

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 12 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 4:
God's People Trust Him**

Trusting God means resting joyfully in God's care and plans. God's people trust God because they know that He is completely powerful, wise, and good. They know His plans are perfect and they are always for their good and His glory. They know that God always takes care of them and helps them do whatever He wants them to do, even if it is very hard.

God's people know that they won't trust God perfectly while they live on earth. God has forgiven them of their sins, but they are still sinners. And so here, they will sometimes struggle to trust God, even though they know He has never failed them. They are grateful for God's Holy Spirit, working in their hearts. He can help them to trust God more and more here on earth. They are even more grateful for the day when they will go to live with God in heaven forever. There, they will know and trust Him perfectly.

BIBLE VERSE

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

Bible Truth 4 Bible Verse: Proverbs 3:5-6

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight."

CASE STORY

Our story is called:

The Case of the Impossible Task.

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

1. What was the Impossible Task? Who tried to do it?
2. Who did she have to depend on to do it? Did he come through and help her do it?

This story is not in the Bible. It is a true story about one of God's people who lived in Dundee, Scotland in the 1870's.

A red-haired, blue-eyed girl bent over her loom, working furiously. She was only fourteen, but she worked as hard as any adult in the factory. As she wiped the sweat from her forehead she thought, "Ten hours a day, slaving over these looms, is exhausting! The noise from all the hundreds of machines is deafening! These mill factory owners ask too much of us. What I wouldn't give to be back in school learning about all sorts of things and all sorts of places around the world! But with father hopelessly drunk most of the time and mother home with a new baby as well as the other five children, I'm the only one who can make money for us to live on."

"This isn't at all what I thought I'd do with my life," Mary thought to herself. "Here I am working in a mill in Dundee, Scotland, but for as long as I can remember, I've wanted to go to Calabar in Africa. Calabar is one of the most remote, dangerous parts of Africa where few Christians have dared to go. I want to go there to tell them about Jesus! But how will I ever get to go there? My family needs me here and I haven't even finished my schooling—I can hardly read or add! Now it seems like an impossible dream; yet, I will trust in the Lord."

"Lord," Mary prayed, "the task is impossible for me but not for You. Lead the way and I will follow. I will not lean on my own understand. I will trust in you and let you direct my path."

So Mary kept working at the mill factory for many more years and trusted the Lord to show her the way...and so He did.

"Perhaps I cannot go to Calabar right now," Mary thought, "but I can prepare myself in case one day the Lord does lead me to go. I will teach myself what they would have taught me in school. I will learn everything I can about the Bible. And even if I can't go to dangerous Calabar and tell

people there about Jesus, I can go to the neediest, most dangerous part of Dundee where few Christians dare go, and I tell them about Jesus," Mary decided.

So Mary bought her own school books, propped them up next to her machine and taught them to herself, little by little as she worked. Then on Sundays and in the evenings, she went to the streets of the worst part of Dundee and spoke about Jesus to whomever would listen. These streets were so dangerous that only Mary and few others were brave enough to go and speak about Jesus there. Many times they came back roughed up by the gangs and pelted with mud.

One night, as Mary stood on a street corner and shared about Jesus, a gang came up and surrounded her. The leader began to swing a heavy lead weight near her face. What would Mary do? If the weight crashed into her head, she would have a serious injury; yet, would she be frightened off by this young man?

"Lord," Mary prayed, "this man needs You. Please help me reach his heart. The task is impossible for me, but not for You. Lead the way and I will follow. I will not lean on my own understanding. I will trust in You and let You direct my path."

The Lord gave Mary an idea. "If you make me flinch, I'll leave; but, if you don't, then you have to come to church with me," she challenged the man.

The leader agreed, sure he would win. Round and round, closer and closer, the heavy lead weight came; but Mary never flinched, even as it grazed her brow. Mary had won!

"She's game, boys," the leader exclaimed. "Come on, let's go to this service of hers."

That night the Lord began to work in the heart of that young man and many of the other gang members. Before long, they turned from their sins and trusted in Jesus. Then they helped Mary tell others in Dundee about Jesus.

As wonderful as it was to see these people from Dundee come to know Jesus, it was not enough for Mary. "Oh, Lord," she prayed, "I love these people here, but what about those in Calabar? They need to know about Jesus even more. Please, Lord, send me!"

