

BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

We're in... Unit 7: The Law-Giving God

Unit 7 Big Question and Answer and Song:

"What Are God's Laws Like?

God's Laws Are Perfect!" PFI NIV Songs 7, Tracks 3,4

Unit 7 Bible Verse and Song: Psalm 19:7,9,11

"The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous. They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb. By them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward."

PFI NIV Songs 7, Track 5

BIBLE TRUTH

We're learning... Bible Truth 1:

God's Laws Are Written in the Bible

A law is something we are told to do or not to do by someone in authority over us. God is our Maker and the King over everything. He has authority over all. He has given us all His laws to obey. They show us how to live lives that please Him: lives that show His holiness and are filled with love for Him and for each other.

God gave the Ten Commandments and many other laws through Moses. Some of those laws were special laws God gave to the Israelites to follow until Jesus came. But many of them were laws that God gave to all people, in all places and all times to obey. Later, God gave us more commandments to live by through His prophets, through Jesus and through Jesus' first followers, the apostles.

We should all learn God's laws. They are written in the Bible, God's perfect Word, for us to learn and obey. God's laws are unlike any other rules. They are always perfect and good. They always show us the best, most loving and God-pleasing way to live.

God's laws are perfect, but we are not! We are sinners. No matter how hard we try, we will never keep God's laws perfectly. We can never please God with just our good works--only Jesus could do that. That's why God offers us forgiveness and eternal life through Jesus, when we turn from our sins and trust in Him as our own Savior.

BIBLE VERSE

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

Bible Truth 1 Bible Verse: Deuteronomy 5:1,6-21

"Hear, O Israel, the decrees and laws I declare in your hearing today. Learn them and be sure to follow them...I am the LORD, your God...You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything...You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God...Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy... Honor your father and your mother...You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor. You shall not covet ...anything that belongs to your neighbor."

CASE STORY

Our story is called:

The Case of the Clever, Clothes Cloister.

1. A cloister is a word we use for a place that is hidden away from sight. How was cloth used as a cloister?
2. Who used came up with the idea to use the cloth as a hiding place? What very important thing did it hide? What did God use the hidden things to do?

This story is not in the Bible. It is a true story about God's people who lived in England in the early 1500's.

Tutor William Tyndale and his two students, Harry and Richard Walsh, closed their books. School was over at Sodbury Manor for the day. It was time for dinner. They joined the others and entered the beautiful, oak-paneled dining room and sat down at the big banquet table. Dinner was a grand affair at Sodbury Manor, home of Sir John Walsh. He was a very important knight and very close to the royal family.

Many evenings, Sir John hosted many other powerful and well-educated men and discussed the exciting happenings of their day. They talked about the great explorer Bartholomew Diaz 's discovering Africa to the south and Christopher Columbus's discovering a New World to the west. Vasco Da Gama had sailed all the way around Africa and uncovered the land of India with her delicious spices. Some were beginning to even believe that the world was round, not flat! Copernicus made a powerful telescope and discovered the earth revolved around the sun. And thanks to William Caxton's newly-invented printing press, many could buy books to read about all of these amazing things. Yes, indeed! There was lots for these well-educated men to talk about at dinner!

As only a tutor—a hired teacher for children-- William Tyndale certainly was poorer and younger than most who gathered around Sir John's dinner table. But he was a priest and just as well educated as any of them. He had gone to both Oxford and Cambridge University, the two finest universities in England. He followed the dinner conversation carefully and gave his opinion at time.

William enjoyed discussing these discoveries, but there was other news that was shaking the world that he cared about even more. And in the end, he cared about it so much, that he would die for it. What was this thing he cared so much about? It was salvation --that is, what we must do to be saved from our sins.

Many of the men who joined Sir John for dinner were priests in the Catholic Church. They believed, like most in those days, that the Christians should follow the ideas—called traditions—made up by the Pope, the powerful church leader who lived in Italy. They believed God spoke His will through the Pope and his ideas should be obeyed just like the words in the Bible. One of the ideas—traditions—that the Pope taught was that people had to do certain good works to be saved. And, if people didn't do enough of these good works, he said they could pay money to the Church to help take away some of God's punishment for their sins. The Pope even taught that people could pay money to take away punishment of other people's sins... even dead people's sins! These certainly were ideas not in the Bible!

The Pope also taught that the Bible should only be printed in Latin, a language most people couldn't read. He thought only the church leaders should have Bibles because common people didn't know enough to understand it properly.

