

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 5:

God's People Are Good Stewards of His Gifts

God is the Creator of all things and all things belong to Him. There is nothing that we have that God did not give to us: our bodies, our belongings, our money, our lives. Yes, everything is a gift from God to us.

What does God want us to do with all these good gifts He have given us? He wants us to be good stewards of them. What is a steward? A steward is someone who takes care of someone else's things.

God tells us in His Word how He wants His people to be good stewards of His gifts to them. He wants them to serve Him with their bodies—with their hands, their mouths and all of their strength. He wants them to freely share what they have with others. He wants them to use their money generously to take care of their families, to help others and to spread the good news of salvation through Jesus.

In heaven, God promises to reward each of His people according to how they stewarded His gifts during their lives on earth. God's people know that they can't be good stewards of God's gifts on their own. They know that it is the Holy Spirit, working in their hearts, who helps them be the good stewards He wants them to be. We can become God's people when we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

BIBLE VERSE

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

Bible Truth 5 Bible Verse: 1 Peter 4:10-11

"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ."

CASE STORY

Exodus 3, 5, 11,12,15,19-40

Our story is called:

The Case of the People Who Wouldn't Stop.

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

1. Who were the people who wouldn't stop? What wouldn't they stop doing?
2. How were they showing that they knew they were stewards? How were they being good stewards of what God had given them?

This story takes place during Old Testament times, right after the Israelites were freed from slavery in Egypt, about 1500 years before Jesus lived on earth.

A joyful crowd of thousands of poor Israelites poured out of Egypt, leading their flocks and carrying fine riches. What made them so happy that day? You might think it was all those riches! They had gold, silver, jewels, fine cloth and many other expensive things. But it wasn't these things the people rejoiced in that day. It was the LORD their God.

"How amazing is the LORD," they exclaimed. "He has rescued us from slavery in Egypt, has given us all these riches and is leading us to a new home in Canaan!"

On and on the LORD led the Israelites, through the wilderness to Mt. Sinai. They had praised the LORD with their lips, now it was time for them to live it out by making a solemn promise with Him.

"Make a covenant with Me—a solemn promise-- to follow all my good laws, and serve and love Me only as your God. If you do obey Me fully and keep this covenant, then out of all nations you will be My treasured possession. I will promise to always protect you, love you, and bless you with the best of things."

"We promise to obey Your good laws. We promise to serve and love only You," the Israelites promised. "We want to be Your people."

The LORD called Moses up Mt. Sinai, leaving Moses' brother, Aaron to lead the people. Up on the mountain the LORD revealed His good laws and wonderful plans to Moses. The LORD wrote on stone the Ten Commandments of how they were to love Him and how to love others. He gave them many other good laws to obey. He told Moses how He planned to use all the skills the Israelites learned in Egypt and all the rich things of Egypt He had give them to allow them to make Him a special place –called the

Tabernacle—where His presence would dwell with the people.

Moses was sure the people would delight in obeying the LORD's good laws and using their skills and riches to build the Tabernacle; but, the LORD knew better. "While you have been up here with Me, the people have forgotten their praise and thankfulness for Me," He told Moses. "They have already broken the covenant they made with Me. They have taken the riches I gave them and used their skills to build a golden calf to worship instead of Me. Go down and see for yourself."

Moses went down and saw the people worshiping and dancing around a giant, golden calf they had made from some of the Egyptian gold. He was furious! He threw down on the ground the stone tablets of God's laws and they shattered. The people had already broken their promise to keep these laws. He ground the golden calf into gold dust, mixed it with water, and made all the people drink it. Many of the Israelites repented of this terrible thing they did, but those who didn't, died by the sword or by a terrible sickness. The LORD is very merciful, but He also hates sin!

The Israelites had already broken their promises to the LORD and He had every right to leave them, but chose not to. "I forgive the people's sins," the LORD told Moses. "I want to keep the covenant with them, even though they have broken it. Make another set of the stone tablets I gave you and go to the people and have them prepare to build My Tabernacle." How merciful He was to His sinful people!

So Moses gathered all the people together and told them, "The LORD forgives your sin. He has something He wants you to do with the riches of Egypt He gave you. He wants you to build a Tabernacle so His presence can dwell among you."

Everyone who is willing is to bring to the LORD an offering of gold, silver and bronze; blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen; goat hair; ram skins dyed red and hides of sea cows; acacia wood; olive oil for the light; spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense; and onyx stones and other gems to be mounted on the high priest's special clothes," Moses told them. "Then come, all who are skilled and make everything the LORD has commanded for His tabernacle."

What would the Israelites do? It would take most of the riches they had been given in Egypt to make this Tabernacle? Would they give them up? It would take a lot

of time and skill to make this Tabernacle. Would they really use all their skill and time to make this? Was their praise for the LORD just a feeling in their heart? Or was He someone they would give the best of their things, their skills and their time for?

