

Who Killed Jesus Christ ?

Introduction; Few of us like to be blamed for things.

- A. This is especially true concerning things we did not do personally.
 - 1. It may be something our parents or grandparents did. Someone may hold a grudge against us because of our family.
 - 2. It may be something our nation has done or did several generations ago. Some hold grudges against Americans because of things done by America in the past.
 - 3. Many hold grudges against peoples and nations we have had wars against in the past. Others still blame nations for things done in previous generations.
- B. One area where many try to assign blame for something done long ago is Jesus' death.
 - 1. There are many who consider the Jews, '*Christ killers.*' Even though Christ's death took place almost 2000 years ago many still blame the Jews.
 - 2. One of the reasons the Jews have been persecuted over the past 2000 years is the part some Jews played in Jesus' death.
 - 3. No one else would want to be blamed for something so long ago. Yet many do it with the Jews.
- C. Mel Gibson is making a movie about Jesus Christ.
 - 1. His goal is to be accurate according to the New Testament. An issue that has come up is how he will treat the Jews. Will he make them look bad.
 - 2. He has said he will not be judgmental but simply present the facts of the gospel as they are given. People can draw their own conclusions.
 - 3. This is probably best. Present the truth (if he really does it) and let it stand on its own. We must beware of binding our own judgments and opinions on the Bible.
- D. '**Who Killed Jesus**' is a very serious question.
 - 1. It is one that we must all ask. If we ask it honestly and sincerely then we will be surprised at the answer.
 - 2. The answer is not as simple as some make it. We must really get into the issue and also ask, 'Why did He die?'. This will help determine who the real murderer(s) is.
- E. Today, "**Who Really Killed Jesus Christ?**"

I. Men Killed Jesus

- A. Men certainly had a part in Jesus' death.
 - 1. This is some of the facts surrounding Jesus' death. Men convicted Him. Men nailed Him to the cross. And men raised Him up to die on the cross.
 - 2. These of course were men who lived almost 2000 years ago. They were not us. It was '*other*' men who killed Jesus Christ.
- B. Some of the men involved were Jews.
 - 1. Jesus was born a Jew and lived and worked among the Jews all His life. His disciples were Jews and all the early Christians were Jews.
 - 2. *John 18:12 Then the detachment of troops and the captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound Him. 13 And they led Him away to Annas first, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas who was high priest that year. 14 Now it was Caiaphas who advised the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.*
 - 3. John often uses the expression, '*the Jews*' in his gospel to refer to the leaders of the Jews. It does not always refer to the people in general but to the rulers of the people.
 - 4. The rulers of Jewish people conspired to kill Jesus. Some were afraid he would cause a revolution and bring the Romans in to destroy the nation.
 - 5. *Mark 15:9-10 But Pilate answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?" 10 For he knew that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy.*

6. Others of the Jewish leaders were envious of Jesus' popularity. They wanted to kill Him because so many people followed Him. Politicians are still the same today.
7. *Matt 27:20-22 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. 21 The governor answered and said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" They said, "Barabbas!" 22 Pilate said to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said to him, "Let Him be crucified!"*
8. The leaders of the Jews persuaded the people to ask for Barabbas when Pilate tried to free Jesus.
9. There is no question about it. Some of the Jews 2000 years ago had a part in the death of Jesus Christ.

C. The ones who actually killed Jesus were Italians.

1. The Romans were the Italians. Modern Italy is descended from ancient Italy. Romans or Italians nailed Jesus to the cross.
2. *John 19:15-18 But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!" 16 Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus and led Him away. 17 And He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha, 18 where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, one on either side, and Jesus in the center.*
3. Pilate was a Roman. He knew Jesus was innocent but listened to the people —as politicians often do. He commanded Jesus to be crucified.
4. *John 19:10 Then Pilate said to Him, "Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?"*
5. *John 19:23-24 Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece. 24 They said therefore among themselves, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be," that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says: "They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots." Therefore the soldiers did these things.*
6. It was the Italian race that had the power of life and death over Jesus Christ. Pilate could have released Him but did not. It was Romans who nailed Him to the cross and crucified Him.
7. There is no question that some of the Italians had a part in Jesus' death 2000 years ago.

D. Many would stop here. However others were involved in the conspiracy to kill Jesus.

2. Deity Killed Jesus

A. Jesus was the divine Son of God.

1. Jesus did many powerful miracles during His ministry. He even escaped when they tried to kill Him.
2. *Luke 4:28-30 So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, 29 and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff. 30 Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way.*
3. Men alone could not kill Jesus. Someone greater had to have a part in His death.

