

BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

We're in... Unit 6: God, the Just and Merciful

Unit 6 Big Question and Answer and Song:

"How Did Bad Things Come to God's Good World?"
Bad Things Came Through Sin!"

PFI NIV Songs 6, Tracks 3,4

Unit 6 Bible Verse and Song: Romans 5:12

"Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned."

PFI NIV Songs 6, Track 5

BIBLE TRUTH

We're learning... Bible Truth 3:

God Treated the First Sinners with Justice and Mercy

Adam and Eve did not just disobey God once and stop. They had become sinners with sinful hearts that rebelled against God again and again. But sin didn't stop with Adam and Eve. They passed down the consequences of their sin to all their children.

Each and every one of us come from Adam and Eve's family--we are all their children. And because we are their children, we are all born sinners with sinful hearts and with bodies that will suffer and die. And also like Adam and Eve, we all deserve eternal punishment for our sins, too.

Yet God, in His great mercy, always planned to send His Son Jesus to save His sinful people by taking the punishment for their sins upon Himself. Jesus did this when He suffered and died on the cross. On the third day, He rose from the dead, showing He had beaten sin and death.

God promises to forgive all who confess their sins to Him and trust in Jesus as their Savior. He will give them each a new heart, filled with His Holy Spirit--a heart that knows and loves Him more and more. And one day, when they die, they will not receive the eternal punishment they deserve for their sins, but eternal life with God forever. How great is God's mercy through Jesus to sinful people like us!

BIBLE VERSE

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

Bible Truth 3 Bible Verse: Romans 5:17

"For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ."

CASE STORY

Our story is called:

The Case of the Unsinkable Message.

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

1. Who told the unsinkable message? Why did he tell this message even as he sank?
2. What was the unsinkable message? What difference did it make?

This story doesn't take place in Bible times. It takes place in the 1912, beginning in Glasgow, Scotland.

Glasgow was a big city built on beautiful, misty hills, next to the River Clyde. But while the hills and river reflected the beauty of God's creation, the city itself sadly reflected the sin and suffering that came into the world when Adam and Eve rebelled against God, long ago.

Many of the people of Glasgow were miserably poor. Large families were crowded into small, dirty apartments, without even a bathroom. Most men, women, and even children worked long hours, six days a week, in factories which everything from giant ships and train tracks to textiles (fabric and clothes making) and lace. The long hours in terrible conditions paid very little and made many sick.

In their hearts, the people of Glasgow suffered, too. God had created them to find their joy and comfort in Him; but like all humans since Adam and Eve, these people had broken fellowship with Him. Instead of turning to God to help them and save them, they turned to gambling, cussing, prize fighting and getting drunk on beer and whiskey as a way to deal with their sorrows.

Many people didn't even try to help the poor of Glasgow. They looked at their run-down houses and their bad habits and wanted nothing to do with them. "There's no hope for these people! Why should we bother? Nothing can change them," they thought.

But there were some in Glasgow who disagreed, especially a man named John Harper. "Yes," said John, "these poor people live sad and sinful lives, but so have all people, since the time when Adam and Eve rebelled against God. There's no way that we can save them, but God can. He promised Adam and Eve He would send a Savior to crush Satan. His promise was for all who turn from their sins and believe in the LORD Jesus Christ. I'm going to tell these poor people of about Jesus. I'm going to pray to God to save them." John had a heart to do one

thing and to do it to the end. He worked bring people out of lives filled with sin and death to wonderful fellowship with God through Jesus-- including those poor people of Glasgow.

John began to wait by the factory gates for the people at lunchtime. As they ate their bread and butter sandwiches, he told them about Jesus. He went to their shabby houses as well as the places where they drank, gambled and watched prize fighters, and he told them about Jesus there, too. He invited them to come to his church and prayed over every seat, in one by one, that God would fill it on with someone who turn from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior.

God blessed John's efforts. Many people were saved. Their lives were still very hard, but God filled their hearts with joy and peace. They were changed people!

God used John mightily and soon, other churches invited him to speak to them, too. One church in Chicago asked him to come preach for three whole months. John believed the LORD wanted him to go. He booked tickets for him and his little daughter, Nana, to sail to New York on none other than the Titanic, the amazing new ship about to set sail to America for the first time.

When John and Nana boarded the Titanic, it was more than they imagined. It was the largest man-made, movable object ever built, and the most powerful ship in the world! It was 883 feet high—about as tall as an eleven-story building. It carried over 800 crew and 1200 passengers. Best of all, White Star, the company who owned the ship, claimed that the new, watertight compartments made the ship unsinkable. One crew member even boasted that not even God Himself could sink the ship!