"Yes," they told Moses, "we want to give our riches. We want to use our skills to build His Tabernacle."

Many wanted to make an offering to the LORD for the work on the Tabernacle. They brought gold jewelry of all kinds: brooches, earrings, rings and ornaments. Others brought silver and bronze. Still others gave blue, purple or scarlet yarn or fine linen, or goat hair, ram skins dyed red or hides of sea cows. Those who had acacia wood brought it. Those who had spices and olive oil offered them. The leaders brought onyx stones and other gems to be mounted on the high priest's ephod and breast piece.

Then the skilled workers came forward. "We want to use all our skills to make the Tabernacle for the LORD's presence," they told Moses.

Moses received the skills these workers offered to the LORD. "The LORD has chosen Bezalel of the tribe of Judah, and he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with the ability to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, to cut and set stones and to do beautiful woodwork," he told the Israelites.

"He has given both Bezalel and Oholiab of the tribe of Dan, the ability to teach others. He has filled them with skill to do all kinds of work as craftsmen, designers, embroiderers in blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen, and weavers—all of them master craftsmen and designers," Moses told them.

Bezalel, Oholiab and the other workers began to work on the Tabernacle, using the offerings, but before long had to quit. "Moses! Tell the people to stop bringing offerings! We don't even have space to work because of all their gifts!" they pleaded.

So Moses sent out the order, "Don't make any more offerings!" What a wonderful problem! The people had over-given to the LORD!

Day after day, Bezalel, Oholiab and the others worked to make the Tabernacle just the way the LORD had commanded. At last it was all done: the Ark of the Covenant, the beautiful curtains with cherubim that kept it hidden in the Holy of Holies; the table for the shewbread, the lampstand; the altar of incense; the altar of burnt offering;

the basin for washing; the courtyard and its curtains; and, all the priestly garments. Moses inspected all the work that had been done and it was perfect!

“Everything has been made just exactly as the LORD planned it. Out of your thankfulness to the LORD, you’ve given from your best things what was needed—and even more. You’ve used your skills and time to make everything just as the LORD planned. Now everything is perfect. Receive the blessing of the Lord for your offerings and hard work. Make the final preparations for the coming of the Lord’s glory to His Tabernacle,” Moses said to the people.

When everything in the Tabernacle was made ready and the priests dressed in their priestly garments, the great cloud of the Lord’s presence that had led them from Egypt dropped down and covered the Tent of Meeting and the glory of the LORD filled the Tabernacle so completely that no one could enter it. And all the people praised the LORD. How amazing was their mighty God! He had given them so much—freedom, the promise of a new life and even the great riches of

Egypt. He gave them an ever-lasting covenant. He had even forgiven them for making and worshiping an idol. He had given them the chance to give their things and use their skills to build a Tabernacle so that His presence could always be with them. And now His presence had come to dwell with them. What a great day it was!

And so from that day, in all the travels of the Israelites, wherever they went, the LORD was with them, making His dwelling place among them, and leading them where He wanted them to go.

Our Bible Truth is:

God’s People Are Good Stewards of His Gifts

Our Bible Verse is: 1 Peter 4:10,11:

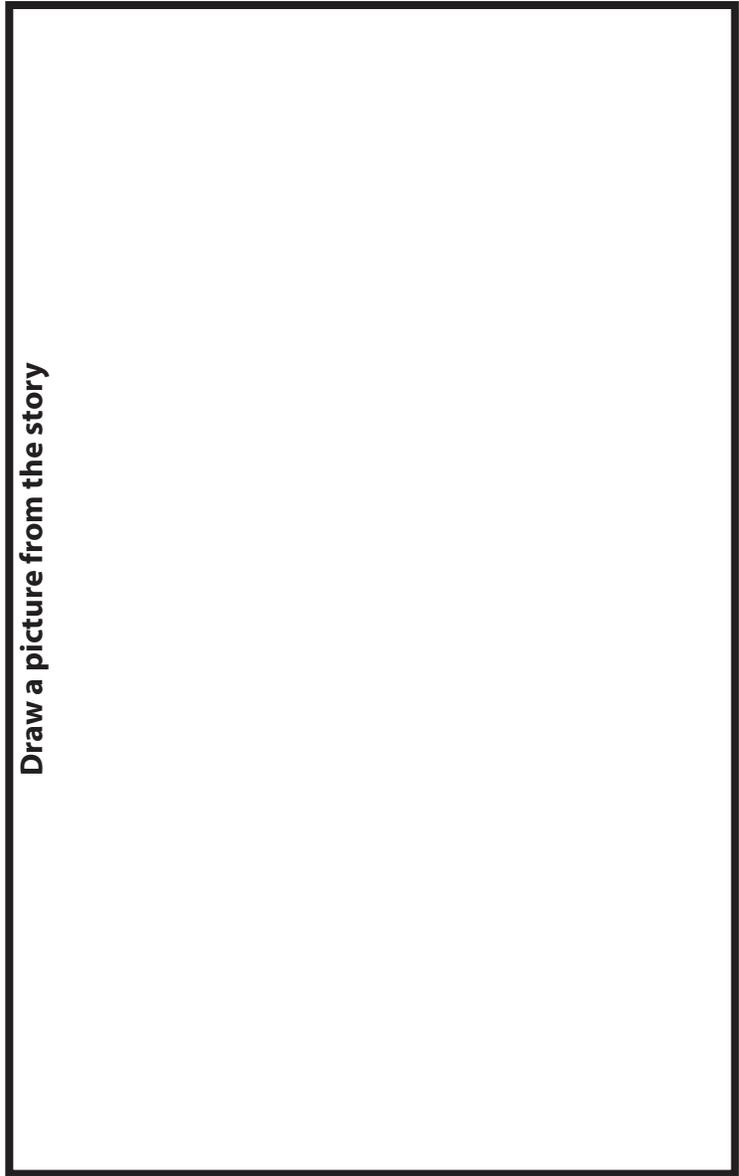
“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.”