William disagreed with these men. He had spent years in university reading the Bible for himself and learned that the Pope's traditions weren't like God's laws at all. He agreed with Martin Luther—a priest from Germany: the Bible says our own good works can't save us and no amount of money could ever buy it for us. Salvation is the free gift of God through faith in Jesus Christ. And, William thought everyone should have the Bible in their own language to read. Why, God gave the Ten Commandments in the language of the Israelites, so they could learn and read it themselves. Jesus and the apostles spoke and wrote in the language of the people of their day, too. Why would God want it to be any different now? William thought.

William was upset. He knew that millions of people were dying in their sins because they believed in the Pope's traditions instead of God's Word. They needed to read God's Word themselves and learn what it really said. Then they could turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior.

William wanted this so badly that he decided to do something about it...right then! He began challenging the priests gathered around the Walshes' dinner table and proving them wrong. How angry these men became!

Then one night came the conversation that was to change William's life. "The common people don't need the

Bible in their own language. It is enough if the priests read it," a church leader named Hampton said.

"But the priests are either too lazy or don't know enough to understand it themselves!" William argued. "Why, right here in our area, half of the priests cannot rightly speak the Ten Commandments!"

But Hampton stood up for the Pope and his decisions. "Better the people have the traditions of the Pope than the commandments of God, I say!" he said.

William could not believe his ears! This man was setting the Pope and his traditions above God and His laws. That was idolatry! "Listen to me," William vowed that night, "This one thing I do! If God spare my life, before many years I will cause a boy that drives the plough out in the field to know more of Scriptures than you know!" Right then and there, William had made a choice. He would leave his easy life as a tutor and translate the Bible into English himself.

No sooner had William started his translation, then he made powerful enemies. Cuthbert Tunstall, the Archbishop of Canterbury (a very important church leader in England), refused to give permission to translate the Bible into English. This meant William could be killed if he kept up his work! Did this stop William? No, it did not. "This one thing I do!" William resolved. "I will not stop until I get the Bible translated into English, even if I die at the stake!" he vowed.

William was forced to England or die. He went to Germany, where Martin Luther lived. He would translate the Bible there, then smuggle it back to England.

At first things went well. By the end of the first year, he had translated all of the New Testament into English and had sent it to the printing press to be copied.

Before long, trouble arose. William looked up from the Greek and Hebrew manuscripts piled on his desk as Roye, his assistant burst into the room. "Sssh! Master Tyndale," said William's friend, carefully locking the door. "We're found out! We must run for our lives," he exclaimed.

"Found out! How? By whom?" William asked.

"Our enemy, John Cochlaeus, overheard some of the printers' men talking about the English Bible. Soldiers are coming to stop the presses, destroy your work and arrest you!" Roye told him. "There is just time for you to escape! Hurry!"

William and Roye quickly gathered up the pages of the English Bible, hid them under their coats, then slipped away down a dark street and out of the city. By morning,

they were well on their way to Worms (pronounced “Vorms”), carrying their heavy but precious burden with them.

In Worms, William found another printer to print his precious English New Testament. At last 6000 were ready to go out. William found cloth merchants who agreed to slip the Bibles into their bundles of cloth bound for England and get them into the hands of the common people. Their dangerous plan worked! People everywhere were reading God’s Word for themselves for the first time! They read God’s laws and knew they were sinners. They read the good news of salvation through faith in Jesus, trusted in Him and were saved!

William was delighted! This was what he hoped for! But Archbishop Tunstall and many others were furious! “This man must be stopped! The people must not read this book!! Gather all of the New Testaments you can and burn them up right outside of St. Paul’s Cathedral in London,” he ordered.

Did this stop William? No, it did not! “This one thing I will do!” was his motto and he would see that the English people had their Bible. He printed more New Testaments and smuggled them in. Then William and his new assistant, Coverdale, began work on the English Old Testament.

William’s enemies weren’t finished either. They hired a man named Henry Philips to make friends with William and then capture him and his English Bible. Philips did his job well. Soon William trusted him and shared with him his dream for the English people to have the whole Bible in English. How important it was for them to have all of God’s laws, all of God’s Word to know and live by!

William soon had given his enemies all the information they needed. They set their final trap and captured him and his English Bible. They destroyed his papers and sentenced William to death. He was hung, then his body burned at the stake.

Even as he died, William was still thinking of the “one thing” he would do. “Lord, open the King of England’s eyes,” he prayed as the flames leapt up around him. William knew that God could change the king’s heart and approve the English Bible.

The Lord answered William’s prayer in just nine short months. Coverdale, his assistant, kept working on the Old Testament until it was completely translated into English. And not long afterwards, King Henry the VIII of England

commanded that the finished English Bible should be printed and read freely throughout the land. Within three years, the King made it law that every church in England make a copy of the English Bible available to its members. And perhaps you have heard of: the King James Bible or even have one? If you want to hear what William’s translation of the Bible sounded like, have someone read some of the King James Bible to you, for it is almost entirely taken from William Tyndale’s original translation.

