

BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

We're in... Unit 12: God's People Live for Him

Unit 12 Big Question and Answer and Song:

"How Should God's People Live?

They Should Live Like Jesus!" *PFI NIV Songs 12, Tracks 3,4*

Unit 1 Bible Verse and Song: Ephesians 5:1-2

"Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God."

PFI NIV Songs 12, Track 5

BIBLE TRUTH

We're learning... Bible Truth 9:

God's People Think about Him

God made our bodies with daily needs. Each day our bodies need food, exercise, and sleep. Our bodies stay strong when we take care of them each day. God made our hearts with daily needs, too. God made us to need time with Him each day to stay close to Him, and to grow in knowing and loving Him. God's people know this. They try to take special time out each day to pray to God and read God's Word, the Bible. Through the rest of the day, they keep thinking about Him and how they can best please Him in whatever they are doing. Sometimes God's people find it hard to spend time with God each day. Sometimes it is because they get very busy, or because they are lazy, or they just don't feel like spending time with Him. They ask God to help them spend time with Him and to think about Him each day. They know that no matter how they feel or how busy they are, it is still very important to keep thinking about God and keep spending time with Him. They know that God uses the time they spend with Him to strengthen their faith in Him, their love for Him and their cheerful obedience to Him.

BIBLE VERSE

How do I know this is true? The Bible tells me so!

Bible Truth 9 Bible Verse: Psalm 63:3-6

"Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you. I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands. My soul will be satisfied as with the richest of foods; with singing lips my mouth will praise you. On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night."

CASE STORY

Our story is called:

The Case of the Sneakiest Sneaker.

As you listen to the story, see if you can figure out:

1. Who was the sneakiest sneaker?
2. How did God use his sneakiness to help others think about God?

This story is not in the Bible. It is a true story about one of God's people who lived in the Sint Pancras, Holland, in the 1930's and 40's.

Young Andy van der Bijl laughed to himself as he hid outside the Whetstra's cottage. Andy was annoyed at how much this godly couple thought and talked about God. He decided to play a mean trick on them to try to make them react in an ungodly way. He had climbed up on their thatched roof and laid a glass pane over the chimney to trap the smoke in the house. Now he waited and watched.

"Help! Smoke! My fresh gingerbread is ruined!!" Mrs. Whetstra soon shrieked as she and her husband ran out of the smoky house.

Mr. Whetstra found the window pane on top of the chimney and guessed who was to blame. He looked for Andy, but never found him. Andy was long gone. If there was one thing Andy was good at, it was sneaking. He could sneak away from all sorts of people and all sorts of places. He was the Sneakiest Sneaker.

And what did Andy want to sneak away from most of all? Any place or any person who had anything to do with God. Andy's family were Christians. They believed in Jesus and wanted to live for God; but, not Andy. He didn't want to think about God at all. Whenever God was brought up, he tried to sneak away. Even on Sundays, Andy found a way to sneak out of church at the beginning of the service and go wandering around the windmills and canals of his village. Then he sneaked back into church, unnoticed, at the very end of the service.

As Andy grew up, World War II swept through Europe. Adolph Hitler, the German leader sent troops of soldiers into every country in Europe, including Holland. Andy's town, like the rest of Europe, was soon occupied by German soldiers who began to take away freedoms from the Dutch people. "No bikes! No radios! No Jewish people! Only as much food as we say you can have!" the

Germans ordered.

Like most Dutch people, Andy thought this was wrong. He joined the Dutch Underground, a group of people who sneaked around doing everything they could to get rid of the Germans. Andy sneaked messages back and forth between Underground leaders. He sneaked food from the Germans to feed starving Dutch people. He even sneaked up to German army cars and ruined them by pouring sugar into their gas tanks. Andy was great in the Underground. After all, if there was one thing he was good at, it was sneaking.

The war gave Andy lots of chances to sneak for a good cause, but it also hardened his heart towards God even more. Andy hated the suffering he saw and blamed God for it. He wanted to think about God even less than before.