The LORD had done so much for the Israelites! He had given them so much, too. Yet they were all too quick to forget Him and use what He had given them to do sinful things.

What about you and me? What has the LORD given us? Has He not blessed us with good things and with skills? Has He not offered us salvation through faith in Jesus? Yes, He has. Will we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior? Will we receive the salvation He offers us freely through Jesus?

And what will we do with what the LORD has given us? Be selfish and think only of ourselves? Forget that He has given them all to us? Or, will we remember each day that we are only stewards of all the good gifts that God has given us and try to use everything we have to love others and help them know about Jesus?

Let’s praise God for all the good gifts He has given us. Let’s ask Him to work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Him as our Savior. Let’s ask Him to make us good stewards of the things and skills He has given us, that we might glorify Him.



Draw a picture from the story

SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU

1. A Question about the Bible Truth, True or False:
 God is the Creator of all things and all things belong to Him.
Answer: True.

2. Crack the Case Questions

a. Who were the people who wouldn't stop? What wouldn't they stop doing?
Answer: The people of Israel. They wouldn't stop giving things to be used to build the tabernacle.

b. How were they showing that they knew they were stewards? How were they being good stewards of what God had given them?
Answer: They did not hold onto the things given to them. They wanted them to be used to do whatever the LORD wanted them to be used for.

3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse:
1 Peter 4:10-11
 "Each one should use whatever ___ he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's ___ in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the ___ God provides, so that in all things God may be ___ through Jesus Christ."
Answers: gift; grace; strength; praised.

BIBLE TRUTH HYMN

Be Thou My Vision
PFI NIV Songs 12, Track 16

Verse 2
 Be Thou my Wisdom,
 And Thou my true Word;
 I ever with Thee
 And Thou with me, Lord;
 Thou my great Father,
 I Thy true son;
 Thou in me dwelling,
 And I with Thee one.
Words: Ancient Irish; tr. Mary E. Byrne
Music: Traditional Irish Melody; harm. David Evans

God's people want God to be their Wisdom, that they would know how to use their lives to please Him. They want Him to be their true Word, that they might believe His Word and obey all it tells them about how to use the good gifts He's given them. They want His Holy Spirit to be dwelling in them so that even in their hearts they might have the wonderful fellowship with God He created them to have. They want Him to ever be with them, so that everything in their lives, from the thoughts of their hearts to their words and their actions, please Him and might be used as He wants them to be used. This is how they can be good stewards of all the gifts God has given them.

AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY

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

A God, we praise You for being the rescuer of Your people from slavery to sin and to death. You give them eternal life.

C God, we confess that too many times, like the Israelites, we are sinners who choose to use the good things You have given us to do what we want to do, instead of using them to worship and serve You. We need a Savior!

T God, we thank You that even though we have often disobeyed Your good ways and misused the good things You have given us, that You offer us forgiveness through 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 use all the good gifts You have given us to serve You.

BIBLE VERSE SONG

Each of Us Should Use
PFI ESV Songs 12, Track 17

Each of us should use whatever gift,
 Gift he has received, to serve others.
 Faithfully administering God's grace,
 In its various forms.
 First Peter Four, ten and eleven.

Words: 1 Peter 4:10-11 Music: Constance Dever ©2015

This verse reminds us God is the one who gives us everything we are and have. He wants us to be good stewards of them. He wants us to use these gifts to help and encourage others; and, to bring praise to His name. He gives us the strength to do this, through His Holy Spirit, when we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.