The Titanic wasn't just big and safe; it was elegant as well. The drawing rooms had crystal chandeliers and people dined off of plates of finest china and gold. There were steamy Turkish baths, mechanical camels and horses to ride, beautiful fireplaces in the rooms, and the first swimming pool ever put on a boat, but only the first-class passengers (who paid \$55,000 per ticket!!!) could use them. There were plenty of those very wealthy people on board the Titanic that day. Benjamin Guggenheim, whose money came from iron factories; Molly Brown, the woman who had grown rich from gold mines in Colorado; Mr. Straus, the owner of Macy's department store along with his wife were there. Even Colonel John Jacob Astor, the

richest man in the world had reserved a room.

John and Nana knew they wouldn't get to do the special things reserved for the very rich, but they would get a peak at them. What a parade of mink coats and jewels it was! But as amazing as the Titanic and its rich passengers were, John thought of only one thing: "These people are lost. Riches won't satisfy them any more than the drinking, gambling and prize fighting could satisfy the poor people of Glasgow. Their lives are hopelessly bound up in sin and suffering, too. They need the Savior Jesus. I'm going to spend this trip praying and telling them about Him, that they might be saved.

God answered John's prayers, for it was for that very reason that God wanted John on that boat, as John was to see, late on the fourth night of the voyage.

The fourth night started out like any other night on the Titanic. Up in the elegant drawing rooms, the rich passengers were dining and dancing. And then at eleven p.m., everything changed. The crew spotted a monstrous, 200,000 ton iceberg straight ahead! The iceberg rammed into the ship's side, causing a huge shower of ice shavings on deck. Many enjoyed the near miss; some even reached out to take ice from the iceberg to put in their drinks. They had no idea that the iceberg had sliced a huge hole in the ship.

"There's a huge tear on the hull," the anxious crew told Captain Smith. "Six of the watertight compartments are filling with water. What should we do?"

"Seal them off. We must keep the water from spreading to the rest of the ship," the captain commanded.

But it was no use. By a little after midnight, the captain knew the ship was going down. "Shoot off the flares! Muster the lifeboats! Alert the passengers! The Titanic will sink in just a couple hours!" he ordered them.

As the word spread, the passengers broke out into a panic. Everyone began to scramble for the lifeboats, only to find out that there were only enough boats for a few hundred of the 2000 people aboard the ship. Women and children would be boarded first, it was decided. Any remaining spots would be given to men. The rest of the people would have to find some way to survive on floating wreckage in the freezing water...or go down with the ship. Some men did not like this. One man even dressed up like a woman to try to get on a boat. Others stole boats for themselves.

But what about John and Nana? What did they do as the Titanic began to sink? As soon as the alarm was sounded, John knew what the LORD would have him do. The LORD had not sent him on this journey to preach to lost people in Chicago; He had sent him to preach to lost people on the Titanic, that they might be saved for eternal life.

John kissed his daughter with a heart-breaking goodbye, put her in safe hands on one of the lifeboats, and then went to work sharing the good news of Jesus. As he helped people scrambling to the boats he asked, "Do you know Jesus? Are you saved?"

"No," was answer from most.

"Then believe on the LORD Jesus Christ. And you will be saved. It is not too late!" he urged them.

Soon, all the lifeboats were full. That left more than 1500 people still on board. Many panicked as they faced the thought of dying in the icy waters, but not John. He had a heart to do one thing: tell the good news of Jesus to as many as he could! There was no lifeboat to save them for this life, but there was a Savior who could save them for all eternity! That was even better!

"Believe on the LORD Jesus Christ and you shall be saved! Believe on the LORD Jesus Christ and you shall be saved," he told all who would listen.

Before long, the Titanic's stern tipped high in the sky, and then the mighty ship slid down into the ocean.

Passengers joined hands and leaped into the bitterly cold waters. John was among those in the icy waters. John knew he would not survive long in those freezing waters, but still he didn't panic. He knew he was saved. Soon he would be with Jesus forever. His only thought for those who were about to die and were not saved. Even in the water, John kept on preaching. A man clinging to a piece of wood floated near John. "Man, are you saved?" John called out. "No, I am not," the man replied. "Then believe on the LORD Jesus Christ and you shall be saved!" John urged him.

Before the man could answer, a wave swept him away. Before long, though, another wave swept him near again. John called to him again, "Man are you saved now?" "No, sir. I am not." So again, John urged him once more, "Believe on the LORD Jesus Christ and you shall be saved."

