

a. Who was responsible for the death of Jesus?

Why did these people want or allow Jesus to be crucified?
bible search (in groups).

- (a) Judas: Matt 26:14-16
 27:3-5

Maybe Judas wanted money, but maybe he hoped Jesus would be forced to act to free the Jews from the Romans if he was arrested. (Judas was probably a Zealot). When he saw Jesus would be killed, he repented.

- (b) The leaders of the Jews: Luke 22:66-71. refer also to Lesson 1 and 4.

They could not see that Jesus was the Messiah because he was different from what they expected - he broke their laws, he forgave sinners etc.

- (c) Pilate: Luke 23:13-25, Mark 15:15, John 19:12.

He knew Jesus was innocent, but he was afraid he might lose his job if there was a riot. He wanted to please the crowd so they wouldn't complain about him to the Emperor.

- (d) Peter: Matt 26:69-75

He was afraid he too would be arrested. He didn't want to be different.

- (e) Disciples: Mark 14:50

They were afraid, ran away from prison or death, and didn't want to be in trouble with the government.

- (f) Soldiers: Matt 27:35

Not concerned - played games while Jesus suffered.

Discussion

Who was responsible for the death of Jesus? (all of them.)
 Would you have acted differently?
 How do we betray Jesus?
 How do our actions affect God?

We all act like these people sometimes.
 The cross shows up our sin. It makes us feel shame. It shows how our sin causes God to suffer.
 But the cross also shows God's great love. He was willing to suffer for us to bring us back to him. When we realize this, we repent and come back to God. We experience God's

13(b)

forgiveness. This is what it means to say "The death of Jesus saves us and brings us back to God".

Activity

Draw a large cross and write on it what the cross means to you.