

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 6:
God's People Obey Him**

Ever since Adam and Eve rebelled in the beginning, all people have chosen to disobey God and His good ways. This disobedience shows in our hearts. Many times, we think we know better than God. We tend to think about ourselves and what we want, most of all. This disobedience also shows up in our lives. We love to get our own way. We choose to say and do things that please us, even if they don't please God. Even if they hurt others.

But God's people seek to be different. They understand that they are sinners and deserve God's punishment. They confess their sins to God and desire to turn away from disobeying Him. (That's what it means to repent of our sins.) They trust in Jesus as their Savior. They want to start a new life of living to please God by obeying Him. God gives them faith in Him and forgives their sins. He gives them a new heart filled with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit helps them to love God and please Him. He helps them want to obey God in their heart. He helps them to love God and live to please Him with their lives.

BIBLE VERSE

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

Bible Truth 6 Bible Verse: John 14:23-24

"Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching."

CASE STORY

Our story is called:

The Case of the Porcupine Roach.

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

1. What was a porcupine roach? Who had one? What did it mean when it was picked up?
2. Who chose to put down his porcupine roach when he wanted to pick it up? What happened? Why did he choose to put it down instead?

This story is not in the Bible. It is a true story about God's people who lived out on the great, High Plains in Alberta, Canada in the 1840's.

Kass'aq were coming! White people! The bad news spread from teepee to teepee in Cree village. "We were out hunting this morning when we saw the smoke of fires in the distance," some of the men reported. "We got as close as we dared to learn more. They weren't trappers, like white men at the fort. These were families with all their belongings."

The chief understand what this meant. The white man was coming to take over their land! "These kass'aq! First they come to take our beaver and buffalo. Now it seems they come to take our land from us, too. This is our people's land. It has been for hundreds of years. Do they think they can have it without a fight? Ask our enemies the Blackfoot. The Crees don't just give away their land—they fight back! Go now! Summon the braves! It is time for us to put on our porcupine roaches, our special battle headdresses. Follow me! We must defend our land!" he told the Cree braves. There would be no hunting of buffalo tomorrow. Tomorrow there would be war!

This was to be the only the first of many battles between Cree and the white men. The Crees relied on tricks of cunning and surprise to fight the white man. Their bows and arrows were little match for the white man's guns and gun powder. More and more white people came, taking away more of the Crees' land and the buffalo they depended on. The Crees fought back, but it was a losing battle. How they hated the kass'aq!

Perhaps no one grew up hating the kass'aq more than Maskipaton, the chief's son. He was all too happy to put on his porcupine roach and strike out against the white men in battle. He wanted them dead!

One day, Maskipaton's aging father, the chief came to

him and said, "Maskipaton, my son, I am too old to lead my people well. It is time for you to take my place as chief of the Crees. You must lead our people now. You must protect our people from our enemies, especially the white man."

Maskipaton happily accepted his father's gifts. "Father, I will do all I can to protect our people and our lands, just as you have. I will keep away our enemies—especially the white man," he promised. And so, under Chief Maskipaton's leadership, the hatred between the Cree and the white man grew even fiercer.

But while hatred was growing between the Cree and white man, God was growing love for both of them in Robert Rundle's heart. He lived far away in England, but couldn't stop thinking about them. "Both white men and Cree need to hear about Jesus," Rundle thought. "Why shouldn't I be the one to tell them about Him?" So Rundle packed up all his things and traveled across thousands of miles of ocean and then thousands of miles of rugged, cold, wild lands until he reached a fort in Alberta in the Cree lands.

It didn't take long for Rundle to see that the fort was a great place to tell the white men about Jesus, but not to tell the Cree. "These people are suspicious of all white men—and well they should be," Rundle realized. How can I tell them about Jesus here at the fort? They may think it's a trick. "And with no written language, they can't even learn the Bible. No. If I want to reach the Cree with the good news of Jesus, there is only one thing to do: I must go to live with them—even if it costs me my life!" Rundle decided.

Rundle set out for Maskipaton's village. As he arrived, Cree braves, quickly surrounded him, ready to attack. "Tanisi! Wachi! (How are you? Shake hands!) I come in peace to see Chief Maskipaton. I have a message for him from the great Creator God," Rundle said.

"I am Maskipaton," the chief answered him in a cold, hate-filled voice. "Tell me your message."

