

# Christ Buffeted

## Charles Herle (1598-1659)

### Luke 22:63-64

## I. The Text Opened

### A. Luke 22:63-64

1. “And the men that held Jesus mocked him and smote him. And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, ‘Prophesy, who is it that smote thee?’” (Luke 22:63-64).
2. The presence of the shepherd is essential for the safety and stability of the sheep.
  - a) So, it should not surprise us that once the Great Shepherd of the flock of God is smitten, his sheep scatter, (Zech. 13:7).
  - b) This Son of God, who cannot be contained by the heaven of heavens is now condemned by the dust of earth.
  - c) He who causes the devils to tremble, (James 2:19), is now trampled on by the most wicked men alive.
  - d) Christ, who is both light to the Gentiles, (Isa. 49:6), and the glory of his people Israel, is now made their blindfold buffoon, (Luke 22:64), and the object of their reproachful game.

## II. The Doctrine from the Text

### A. Doctrine: There is nothing in Christ they can find to mock him.

1. What can they find to mock him for?
  - a) His words were few; and when he spoke, some of these same men were amazed at the power contained in them, (Luke 4:22, 32), “Never man spoke like this man,” was their own frequent acclamation.
  - b) His gesture was civil and modest, his behavior humble and meek, his person, fairer than the sons of men.
    - (1) *Everything in him challenges admiration and reverence and overtakes the heart with an awful love.*
  - c) The Old Testament nation of Israel, God’s chosen people, were intended by God to be ruled by him alone.
    - (1) *Yet they were not content with this arrangement.*
    - (2) *They complained to God, “make us a king to judge us like all the other nations,” (1 Sam. 8:5, 19-20).*
    - (3) *And in the fullness of time, God fulfilled his promise to his people by sending the King of kings, (Psalm 99).*
    - (4) *Yet how soon they rush to dishonor, abuse, and eventually murder him under the very title which they themselves gave him, the, “king of the Jews,” (John 19:19).*
  - d) All the people were astonished at his wisdom when he first taught the Scriptures in the temple at the age of twelve, (Matt. 7:28).
    - (1) *His power made them wonder, and devils themselves trembled and confessed that he was Lord.*
    - (2) *He healed the blind, the lame, the deaf, the dumb, the sick, and the dead, as well as stilled the winds and seas; these all yielded to his word.*

(3) His bounty was evidenced by so many others when he fed four thousand on one occasion and then five thousand on another from one boy's lunch of bread and fish.

(4) Kings are said to have long arms and broad hands for matters of power and bounty.

(a) But in doing so they cannot help but also have weary shoulders in the continual guidance of those arms and hands to the fullest possible attendance, allegiance, and love.

(b) But when envy, treason, and scorn throws yet more weight on that burden, how can it be borne by any other but God himself?

(c) Such a crown, so wreathed, so lined, not only with the most thoughtful care for his own, but with contemptuous abuse and scorn from his enemies must surely be a burden too great for humanity to support.

e) And yet this One who was despised and rejected of men continually stands ready to move me from my place of lack and need, "Come unto me all of you, come buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price," (Isa. 55:1).

(1) He is able to deliver all who call out in faith to him, for he gave himself as a ransom for the souls of men. As the Good Shepherd, he willingly laid down his life for his sheep (John 10:11).

f) Will men despise and reject him and further hardening their hearts toward him?

(1) Or will they turn from their sin to follow him when they hear his voice calling them?

2. "Prophesy, who is it that smote thee?" (Luke 22:64).

a) Christ's abusers take great pleasure in torturing him, turning their abuse of him into sport.

b) They blindfold him and strike him, one after the other, while taunting him to say with his eyes covered which one of them is hitting him.

c) Do they not see? Do they not understand that in doing so, they attempt to cover the very light of the world, that light, "that came into the world" (John 1:9), to enlighten, warm, and heal every creature?

d) Do they desire to darken the eyes of the One in whom darkness and light are both alike? (Psa. 139:12).

(1) Nothing delights his tormentors more than their dimming of that light and the distortion of that countenance.

(2) How contrary is their behavior to David's prayer in Psalm 80:7, "Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved."

e) The psalmist also urges, "lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord," (Psa. 134:2).

(1) But how vigorously these evil and wicked murderers here raise their hands against God's Christ.

(2) How unusual is the mixture of their bitterness, malice, envy, hatred, and scorn, and how willingly they put aside their bickering differences to come together and smite him with their concoction of punishments.

f) And yet, as horrifying as this scene is – reading that Christ beaten, spit on, mocked, and scourged before a gawking crowd of onlookers – Scripture assures us that this was God's preordained plan.

(1) Acts 2:23 says about Christ, "who being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain..."

### III. The Text Applied

A. Our sin brought him into such a work.

1. While hatred lifts her heaviest hand against him in a cacophony of wrongful violence, and scorn sets her insulting foot on him in a contemptuous disdain, we must remember that it is by these stripes, these scourgings, these beatings, that we are healed, (1 Peter 2:24).
  - a) How painful to watch the pure and spotless Lamb of God being brought to the slaughterhouse of filth and sin to be tortured and murdered.
  - b) But we must remember that it is for our filth and our sin that he goes willingly and silently before his tormentors, for that was God's way.
  - c) That was the only way we could ever be redeemed.
  - d) He did this for us.
2. We are so low, by nature, that we must with the prophet claim kindred-ship with corruption, (Job 25:6).
  - a) Dead in trespasses and sins; a heart leavened with spite and malice.
  - b) And yet how mercifully God sought us in this low and dejected state.
3. We have found how often we have mocked him in hypocrisy when we bow our knees before him but not our heart.
  - a) Have we given him the empty title of "my King," and yet not paid him due tribute?
  - b) Though our sins wound him, may it be that our service would not.
  - c) Let our labor for him be true, from our heart.
  - d) Let our allegiance to his kingdom be rooted in truth and love and not in show; not in the form of godliness, but the power of godliness.
  - e) He so freely gave his "back to the smiters," (Isa. 50:6), will not surely deny it to our burdens.
  - f) Christ gave his cheeks to those who plucked his beard from his face for us, so surely he will not withdraw them when, with David, we shall in faithful reverence say, "kiss the Son lest he be angry."
    - (1) *Christ who set his face as a flint to endure all these scornful scoffs and blows, how should we not show forth the light of that countenance to us, now, as we seek his face.*