

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 13:

God's People Know Heaven Is Their Home

Jesus is God's Son. He left His home in heaven to come to earth to save God's people. He lived a perfect life and offered it up as the perfect payment for the sins of God's people, so they could be His forever. Jesus rose from the dead on the third day then went back to heaven to reign. He is preparing a place for God's people to come and live with Him. There is nothing better than living with God and enjoying Him forever. The Bible tells us that we can't even imagine how wonderful it will be. There are many hard things that God's people may have to endure here on earth, but they look forward to the day when they go home to heaven and suffer no more. There are also many good things that God's people enjoy here on earth, but they know that none of them can compare to the good things they will enjoy in heaven in God's presence. Every day, God's people try to please God with whatever happens in their lives, but they are always looking forward to that wonderful day when they will go home to be with Him forever.

BIBLE VERSE

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

Bible Truth 13 Bible Verse: Philippians 3:18-20

"I have often told you before and now way again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ."

CASE STORY

Matthew 6:14-16; Luke 7, 23; John 6:1-15, 7:31, 40;
Acts 7: 20-43; Hebrews 12:1-3

Our story is called:

The Case of the Homebound Hero. As you listen to the story, see if you can figure out:

1. Who was the Homebound Hero? Where was His home and what was it like?
2. What did He do before He went home that made Him a hero? Why did He do this?

This story takes place in New Testament times, when Jesus came to earth to be our Savior.

Imagine a home filled with glorious light and indescribable beauty. Imagine a home where there's never sin or sadness, pain or death: where the Kingdom of God is in full bloom. A place of goodness and love so deep and delightful that they fill you up completely, spill over and fill up everyone else too, leaving no room for anything else. Then imagine not just a home, but an entire, endless home LAND like this.

Seems impossibly good, doesn't it? Must be a pretend place. But it's not. This place so wonderful that we can't even begin to imagine is real! It's heaven--home of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

No one would ever want to leave a home like this, but Jesus, the Son of God, chose to! Why? He was being sent on a mission by God, His Father to save sinners that they could know Him and one day come live in heaven with Him forever. Any where would Jesus go when He finished? Right back to His home in heaven, where once more He would enjoy the Perfect Wonderfulness of life with God the Father and the Holy Spirit. Jesus loved His Father and He loved God's people, so He would go. but He looked forward to being done, for there was no place like home!

Down to earth went the Son of God. He was born a baby boy--Mary's son. Fully human, fully God. And He was given the name, Jesus.

When Jesus grew up. He began to preach. "Repent--turn away from your sins--for the Kingdom of God is near. believe in Me. I'm the Promised One, sent to bring you to God. He backed up His words with amazing miracles. Sick people healed; dead people brought back to life. Thousands fed with only a few fish and loaves of bread. The people were amazed! "Who has seen such mighty deeds! Who has heard such powerful words! Could this be

God's promised Messiah, the king who will destroy Israel's enemies and bring God's kingdom?" they wondered. Great crowds of people began to follow Jesus. Many wanted to overthrow the Romans and make Him their king.

But Jesus knew this would never do. Perhaps the idea of living a rich life in a grand palace sounding temptingly easy. But it would never save God's people from their sins. Only suffering and dying on the cross would do that! And what did the gold of an earthly throne offer compared with fellowship with God and the beautiful glory of heaven His home. Jesus withdrew from the crowds and prayed to His Father in heaven. No. There was no place like home!

The crowds didn't like Jesus' decision. Before long, their praise turned to hatred. "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" they cried as Jesus was arrested and sentenced to death on a cross--although He had done nothing wrong.

A sign was posted above Jesus as He hung on the cross. It said, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." Those who passed by made fun of Him: "Come down from the cross if you are God's Son," they jeered.

Jesus could have done just that, if He had wanted. Thousands of angels stood waiting His command. But the Bible tells us that Jesus chose to endure the suffering of the cross by thinking of the joy set before Him. What joys? The joy of triumphing over sin and death for God's people. The joy of fellowship with God the Father and God, the Holy Spirit in heaven once more.

And the joy knowing that His death would mean God's people would share in that wonderful fellowship, too. There was no place like home for Jesus. And there would be no place like this home for God's people, too. So Jesus kept suffering on the cross, knowing that soon He would be home forever.

There were two criminals that were crucified with Jesus that day. One of them also insulted Jesus: "Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself for us!" he said to Jesus.

But the other criminal believed in Jesus. "Don't you fear God? We are getting the punishment we deserve, but Jesus has done nothing wrong!" He told the other man. Then to Jesus he said, "Jesus, remember me when You come into your kingdom."

Jesus answered him, "Today you will be with Me in My kingdom. You will be coming home to heaven with Me."

Three hours later, it was all over. Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "It is finished," and died. The other two men died that

day, too.

To heaven went the spirits of Jesus and the believing thief. The thief could hardly believe the rich beauty of his new home. Never could he have imagined a place so wonderful.