When the war ended, Andy decided to join the Dutch army. He was sent faraway to Bali, an island in the South Pacific, where he was a commando. Andy was trained to crawl through the thick, jungle underground on his belly, armed with knives, guns and hobnailed boots in search of enemy rebels who were trying to overthrow the Dutch government. As the greatest sneaker, Andy soon became the best commando, daring to do what no one else would do.

But there were some things that even Andy couldn't sneak away from. Sometimes the commandos did things they shouldn't do. Sometimes they hurt the village people who weren't fighting them. Andy felt terribly guilty about this. Soon, not only did he not want to think about God, he didn't even want to live anymore. So, instead of sneaking around like the other commandos, Andy put on a bright, yellow hat and would run out in front of the enemy, yelling, "Shoot me if you can!" His enemies happily tried to, but Andy always seem to escape unharmed.

But one day, Andy and his team were surrounded with no place to hide. Andy was shot in the ankle. At the hospital, the doctors said, "You're a lucky young man. We won't have to amputate (cut off) your leg, but you will walk with a limp the rest of your life. We're sending you home to Holland. Your sneaking days are over."

Something else in Andy's life changed while he was in the hospital. Some Christian nurses urged Andy to think about God and Andy began to listen for the first time in his life. On the long, sea voyage home, he began to read the Bible his mother had given him. When he got home, he

went to church. God worked in Andy's heart and he turned from his sins and trusted in Jesus as his Savior. His life was completely changed.

Now, not only did Andy want to think about God and know Him better, but he wanted others to, as well. He began to share with everyone he could about the wonderful good news of Jesus. He got up early each morning for a special time of prayer and Bible reading. "I need to start each day by thinking about God and ask for His help, if I am to do and say what God wants me to today," Andy thought.

The Lord guided Andy to a special work, just right for a great sneaker, like him. The Lord was going to use this gift to help others think about Him. Andy learned about the thousands of Christians in Eastern Europe who were allowed few Bibles and Christian books. Many of them lived in constant fear of harm from the Communist officials who ruled in their countries. The Communist didn't want people to think about God or place their hope in Jesus anymore. They wanted them to think about their Communist ideas and place their hope in their Communist government instead.

"Perhaps their governments won't give them Bibles, but I am a good sneaker. I will find a way to sneak Bibles and Christian books into them," Andy thought.

Andy shared his plan with other Christians and asked for their help. When his old, godly neighbors, the Whetstras, heard his plan, they gave him their old, blue Volkswagen Beetle. Andy filled the little car with Bibles and other small, Christian books that told the good news of Jesus.

Off Andy went. Through Holland, West Germany, Austria, and on towards Eastern Europe. At the border of Yugoslavia, Andy was stopped by border guards. They had orders to search every car entering their country and remove anything not allowed in by their government—including Bibles and Christian books.

As the two guards approached, Andy prayed, "Lord, in my luggage I have Bibles and books for Your people across this border. When You were on earth, You made blind eyes see. Now, I pray, make seeing eyes blind. Don't let the guards see those things You don't want them to see." Andy was a good sneaker, but he knew that he couldn't sneak his way around these guards. The Lord would have to do this sneaking for him.

"What do you have to declare?" the guards questioned.

"Camera, money, wristwatch," Andy answered them.

"Anything else?" they demanded.

"Only little things," Andy replied without lying. After all, the Bibles and the books were little.

"We will search your car," the soldiers told him.

The guards searched the whole car. Everywhere they looked was crammed full of Bibles and Christian books, yet they saw not a one! God had answered Andy's prayers! Their seeing eyes saw nothing! The guards opened the border gate and let Andy and his books right in. The Lord, Andy now knew, was an even better sneaker than he was.

Andy's little, blue Volkswagen Beetle was to sneak Bibles and Christian books across Eastern European borders many more times. Each time, the Lord made the seeing eyes of the border guards blind. Because of this sneakiest sneaker, Christians in Eastern Europe had Bibles and other books to help them think about God and how to live for Him...and to give to others so they might know the good news of Jesus, too.

