

Lesson 7.28 – Crucifixion: Mob Mentality

Topic: Conflict Management

Subtopic: Mob mentality

3E.Reconciliation and Peacemaking

4E. Leadership and Power

Class: Standard IV (Grade 4)

Objectives: **Knowledge:** Students will know that bystanders can make a difference in a conflict. **Attitude:** Students will want to think for themselves even in conflicted situations.

Materials Needed:

Blackboard and Chalk

Exercise book

References: Matthew 26:47-50, 55-58, 69-70; 27:21-25, 35-41

Memory Verse: Romans 5:8

Teacher Activities

Introduction: *Optional Worship.*
Think – Pair- Share.

You are walking home from school with two friends. Your friends get into a fight and start hitting each other. Other students see what is happening and start taking sides and joining in the fighting. Some of them grab sticks and rocks to hit with. What will you do?

Bible Story: The situation I just had you think about is a mob situation. Our story today tells about a mob that attacked Jesus and killed him. .

Have students read the scripture and then discuss it.

Application: When two people or groups are fighting, the bystanders can make an important difference in the outcome. Help students understand their role as bystanders and think about the difference bystanders can make.

Evaluation: Do students understand the important role bystanders play in conflict?

Student Activities

Introduction: Students think about what they would do in a violent situation. They tell and partner and then volunteers share with the class.

Bible Story: Readers read the scriptures from Matthew 26 and 27 (see above.)

Application: Students discuss Jesus' crucifixion and the story of a fight. They consider what role the bystanders play.

Evaluation: Do students journal answers reflect thoughtful consideration of the alternatives?

Extension Activities: *Prayers.* Remind students why Jesus died on the cross. God is just and there must be punishment for sin. We deserved to be put to death because of our sins. Jesus died for us so God could forgive our sins and we could have eternal life. Have a time of prayer and invite students to offer one or two sentence prayers of thanks either outloud or silently. Then let a student close in prayer.

Notes for Teacher

Many times when there is a crowd, people stop thinking and are drawn into the mob mentality. The story of Jesus' crucifixion gives an example of this kind of mob thinking and the terrible consequences it can lead to.

Key Points: Bystanders play an important role in a conflict. It is important to think for yourself and not get drawn into crowd thinking (mob mentality).

Introduction: *Think-Pair-Share.* Read a story to the class (see above) and let them think about it for several minutes. Then have them *Pair* with a partner and discuss their answers. Do not *Share* (sharing with class) yet. Wait until later in the lesson.

Bible Story: Tell students to think about what choices different people had and what they did. Have several Readers divide up the verses and read the scriptures from Matthew 26:47-50, 55-58, 69-70; 27:21-25, 35-41

- Just a short time before this the crowds were cheering for Jesus and flocking to hear him. What has changed? (Now they are demanding his death.)
- How are his disciples—Judas and Peter—reacting to the situation? (Judas betrayed him; Peter denies he knows Jesus)
- Why aren't people in the crowd speaking up for Jesus? (Accept a variety of answers. The people may have been afraid. They may have been frustrated because Jesus didn't do what they had expected Him to do—become an earthly king. They probably are influenced by the crowd around them and were not thinking for themselves.)

Application: When there is a crowd of people doing something, it is easy to get caught up in the actions of a few people and let the leaders tell everyone else what to do. This is sometimes called "*mob mentality*". In this case the "mob" is a large, unruly crowd. *Bystanders* are those who are observing something without actually getting involved. However, Bystanders sometimes do get involved and start doing what those around them are doing without thinking for themselves.

They get caught up in the "mob mentality" or the mob way of thinking.

- Who were the leaders in the story about Jesus? (the chief priests, the elders, Pilate)
- Who were the *bystanders* (the crowd, the disciples)
- How did the crowd make things worse? (bringing clubs and demanding Jesus' death, making fun of him)
- How do you think the disciples felt? (confused, afraid)

Let's go back to the story at the beginning.

- In the story, what was your role? (bystander)

- How were bystanders making the situation worse? (the other students who came along started fighting) Point out that many of these students wouldn't even know what the fight is about. They just jumped in. Others might favor one student over the other and get involved because they like a fight. Many of them are not thinking about the consequences; they are being influenced by the crowd. This is *mob mentality*.)
- What can you or any other bystander do? (Let students share their ideas. *Some possible answers*. When it was just your two friends, you might have tried to break it up or get them to talk about the problem. When more students get involved you might try to get some of the other bystanders to help you stop them, go get help or start calling for the police which might get them to stop; remind them of the consequences “we could be arrested” or “we could be suspended from school”; try to stop other friends from getting involved. If there are many bystanders they can act together to stop a fight.)
- It is important that you keep thinking of possibilities and don't get drawn into the fight or caught up in the *mob mentality*. It is important to think about the danger as well as what you can do to stop the fight. If the situation is becoming very dangerous you may have to leave and try to get people to come help.
- Important things to remember:
 - Bystanders should not take sides.
 - Bystanders must keep thinking for themselves and not just do what others say to do.

Another situation for small group or class discussion. This situation involves a group of girls. Two popular girls decide they don't like a girl named Diana. They start talking to their other friends and tell them to ignore Diana. They even make fun of Diana and call her names.

- Who are the bystanders?
- What can they do?
- What would you do?

Journal. Have each student choose one of the two situations—the fight or the girls picking on Diana—and tell what they would do if they were one of the bystanders. Also tell why they chose that option.

NOTE: This lesson was inspired by a lesson titled *Mob Mentality and the Bystander* by Kathryn Jones, North Reading Public Schools, May 30, 2009, 8th grade United States and World History retrieved July 10, 2010 from gse.uml.edu/rtah/lessons