In a few years, the Lord answered Mary's prayer. Needs at home changed and she joined the Calabar mission team. One August day, she boarded the *Ethiopia*, a huge steamer ship, and set off for Calabar.

Thirty days later, the ship arrived in Calabar. Mary quickly

saw why it was called "The White Man's Grave." There were huge swarms of mosquitoes that carried malaria. There were elephants who trampled people, and hungry lions and leopards looking for someone to attack. The rivers were full of sneaky crocodiles and grumpy hippopotamuses.

If that were not enough, there were the people, themselves. They lived in fear of the witchdoctors and their magic spells. They were taught to worship skulls and spirits. They were quick to kill each other; and, what was worse, some even ate the people they killed—they were cannibals! They didn't care about the good news of Jesus the missionaries brought. The further inland you went, the more vicious the people were. Most missionaries refused to go inland. They stayed near the coast where people weren't quite so wicked. Mary, however, was not most missionaries.

"I want to go inland as far as I can, to people who have never heard about Jesus!" Mary told the others.

"You will be killed, if you go," the others warned her. "Everyone else has been killed. You will be no different. You're just a single woman. If anything they will be quicker to kill you."

Mary listened to the scary warnings. Would she risk her life to tell the people inland about Jesus?

"Oh Lord," Mary prayed, "They're right. The task is impossible for me. But, it is not impossible for You. Lead the way and I will follow. I will not lean on my own understanding. I will not fear. I will trust in You and let You direct my path." So Mary started up the River Okoyong in a canoe with her five adopted children and her things. Danger was on every side. One day an angry hippopotamus began to attack their boat. Mary saved their lives by throwing her big, cast iron pot down its throat and paddling off quickly.

At last Mary came to the village of Ekenge. This was a village of fierce warriors and the people were not at all happy to see her. They threatened to kill her, just as they had the other missionaries. But Mary trusted in God and He gave her courage to stand up to them. Chief Edem-- saw Mary's courage and her trust in the Lord and he accepted her and her children into his village. The people began to call her "The White Ma." They would listen to her talk about Jesus and treat their sicknesses with her strange medicine. Soon they came to her to settle problems they had.

One day, messengers from another village burst into Ekenge looking for Mary. "We have run through the jungle

for eight hours to get here. We need your White Ma to come heal our dying chief with her powerful magic. If our chief doesn't get well, then many of our men will be killed to go with him into the spirit world. Come, save our chief and our men!" they pleaded.

"You mustn't go," Chief Edem said. "Warriors in the jungle will kill you."

"The streams are all flooded from the rains," Ma Eme, another villager, warned her. "The jungles are full of wild beasts that will eat you. Don't go!"

What would Mary do? Would she risk her life or stay safe in the village? Mary prayed all night. "They're right, Lord. The task is impossible for me, but not for You, Lead the way and I will follow. I will trust in You."

The next morning she told Chief Edem and Ma Eme, "I believe the Lord wants me to go, so I must go. I will trust in Him."

The journey to the other village was very hard. Heavy rains soaked her clothes and turned the jungle to mud. Her shoes fell apart and she had to walk barefoot the rest of the way. Soon Mary was sick with a terrible fever and headache. She felt like giving up.

"Lord, this task is impossible for me. I am so sick! But I know that this isn't impossible for You. I will trust in You. Help me to get to the chief," she prayed.

At last Mary arrived at the village, sick, hungry and night she worked to heal him. The next day, the chief awoke!. Each day he improved. The people celebrated. Thanks to the White Ma, not only would the chief live, but the other men would be allowed to live, too.

"White Ma," the people said, "Tell us about your magic powers! We have never seen such power. Who gave it to you?"

She said to them: "The Lord Jesus Christ did. I have come to you because I love and worship Jesus Christ. He is the Great Physician and Savior, the Son of the Father God who made all things I want you to know this Father and to receive the eternal life which Jesus offers to all those who confess their sins to Him and turn to trust in Him as their Savior. To know Jesus means to love Him, and with His love in our hearts we love everybody. Eternal life means peace and joy in this world and a wonderful home in the next world. My heart longs for you to believe in Jesus, to walk in His paths, and to know the blessings of eternal life through Him," she told them.