Brother Andrew—as Andy became known as— began a ministry called Open Doors, International. Even to day, many other people are sent out through this ministry as sneakers to get Bibles to those who wouldn't have them otherwise, so that they can think about God, come to know Him and serve Him.

Our Bible Truth is: God's People Think about Him

Our Bible Verse is: Psalm 63:3-6

"Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you. I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands. My soul will be satisfied as with the richest of foods; with singing lips my mouth will praise you. On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night."

How did Andy find courage to face those border guards each time? By spending special daily time with the Lord, reading His Word, thinking about Him and praying for guidance and courage.

What about you and me? Are we sneakers from God like Andy was? God calls us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior, too. He will forgive our sins. He will make us His dearly loved people, just like He did Andy. And when we become God's people we can know that God will have good plans for us to do..and that as we spend time with Him in His Word and in prayer, He will give us everything we need to do whatever it is He wants us to do.

Draw a picture from the story

SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU

1. Bible Truth Question, True or False:
 God's people try to have a special time in the morning to think about God and read His Word. They try to keep on remembering Him through the day.
Answer: True.

2. Crack the Case Questions:
a. Who was the sneakiest sneaker?
Answer: Some would say Andy was. But perhaps it was the Lord. After all, he could make seeing eyes blind and sneak the Bibles past the border guards.

b. How did God use his sneakiness to help others think about God?
Answer: God used Andy's sneakiness to sneak Bibles and other Christian books past border guards to give them to the Christians in Eastern Europe. These books would help the Christians think about God and tell others the good news of Jesus, too.

3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse:
Psalm 63:3-6
 "Because your ___ is better than life, my lips will glorify you. I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands. My soul will be ___ as with the richest of foods; with singing lips my mouth will praise you. On my bed I ___ you; I think of you through the watches of the night."
Answers: love; satisfied; remember.

BIBLE TRUTH HYMN

Be Thou My Vision
PFI NIV Songs 12, Track 26

Verse 1
 Be Thou my vision,
 O Lord of my heart;
 Naught be all else to me,
 save that Thou art:
 Thou my best thought,
 by day or by night,
 Waking or sleeping,
 Thy presence my light.

*Words: Ancient Irish; tr. Mary E. Byrne
 Music: Traditional Irish Melody; harm. David Evans*

God's people want God to be their vision—the one they think about most of all, the one who is the best thing they can think of. They keep thinking about Him, both in a special time of praying and reading...and all through the rest of the day and night. They think about Him and know He is with them. His presence guides them, like a light in darkness. He lives inside their heart, giving them wisdom and showing them what He's like.

AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY

A=Adoration, C=Confession, T=Thanksgiving, S=Supplication

A God, we praise You being the Changer of Our Lives. And, the Giver and User of All Our Gifts...even sneaking!

C God, we confess that too many times we are like Andy. We look for ways to avoid You instead of think about You. We would rather be doing other things than seeking after You. We need a Savior!

T God, we thank You for seeking after us and helping us to think about You and turn about You. Thank You for sending Jesus to die for people like Andy and us!

S God, work in our hearts. Help us to confess our sins, turn away from them and trust Jesus as our own Savior. Help us to use all the good gifts You give us to do great things for You. Help us to trust You to take care of us, like Andy did.

BIBLE VERSE SONG

Your Love Is Better than Life
PFI NIV Songs 12, Track 27

Because your love is better than life,
 My lips will glorify you.
 I will praise you as long as I live,
 And in your name I will lift up my hands,
 Because your love is better than life,
 Because your love is better than life,
 Because your love is better than life.
 Psalm Sixty-three, three and four.

Words: Psalm 63:3,4 NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2011

These verses remind us that God's people delight to think about Him. They cannot think of anything better than thinking about God and praising Him, whether it is during the day or during the night. This is because they know that He loves them so much and because there is no one more wonderful than God.