But oh, the roar of praise, the blazing light of glory, and the flood of love and joy that burst upon Jesus as He entered His heavenly home! He had done without many good things on earth. He had struggled against sin. He had suffered more than anyone whatever suffer to complete the mission his father had given him. And now he had won the victory over death! All glory, honor and praise would be His now and forever, the angels proclaimed.

Jesus was delighted to be home in heaven again. Where the kingdom of God was in full bloom already. Where there was no sin, no sickness, no sadness, or death. Where the glory of God's presence dwelt in fullness. And where Jesus once more enjoyed the fullness of fellowship with God the father God the Holy Spirit. And because of Him, it would be where God's people would live, enjoying the Perfect Wonderfulness of that fellowship, too. There really was no place like home!

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Our Bible Truth is:

God's People Know Heaven Is Their Home

Our Bible Verse is: Philippians 3:18-20

"I have often told you before and now way again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ."

What about you and me? Like the thief who turned from his sins and believed in Jesus while dying on the cross, so we, too, can turn from our sins, trust in Jesus as our Savior and be saved. Then we will become God's adopted people.

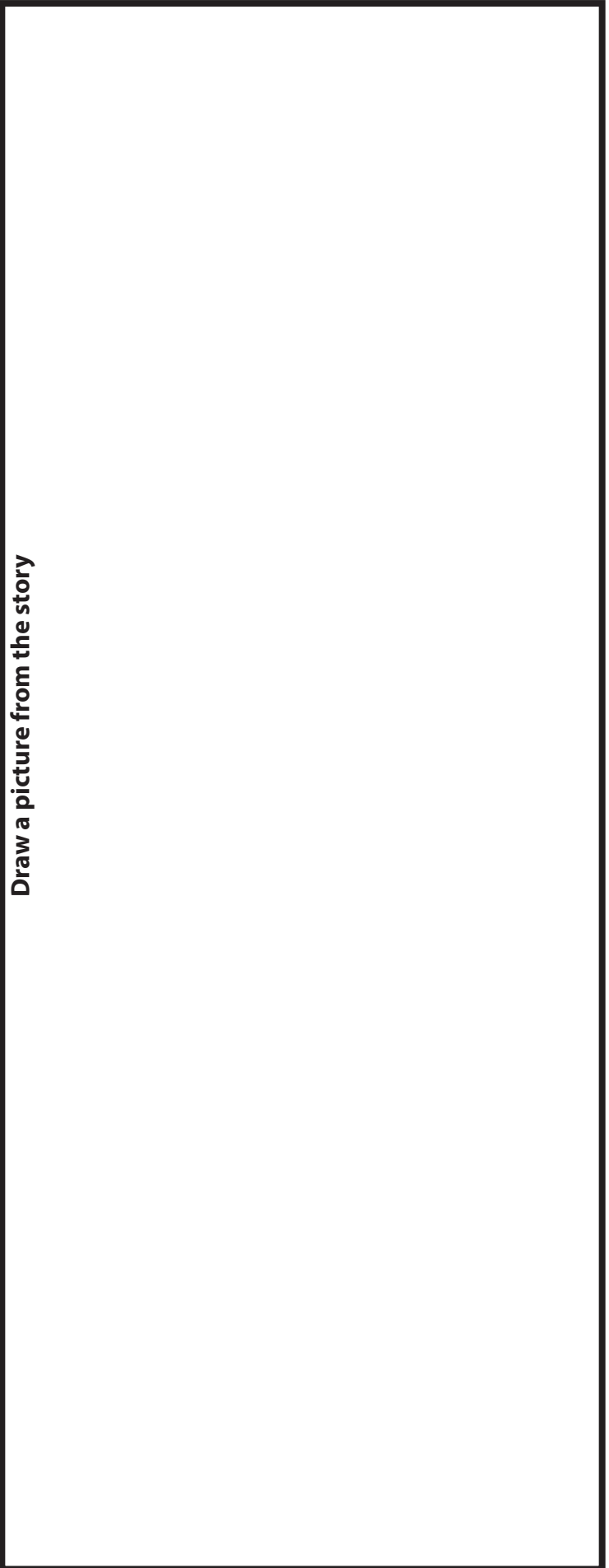
The Holy Spirit will come and live in our hearts and through His wonderful fellowship in our hearts, we can already begin to have a taste of life in God's Kingdom even today!

But, of course, that is only the beginning, for if we become God's people, we can look forward to the day when we die and go to be in heaven and enjoy God's wonderful presence at last.

And even that is not all, for one day Jesus will come back to this earth. He will bring an end to sin and death in this world and He will make new heavens and earth. Then at last, God's kingdom here on earth will be in full blossom just like it is already in heaven now. Everywhere Jesus will reign and everyone will rejoice in His glory, goodness and beauty. And God's people will enjoy all these pleasures of eternal life with God forever.

Let's praise this God who delights to make sinners His dearly loved people and take them to live in His wonderful home with Him forever. Let's ask Him to help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Let's ask Him to help us to remember the eternal rewards and pleasures of heaven that we might take joy in obeying His will for our lives here on earth, no matter what He calls us to give up or endure according to His good and wise plan.