With that last plea upon his lips, the cold overtook him. John's body slipped into the deep and he died, but his spirit went up into the glorious presence of His beloved LORD Jesus Christ, who he had proclaimed even with his

last breath. Little did John know that the man clinging to the wood accepted Jesus.

John had a heart to do one thing and to do it to the end. He labored to bring people out of lives filled with sin and death to wonderful fellowship with God through Jesus--even with his last, dying breath.

The news of the sinking of the Titanic shocked the world. Outside the door of the White Star office crowded anxious friends and family of passengers around two lists posted. On one list was written: "Known to Be Lost." On the other, "Known to Be Saved." Cries of relief or horror went up as the names of loved ones were found on the lists.

John Harper's name appeared on the White Star's "Known to Be Lost" list, for indeed he had been lost to the sea. Many people mourned at the loss of such a wonderful man of God. But there was rejoicing in heaven, as not only John but many others on White Star's lists had believed on the LORD Jesus Christ and were Known to Be Saved from their sins and for eternal life with God.

**Our Bible Truth is: All People Are Born Sinful,
All People Need God's Mercy**

Our Bible Verse is: Romans 5:17

"For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ."

John Harper had a heart to do one thing and to do it to the end. He labored to bring people out of lives filled with sin and death to wonderful fellowship with God through Jesus.

What about you and me? Have we turned from our sins and believed in the LORD Jesus Christ? Have we been saved for eternal life with God? God offers His salvation to all who come to Him. And if we have been saved, what is it that we should have a heart to do and do it to the end? Should it not be to bring people out of lives filled with sin and death to wonderful fellowship with God through Jesus?

Let's praise God for His gracious offer of eternal life to all who have faith in Jesus. Let's ask Him to give us hearts like John Harper, who trusted in Jesus to the end of his life and who made telling others about Jesus the labor of his life.

SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU

1. A Question about the Bible Truth, True or False:

God, in His great mercy, also planned to send Jesus to save sinners, like you and me.

Answer: True!

2. Crack the Case Questions

a. Who told the unsinkable message? What happened to him?

John Harper. He drowned when the Titanic sank.

b. What was the unsinkable message? What difference did it make?

The good news of salvation through faith in Jesus. All those people on the ship were facing death, yet they would receive eternal life if they repented of their sins and believed in Jesus that very night.

3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse: Romans 5:17

“For if, by the trespass of the one ____, death reigned through that one man, how much ____ will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of ____ reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.”

Answers: man; more; righteousness.

BIBLE TRUTH HYMN

Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy

PFI NIV Songs 6, Track 11

Verse 3

Come ye weary, heavy-laden,
Lost and ruined by the Fall;
If you tarry till you’re better,
You will never come at all.

Refrain:

I will arise and go to Jesus,
He will embrace me in His arms.
In the arms of my dear Savior,
O there are ten thousand charms.

Words: Joseph Hart Music: Walker’s Southern Harmony

From Adam and Eve on down to us, we are all are weary and heavy-laden with sin. Try as hard as we might, we can never get rid of our sin on our own. And, we can never make ourselves acceptable to God on our own. But God, in His great mercy, offers all who are ruined by the Fall to find forgiveness of sins and eternal life through Jesus. We don’t have to wait until we are less sinful to come to Jesus. He will take us as we are. And there, we came find not only forgiveness for our sins and rest for our souls, weary with sin. We can find wonderful fellowship with God. And that is better than even ten thousand things that charm us (that we think are delightful.)

AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY

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

A God, we praise You for being our merciful Savior.

C God, we confess that like everyone on that boat, we are sinners who need to repent and believe in Jesus.

T God, we thank You for sending people to tell us the good news of Jesus so we can be saved.

S God, work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

BIBLE VERSE SONG

For If by the Trespass

PFI NIV Songs 6, Track 12

“For if, by the trespass of the one man,
death reigned through one man,
For if, by the trespass of the one man,
death reigned through one man,
Then how much more will those who receive
God’s abundant grace and righteousness
Reign in life, Reign in life,
Through one man, Jesus Christ.”
Romans Five, seventeen.

Words: Romans 5:17, NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2011

Adam and Eve passed on their sinful hearts to their children--all of us! That means that we all are born sinners. How terrible! But God promised to show mercy to all who look in faith to the Savior who would crush Satan’s power. Yes! All who turn from their sins and trust in Jesus are saved from the punishment they deserve from God for their sins. Sin came through one man, Adam. But Jesus, the Son of God and the son of man, gives His grace and perfect righteousness--everything they need to be saved!