that sinful man would take it upon himself to try and even condemn the Son of Man who rules over all with glory! This leads the all to say in v. 70; are you saying that you are the Son of God? The rulers knew of the connection between the Son of Man and the Son of God- and they asked for Jesus to respond. Are you then the Son of God? Jesus says- you have said so. In referring to Himself as the Son of God- Jesus is now giving them the proof they were looking for- Jesus will not lie to save Himself. To be the Son of God- Jesus was making Himself equal to the Father. This enabled them to charge Jesus with blasphemy- because in their eyes a man was making himself equal to God. Now understand that this would be a true charge- if Jesus was not in fact the Son of God being equal to the Father. But they never ever considered the proof- they

were looking for a reason to crucify Him- and now they had it! They never considered- that this may in fact be the Son of God! So Jesus accepts the designation as the Son of God- the 2nd person of the Trinity. As Gal. 4:4 states, in the fullness of time, God send forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, to redeem those under the Law. So Jesus was the Son of God- sent by the Father to this fallen world to save those born in bondage and sin. But listen to the rest of Gal. 4:5- He was sent so that we might receive the adoption as sons. So Jesus, the Only, begotten Son of God was sent to make us adopted sons and daughters of God! Being a child is not just a biological issue, it is an identity! Because Jesus the Son of God came, suffered and died for us, we now might receive the right to be called sons and daughters of God as well! So even during this time of intense persecution, beating, rejection and cursing; Jesus remains faithful and true- revealing who He is to all who will listen.

To conclude, the denial by Peter and the confession of Jesus is easily seen when we compare these two events. Peter was afraid and he denied the truth! Jesus could not and would not deny Himself- because He remains faithful as we read last week from II Tim. 2. As our theme states, Jesus Christ reveals His identity in His true confession before His enemies. So Jesus begins to drink from the cup of God's wrath- treated as a blasphemer when he speaks the truth. He comes as the suffering servant- who was beaten so that we might be blessed- by His stripes we are healed! Or as Mark 10:45 puts it, the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, to give His life as a ransom for many.