“This one thing I do,” said William Tyndale, even to his last ounce of strength. With the help of God, that one thing he did!

Our Bible Truth is: God’s Laws Are Written in the Bible

How wonderful it is that we get to hear these Ten Commandments and all of God’s other laws in English, our own language.! Next time you hold an English Bible in your hands or hear the Bible read to you in English, take time to thank God for His brave servant, William Tyndale, who gave his life that you and I might know the wonderful difference between the traditions of the Pope and laws of God. Because of his sacrifice we can read that all of us are lawbreakers, deserving God’s eternal judgment for our sins; yet, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we can receive God’s free gift of salvation. William Tyndale made it the one thing he would do to make this Bible available to people who read and speak English like us. Shouldn’t we make it our one thing to read it?

Let’s praise God for giving us His laws in the Bible and letting us read them in our own language! Let’s ask God to work in our hearts as we read His laws, that we might live holy lives that reflect His own holiness for others to see and to bring glory to His name.

SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU

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

God gave the Ten Commandments through Moses. He gave us more good laws through the prophets, through Jesus and through Jesus' first followers, the apostles.

Answer: True!

2. Crack the Case Questions

a. A cloister is a word we use for a place that is hidden away from sight. How was cloth used as a cloister?

Answer: Bundles of cloth were used to hide copies of the New Testament that were being smuggled into England.

b. Who used came up with the idea to use the cloth as a hiding place? What did God use the hidden things to do?

Answer: William Tyndale. God used these New Testament to give the people of England a Bible they could read and learn themselves.

3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse:

Deuteronomy 5:1,6-21

"Hear, O Israel, the decrees and laws I ___ in your hearing today. Learn them and be sure to ___ them...I am the LORD, your God...You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything...You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God...Observe the ___ day by keeping it holy...Honor your father and your mother...You shall not ___. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor. You shall not ___ ...anything that belongs to your neighbor."

Answers: declare; follow; Sabbath; murder; covet.

AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY

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

A God, we praise You for being completely powerful to complete Your will, even when strong enemies oppose it.

C God, we confess that we have Your laws to read in English, thanks to William Tyndale's work, and they show us that we are lawbreakers. We need a Savior!

T God, we thank You for giving us the Bible to read in English, that we can read it ourselves and know the good news of Jesus.

S God, work in our hearts. Help us to turn away from our sins and trust Jesus as our own Savior. Help us to read and love His Word. Give us courage to do great things for the sake of the gospel, just like He did in William Tyndale.

BIBLE TRUTH HYMN

The God of Abraham Praise

PFI NIV Songs 7, Track 6

Verse 2

His Spirit floweth free,
High surging where it will:
In prophet's word He spoke of old,
He speaketh still.
Established is His law,
And changeless it shall stand,
Deep writ upon the human heart,
On sea or land.

Words: Daniel ben Judah Dayyan, Translated by Newton Mann

Music: Meyer Lyon

God's Holy Spirit works powerfully, doing everything God wants Him to do. Long ago, in the days of the prophets, God's Spirit spoke to them and gave them His words to speak to God's people. The prophets spoke them to the people, but also, they wrote them down in the Bible. Sometimes, God's words were laws He wanted His people to keep. Sometimes they were words of comfort or warning. Other times, they were words about the future. God's Holy Spirit helped the prophets say God's words just right...and He helped them write them down just right. Even now, we can read God's words that the prophets wrote down when we read the Bible. God can use them to "write" His truth deep upon our hearts. That is, He can use them to teach us His ways and how He wants us to live. He can use them to help us to know Him and obey Him.

BIBLE VERSE SONG

Hear, O Israel

PFI NIV Songs 7, Tracks 7,8

Refrain:

Hear, O Israel, the decrees and the laws I declare,
Learn them and be sure to follow them,
be sure to follow them.

You shall have no gods before Me,
You shall not make an idol,
You shall not misuse the name of the LORD,
Observe the Sabbath Day by keeping it holy,
Honor your father and your mother. *Refrain*

You shall not murder,
You shall not commit adult'ry,
You shall not steal,
You shall not give false testimony,
You shall not covet anything. *Refrain*
Deuteronomy Five,
Verses one, six through twenty-one.

Words: Deuteronomy 5:1,6-21 Music: Constance Dever ©2011

Long ago, the LORD gave the 10 Commandments and many other good laws to the people of Israel. The Israelites agreed to keep them. He would be their God; they would be His people. He would bless them and take care of them. These verses are the Ten Commandments (laws) that God gave them. But even though God gave them to the people of Israel that day, they are laws for all of us to keep. They tell us how God wants us all to live.