This was only one of the amazing things that the Lord did through Mary Slessor, in the jungles of Calabar. The Lord used her to tell many people about Jesus who would have never had heard otherwise. Year after year Mary Slessor worked on, doing the impossible. Year after year, the Lord sustained her. She survived thirty-eight years in that dangerous jungle! Why? Because even though the task was impossible for her, it was never impossible for the Lord. He led the way and she followed. She trusted in Him

Our Bible Truth is: God's People Others**Our Bible Verse is: Proverbs 3:5-6**

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight."

The Lord gave Mary Slessor this kind of trust in Him. Many times she faced life-threatening dangers, yet she rested joyfully in the fact that God always was at work, only allowing what was for His glory and the good of others and herself.

What about you and me? Do you think we can trust the Lord as Mary Slessor did? Yes, we can! He will always take care of His people completely! Let's praise this amazing God for being completely trustworthy. 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 send the Holy Spirit to work in our hearts and help us to trust Him with all of our lives so that we will be willing to even dare to do whatever He wants us to do, even if it is "impossible-looking" as what Mary Slessor did..

SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU

1. A Question about the Bible Truth, True or False:
 God's people trust God because they always understand what He is doing.
Answer: False. They trust God because they know what He is doing is always wise and best, even though they don't understand it.

2. Crack the Case Questions

a. What was the Impossible Task? Who tried to do it?
Answer: To take the gospel to the gangs in Dundee, Scotland; and, especially to go to Calabar and take the gospel to the inland tribes and survive. Mary Slessor.

b. Who did she have to depend on to do it? Did he come through and help her do it?
Answer: The Lord. Yes, He did! He gave her courage and wisdom to stand up to the gang members and tell them about Jesus. And, He gave her courage to travel up the river and to tell many people about Jesus. Not only did they not kill her, but they greatly honored her and listened to her.

3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse:
Proverbs 3:5-6
 "___ in the LORD with all your heart and ___ not on your own understanding; in all your ___ acknowledge him, and he will make your ___ straight."
Answers: Trust; lean; ways; paths.

BIBLE TRUTH HYMN

Trust and Obey
PFI NIV Songs 12, Track 12

Verse 2
 Not a burden we bear, not a sorrow we share,
 But our toil He doth richly repay;
 Not a grief or a loss, not a frown or a cross,
 But is blest if we trust and obey.

Refrain:
 Trust and obey,
 For there's no other way,
 To be happy in Jesus,
 But to trust and obey.

Words: Daniel B. Towner Music: John H. Sammis

This song is about how we can trust God all the time, even when very hard things happen that we don't understand. It reminds us that those who trust in Jesus can be happy, even in times when it's hard to understand, because God is that good. He will always bless His people--those who turn from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior! They can count on that. They can just go ahead and obey Him. They can trust that it will all turn out for our good and His glory. We can be happy in Jesus, trusting and obeying Him, when we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus, too.

AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY

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

A God, we praise You for being the Protector and Sustainer of Your people. They can even survive in the most dangerous parts of the world because You will protect them and sustain them according to Your perfect will.

C God, we confess that often we face difficult things and we choose not to trust You, but to fear and worry.

T God, we thank You for giving Your people the strength, love and courage to care for people and tell them about Jesus, even in the hardest of situations.

S God, work in our hearts. Help us to confess our sins, turn away from them and trust Jesus as our own Savior. Make us like Mary: willing to go to even very dangerous places to tell others about Him.

BIBLE VERSE SONG

Trust in the LORD
PFI NIV Songs 12, Track 14

Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
 And lean not on your own understanding.
 In all your ways acknowledge Him,
 And He will make your paths straight.
 Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
 Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
 Trust in the LORD with all your heart.
 Trust in the LORD with all your heart.
 Proverbs Three, verses five and six.

Words adapted from Proverbs 3:5-6 Constance Dever © 2011

This verse reminds us that we can always trust the LORD and His good plans, even when we don't understand what He is doing. He wants us not to depend on ourselves and what we see, but on Him, His Word and His good plans. And when we do, we can know that He will show us what He wants us to do, every day of our lives.