

Message #114

Luke 22:63-65

How do you treat a man before you execute him?

How do you let the worst criminals in the world spend their final hours?

We can actually answer that question today because we have logs and records that are kept that actually chronicle the final hours of a condemned criminal. In fact, we actually have a precise record of the final 12 hours of the life of one of the worst serial killers—Ted Bundy.

1) The night before his execution, he was allowed to call a press conference.

All of the major networks sent crews to Stark, Florida, only to discover that Bundy decided to cancel the conference.

2) The night before his execution he was given a pre-execution eve meal (not his final meal).

His choice was a burrito, rice and a salad.

3) The night before his execution, he was allowed to give two interviews to James Dobson from Focus on the Family.

Dobson had his first interview early in the evening and then came out and talked to reporters and then he went back in for a second interview.

4) After Dobson had talked with Bundy, James Boone, his wife's Methodist minister was allowed to visit him.

5) After Boone was done, Bundy was visited by State Attorney John Tanner, his wife Marsha, and Fred Lawrence, a Methodist minister. They read the Bible and prayed together until about 1 AM.

6) From 1 AM to 5AM, Bundy was all alone in his cell. The cell was 14 feet long by 9 feet wide.

7) At 5 AM he was given a choice of a final meal. He chose steak-eggs, hash browns and coffee. He did not end up eating the meal.

8) Shortly after the meal, his head and right leg were carefully and completely shaved.

9) He was given fresh, clean clothes of loose blue prison pants and a light blue shirt.

10) At about 6:30 AM, two guards were shackled to him and gently led him to the death chamber.

11) He was taken into the chamber and carefully and politely seated in the electric chair.

12) He was asked if he had any last words - "I'd like to give my love to my family and friends."

13) Just before 7 AM on Monday, January 24, 1989, the 42-year-old man who has been estimated to have killed 40 young ladies was executed in Florida.

The American Civil Liberties Union did everything they could to stop the execution, but even they had a hard time trying to defend Ted Bundy.

That is the way one of the most vicious killers and murderers in history was treated just before he was executed.

Now let's turn back the clock a bit. How do you treat Jesus Christ before you execute Him? He hasn't committed any crime. He has not ever done one thing wrong in His life. He does not even deserve to die. His entire life has been given to helping people and saving people, not hurting people and destroying them. So how do you treat Jesus in His final hours?

Fortunately we can answer that question for you because it is carefully chronicled for us in the Word of God. We have a factual account of His final hours:

- 1) He did not get to call a press conference.
- 2) He did not get to choose a final, nice meal.
- 3) He did not get to spend any time praying with spiritual people who cared about him.
- 4) He was not treated kindly or gently by anyone.
- 5) No civil liberties group tried to stop His execution.
- 6) He was betrayed by Judas.
- 7) He was abandoned by His own disciples.
- 8) He was disowned by Peter.

Here is the sad reality of this—Ted Bundy was treated a whole lot better in his final hours than Jesus Christ.

What we see here in these verses Luke researches and writes is this:

IN THE FINAL HOURS OF CHRIST'S LIFE, HE ALLOWED HIMSELF TO BE BRUTALLY MISTREATED BY EVERYONE SO HE COULD SAVE US FROM OUR SINS.

No one is coming to His rescue. There was no one who came to His defense. There was no one who was kind to Him. There was no protest group to rise up and defend Him. He was forced to endure the type of treatment that not even a dying animal would have to endure. He went through His trials all alone. There was no one to defend Him. He suffered and He died alone.

The thing that is so staggering about this is that He had the power to get out of this at any moment. He did not have to file some stay of execution lawsuit. He could have executed everyone right then and there.

Yet, He willingly allowed Himself to be brutalized, mocked and mistreated by godless, spiritual idiots, who would care more about Barabbas or a Bundy than they would care about Jesus.

We do not want to miss any of this. So we want to approach this by asking and answering three questions:

QUESTION #1 – When did this brutality against Jesus Christ occur?

In Christ's final hours, Jesus Christ faced 6 trials: **three before Jewish officials and three before Roman officials.**

The three Jewish religious trials included:

- 1) A trial before Annas (Caiaphas' father-in-law) - John 18:12-14
- 2) A trial before Caiaphas - Matt. 26:57-68
- 3) A trial before the Sanhedrin - Matt. 27:1-2; Luke 22:66-71

The three Roman civil trials included:

- 1) A trial before Pilate - John 18:28-38
- 2) A trial before Herod - Luke 23:6-12
- 3) A second trial before Pilate - John 18:39-19:6

Luke records two of the three Jewish trials, lumping the High Priests (Annas & Caiaphas) into one (Luke 22:54-65) and Luke records all three of the Roman trials. At every one of these trials Jesus Christ was mocked, manhandled and mistreated.

As we examine this text, we conclude that the brutality here in Luke occurred after Christ's appearance before Caiaphas (Matt. 26:57, 67-68) and before His appearance before the Sanhedrin (Luke 22:66).

These trials and events occurred in the early morning hours while it was dark, just before dawn. There were not too many things that could keep people up all night, but beating up Jesus Christ was one of the things that would.

None of these people would stay up all night to pray, but they would stay up all night to mistreat the Son of God.