Draw a picture from the story



SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU

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

When Jesus rose from the dead and went back to heaven to reign, He forgot all about God's people.
Answer: False. He always lives to intercede for God's people. And, He is preparing a place for them to live with Him forever.

2. Crack the Case Questions:

a. Who was the Homebound Hero? Where was His home and what was it like?

Answer: Jesus. His home was heaven. It was perfect, without any sin, suffering or death. It was where He enjoyed the Perfect Wonderfulness of fellowship with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.

b. What did He do before He went home that made Him a hero?

Answer: He suffered and died on the cross to save God's people from their sins. He did this so they could be God's people and also come live in heaven, enjoying the Perfect Wonderfulness of close fellowship with God forever, too.

3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse: Philippians 3:18-20

I have often told you before and now way again even with tears, many ___ as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is ___, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things. But our citizenship is in ___. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ."

Answers: live; destruction; heaven.

BIBLE TRUTH HYMN

The Sands of Time Are Sinking

PFI NIV Songs 12, Tracks 38-41

Verse 1

The sands of time are sinking,
 The dawn of Heaven breaks,
 The summer morn I've sighed for,
 The fair, sweet morn awakes;
 Dark, dark hath been the midnight,
 But dayspring is at hand.
 And glory, glory dwelleth,
 In Immanuel's land.

Verse 2

The King, there in his beauty,
 Without a veil is seen,
 It were a well-spent journey,
 Though sev'n deaths lay
 between;
 The Lamb with his fair army,
 Doth mercy doth expand,
 And glory, glory dwelleth,
 In Immanuel's land.

Verse 3

O Christ, He is the fountain,
 The deep, deep well of love,
 The streams of earth I've tasted,
 More deep I'll drink above,
 There to an ocean fullness,
 His mercy doth expand,
 And glory, glory dwelleth,
 In Immanuel's land.

Verse 4

With mercy and with judgment,
 My web of time He wove,
 And aye the dews of sorrow,
 Were lusted with His love,
 I'll bless the hand that guideth,
 I'll bless the heart that planned,
 When throned where glory
 dwelleth,
 In Immanuel's land.

Words: Anne R. Cousin Music: Constance Dever

People used to tell time with a hourglass. It would take exactly one hour for the sand to sink from the top of the glass to the bottom. God's people know that the sands of time are sinking...that the day when they will go to live at home with God in heaven is coming closer and closer. They will live out every day of their life, according to God's perfectly good plan. Then, they will go to be with Him in heaven. God's people are so excited for the day when they will live with God forever! At last they will get to see Him, their King, who gave up His life as the "Lamb of God"--the perfect sacrifice for their sins. Life here on earth may be difficult sometimes. There may be times of sorrow. But God's people trust in God's good plan for them every day they live here on earth; and, they happily look forward to getting to live in heaven--the glorious Land of Immanuel, which means God with us. There, they will at last live at home with their God... and there's no place as wonderful as home, especially this home.

AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY

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

A Jesus, we praise You for Your amazing love for sinners and for God, Your Father, to be willing to leave Your wonderful home in heaven to save us.

C God, we confess that many times we don't appreciate all that Jesus left behind to be our Savior. We grumble at things we know God might want us to do, but forget all that He has done to save people like us!

T God, we thank You that You, Yourself, made the way for sinner like us to live with You in Your wonderful heavenly home forever.

S God, work in our hearts. Help us to confess our sins, turn away from them and trust Jesus as our own Savior. Change us and prepare us to live with You in heaven by helping us love and obey You. Help us to long to be with You in heaven.

BIBLE VERSE SONG

Many Live As Enemies

PFI NIV Songs 12, Track 42

Many live as enemies of the cross of Christ,
 Many live as enemies of the cross of Christ,
 Their destiny is destruction,
 Their mind's on earthly things,
 Their mind's on earthly things

But our citizenship is in heav'n,
 Yes, our citizenship is in heav'n,
 And we eagerly, we eagerly,
 Await a Savior from there.
 Philippians Three,
 eighteen through twenty.

Words: Philippians 3:18-20 Music: Constance Dever ©2011

All of us are sinners. We have all chosen to live life our own way, instead of God's good way. We deserve God's punishment, not eternal life with Him. But God sent His Son, Jesus, to save sinners like us. He took the punishment for sins when He died on the cross. On the third day, He rose from the dead in victory. Now all who turn away from their sins and trust in Him as their Savior are forgiven their sins. They belong to God. No longer are they people who belong in this world. They are citizens of heaven--that's where their home is. And one day, either they will die to go to live with Him; or, Jesus will come back and take them home, Himself. Oh, how wonderful that will be! God's people eagerly await for that day to come. No more sin and death! Such wonderful closeness with God always! Until that day, God's people will go on telling others the good news of Jesus. They don't want anyone to remain an enemy of the cross of Christ and face God's punishment. They want them to repent and receive eternal life.