B. Jehovah God helped kill Jesus.

1. God the Father planned for Jesus to die before He made the worlds. Jesus' death was not a surprise to God or Christ.
2. *John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."*
3. *1 Pet 1:17-20 And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear; 18 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. 20 He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you*

4. Jehovah God rules the world. Nothing happens without His permission. Jesus could not die unless He allowed it. God therefore shares some responsibility for His death. He planned it and allowed it.
 5. If we can stop something and do not, we share responsibility. If a tragedy happens and we knew about it before hand and told no one, we are partly responsible. God not only knew Jesus would die but planned it.
 6. A General may send troops into a situation where He knows they will die. Yet it may be a situation that will determine the outcome of the war. It may be a necessary decision but the General still shares responsibility for the deaths.
 7. *Rom 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*
 8. Jesus' death was necessary —we will consider this more later. Yet Jehovah God sent Him into the world to die. He shares some of the responsibility for His death.
- C. Even Jesus Christ Himself bears some responsibility for His death.
1. If a man can save Himself and does nothing he is partly responsible for what happens to himself. We have already noted Jesus' power to avoid His enemies —Luke 4:28-30.
 2. If we see a truck coming down the road and step in front of it anyway, we are responsible for what happens. Jesus knew early on who would betray Him and how.
 3. *John 6:64 "But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him.*
 4. Jesus had the power to save Himself and could have. Yet He did not.
 5. *Matt 26:52-53 But Jesus said to him, "Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. 53 Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?"*
 6. *Matt 26:39 He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."*
 7. If a commander asks for volunteers for a suicide mission and people volunteer, knowing they will die, they share some of the blame. They could have refused to volunteer or they could have run away. So they willingly offer their lives.
 8. They may do so because they think the sacrifice is worth it. Jesus sacrificed His life. He could have saved it. He had a reason and thought it was worth it. Yet He still share some of the blame for His death.
- D. The Father and Jesus share some of the blame for Jesus' death. However we still have not found the real killer.

3. The Real Killer

A. I killed Jesus Christ.

1. 'When we point one finger at others, we have three pointed back at us' —mother's saying. I can talk all day about the Jews and the Romans and God and Jesus Christ and the part they played in Jesus' death.
2. Yet I have not found the real killer because I have not found the reason for the crime. I have not considered why God sent Jesus to die and why Jesus considered his sacrifice necessary.
3. There is no other lesson so important as this one. Why did God send Jesus to die? Why was Jesus willing to allow others to kill Him?

B. Jesus died because of me.

1. We have seen in our study so far, part of the reason for Jesus' death but have not talked about it. Jesus died for man's sins. He died to save sinners.
2. *John 3:16-17 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."*
3. *Rom 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*
4. God loved us and gave His Own Son so we would not perish. Christ died for us when we had no strength to do anything for ourselves. Jesus Christ loved us and thought His sacrifice for us was worth it.
5. *Rom 5:6 For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.*

6. Paul stated perhaps more plainly than anyone when Jesus came and died. Paul felt very keenly his sins and loved Jesus for dying for him.
7. *1 Tim 1:15 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.*
8. Jesus came into the world to save sinners. He came to die for their sins so they could live and have everlasting life.
9. *1 John 4:9-10 In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*
10. God loved us and showed that love by giving His Son to die on the cruel cross for us. Jesus loves us (John 15:12-15) and willingly died for us. They both share part of the blame for Jesus' death.
11. Yet the real reason for Jesus' death is sin. Jesus died for sinners. If we are a sinner we are the reason Jesus died. He willingly sacrificed Himself that we might be saved.

C. What do we do about God and Jesus' sacrifice?

1. Jesus died to save mankind. Yet many are still lost. They do not take advantage of His great, willing sacrifice. His sacrifice does not automatically save us. We must first believe in Him and accept His sacrifice.
2. *John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:*
3. The first preachers tried to convince men they were sinners. They tried to let them know they had a part in Jesus' death.
4. *Acts 2:36-38 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."*
5. When Peter said, "...whom you crucified..." he may have meant the Jews in general. The ones there on Pentecost probably had nothing personally to do with His death though. Yet they were still guilty of it.
6. Peter later acknowledges that many stood against Jesus and not just the Jews. He accuses Herod, Pilate, the Gentiles and the people of Israel. They were all guilty because they all sinned.
7. *Acts 4:27-28 "For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together 28 to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done."*
8. All men were guilty of the death of Jesus Christ and all needed to be saved. Many on Pentecost understand this and ask what they needed to do to be saved from this great sin.
9. *Acts 2:37-38 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" 38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*
10. As believers they needed to repent and be baptized. These things are what Jesus said to preach before He returned to heaven.
11. *Luke 24:45-47 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. 46 Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, 47 and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."*
12. *Mark 16:15-16 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."*
13. We believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God who died for us. We repent of our sins and turn from them. We turn to Jesus as our Lord and Savior and are baptized into His death, burial and resurrection —Rom 6:3-7.
14. We are raised to walk with Him in a new life. Our sins are washed away (Act 22:16) and we are now children of God who have the hope of heaven.

D. We finally see who really killed Jesus. We did! Now what?

Conclusion; Most of us do not like to be blamed for things.

- A. We especially do not like to be blamed if we do not think we are guilty.
 - 1. Many do not like to accept blame even when they are guilty.
 - 2. We are all guilty of Jesus' death because we are all sinners. We need to do something about it.

- B. If we can help anyone in becoming servants of God, please let us.