Let's face it; people will stay up all night to do things ungodly but not godly. People will not stay up late to pray, but they will to party. People will not stay up late to be involved in something spiritual, but they will to be involved in something sinful. People will not stay up late to read their Bible, but they will to beat up the Lord. People will stay out all night to do godless things, but not get up early to come to Church. **This brutality occurred in the dark of the night and it occurred all through the night.**

QUESTION #2 – What was the brutality committed against Jesus Christ?

The description of the brutality found in this one episode is one of the most graphic in all of the Bible. These were godless captors doing horrible things to Jesus Christ. These things took place in a supposed court room setting. There are eight brutal, detestable actions taken against Jesus Christ:

Detestable Action #1 - They held Jesus Christ. **22:63a**

The text says “the men were holding Jesus.” The article “the” that precedes the noun men means these were specific men, they were the guards. They were most likely the temple guards. Now the responsibility of guards is protection. Supposedly when it comes to some court case, the guard’s job is to uphold justice and to protect the prisoner and see to it that he gets a fair trial. Not these guards.

These men were “holding Jesus.” The participle “holding” means they were pressing Him and violently constraining Him from every side (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 428). They not only have Him in custody, they are actually holding Him in such a way that it hurts Him.

This describes a constraining that causes great suffering. The present tense indicates they were continually holding Him in this way. They were roughly man-handling Jesus.

The men doing this were doing this in such a way that they were continually hurting Jesus Christ. You could not treat the worst criminal on this earth this way and get away with it.

Detestable Action #2 - They mocked Jesus Christ. **22:63b**

This word means they continued to scoff at Jesus Christ. They continually ridiculed Him, as if this were some game. They were actually laughing at Him and making a joke out of Him.

Detestable Action #3 - They beat Jesus Christ. **22:63c**

The word “beat” means they thrashed Him. The present tense of the participle means this was a continual beating and a flaying that would have actually removed the skin. This is the same word Dr. Luke uses in Luke 12:47-48 that describes brutal whipping and lashing.

We know from Isaiah 50:6 that Jesus was brutally beaten in His back. He was standing there like a punching bag for all who wanted to beat Him.

Detestable Action #4 - They blindfolded Jesus Christ. **22:64a**

The word “blind fold” means they put a cover over His face so He could not see. This made things more fun for these evil, godless men. They could beat Him and punch Him and spit on Him and with Him held and blindfolded, they figured He was at their total mercy.

What these men did not know is that Jesus knew every one of them and saw every one of them and every one of these men will face Him at the Great White Throne Judgment and they will be seen to be the godless wimps and cowards they are when He throws them into the eternal lake of fire.

Detestable Action #5 - They hit Jesus Christ. **22:64c**

The word “hit” is a different word than “beat” in verse 63. This word has to do with specifically striking or punching with a hand or fist.

These ruthless evil captors were literally punching Jesus Christ. He was their punching bag and they were punching Him in the head (John 18:22).

This was some fun for these people. They bind a person, hold a person, blindfold a person and then punch Him. This is happening in the court room.

Detestable Action #6 - They questioned Jesus Christ. **22:64b**

The game they were playing was “name the puncher.” They are saying give us a prophesy of who it is that is hitting you. They obviously knew something about this as being prophetic. I don’t think this is a coincidence.

Playing this kind of game with Jesus Christ is dangerous and in fact is damning. Play games with Jesus Christ and you will end up in hell.

Detestable Action #7 - They said many things against Jesus Christ. **22:65a**

Detestable Action #8 - They blasphemed Jesus Christ. **22:65b**

Not only did they physically abuse Jesus Christ, they verbally abused Him. They were speaking lightly of Him, they were speaking impiously and profanely against Him. These men were using His name in vain. They were blaspheming Him.

Now what in the world had Jesus Christ done to deserve this?

- 1) He gave sight to blind people - 7:21; 18:35-43
- 2) He healed lame people - 5:17-26
- 3) He cleansed lepers - 5:12-16; 17:11-19
- 4) He raised the dead - 7:11-17; 8:40-56
- 5) He preached the good news - 6:20
- 6) He forgave sin - 6:20

These are His crimes. The thing that brought all of this on was that He told the truth of God. When you stand for God’s truth in this world, you will be hated and mistreated in this world.

That happened to Peter and John (Acts 4). That happened to the Apostles (Acts 5:17-29). That happened to Steven (Acts 7). That happened to Paul (Acts 13:44-50; 14:19-20; 16:22-23; 17:5-15; 21:32; 23:2).

Those who tell the truth of God typically do not win popularity contests.

QUESTION #3 – Why did Christ allow this brutality?

Jesus knew every bit of this would happen. In fact, He specifically predicted every bit of this before He stepped one foot into Jerusalem - **Luke 18:31-33**.

Jesus Christ could have crushed all these godless people. He could have put every one of them into hell at that very moment. Why did He allow this?

Two passages of Scripture answer the question:

The prophet Isaiah answered this question in Isaiah 53:4-8 some 700 years before Christ.

The Apostle Peter answered this question in I Peter 2:21-24 some 30 years after Christ.

They both conclude and all of Scripture concludes that **Christ went through all of this for us**. It was our sin. It was our transgression. It was our wickedness. This was the reason Christ endured all of this.

He went through all of this for you and for me.

William Van Doren, an American Biblical scholar of the 1800's was once asked who smote Jesus Christ? Mr. Van Doren said, "I and my sin."

Jesus Christ was brutalized for us. It was our sin that caused this.

He went through all this to save us.

He is not on trial for His sin, but for our sin.

If you will believe on Him you will be forever saved.