"The great Creator God has sent me with an important message for you, but it is very long. I want to write it down for you on birch bark and teach you and your people to read it. It will take me a long time to write it all down. I will need to live here with you in your village. Will you let me?" Rundle asked.

Chief Maskipaton was suspicious of the white man's

request. The white men he knew hated the Crees. Could this just be another trick to get rid of his people or take their lands?" Maskipaton wondered. "Yet what if this white man really did have a message from the Creator God? What could it be He wanted them to know? The chief's curiosity overcame his suspicions. For this one white man, he would set aside the porcupine roach—at least for now. "You may stay, kass'aq, but we will be watching you. Any tricks from you and I will put on my porcupine roach and scalp you myself!"

There never were any tricks. Robert Rundle loved the Cree. He learned their customs and their language; and, he began to write down the Creator God's message in their very own language. After much hard work Rundle went before Maskipaton with a present. "Chief, here is the Creator God's message, written in your own language. I would like to teach it to you first."

"Good," Maskipaton said. He was curious to hear the message Rundle had worked so hard to write down. Chief Maskipaton was an quick learner. Soon he could read about the perfectly holy Creator God who had made all things; but, how people had rebelled against Him, deserving eternal punishment for their sins. Then he read about Jesus, the Chief of Peace and Love and Son of the Creator God, who the Creator God sent to die for the sins of all who would ever turn from their sins and trust in Him.

As Maskipaton read, he knew in his heart it was true. He was proud and sinful. He had killed and hated many men, especially the white man. He went to Rundle and said, "Rundle, I believe the Creator God's message. What must I do to be saved?"

"Ah, great chief, you have done the first thing already: You believe," Rundle told the chief, "but there is more. You must turn away from your sins and obey the Creator God's good laws. There will be many times when this is very hard. You will even have to set down your porcupine roach and seek peace. You will need to love your enemies."

"If that is what I must do, then I will never be saved," Maskipaton answered. "How can I stop hating and killing these kass'aq or the Blackfoot who have been so terrible to my people? I'll never be a Christian as long as there is a scalp to take or a horse to steal from the Blackfoot!" he vowed.

But the more Maskipaton read of the Creator God's message, the more the Holy Spirit worked in his heart.

"Rundle, I have changed my mind," the chief finally said, "I want to be a Christian. I am ready to obey the Creator God's good laws. I will even set down my porcupine roach and seek peace with my enemies."

So Chief Maskipaton became a Christian. The Holy Spirit did an amazing work in his heart. Instead of leading his people into war with the Blackfoot and the white men, Maskipaton worked to bring peace and understanding. Instead of encouraging his people to follow the gods of wind and fire and rain, he helped them to read so that they could know the message of the Creator God and His Son Jesus, too.

But just as Robert Rundle had told him, there would times when it would be very hard to obey God's good laws. One night soldiers came and for no reason attacked Maskipaton's village killing many of his people, including the old chief, his father. What would Maskipaton do now? Would he put back on the porcupine roach and seek revenge on these soldiers or would he obey the Creator God's good laws and continue to seek peace? The Holy Spirit gave Maskipaton strength to keep obeying the Creator God. "I have set down the porcupine roach in obedience to the Creator God. I will not put it on again," he declared. "I will continue to work for peace between my people and the kass'aq."

The Lord blessed Maskipaton for his obedience. For soon after this terrible attack, a great peace treaty was signed. Both Cree and white man gathered together at Maskipaton's village for a big celebration. There was lots of food and dancing around the fire to the beating of drums. But right in the middle of the celebration, Chief Maskipaton received some very startling news: "The soldier who killed your father is here tonight. Now is your chance for revenge," one of his braves told him. What would Maskipaton do?

"Stop the drums! Stop the dancing!" Maskipaton ordered. Everyone stopped in their place. "I have been told that the soldier who killed my father is here tonight. Bring him here to stand before me!"

The braves brought the scared soldier to Maskipaton.

"Answer me! Are you the man who killed my father?" the chief demanded.

"Yes," the soldier answered and a gasp of horror went through the crowd.

Maskipaton ordered the soldier's outer clothes removed.

Everyone knew this was how the Cree prepared to kill their enemies.

But instead of killing the man, Maskipaton gave him his best buckskin clothes and then set the man on his very best horse. "You are the man who killed my father," Maskipaton told this man. "Before I came to know and obey the Creator God and His Son Jesus, the Chief of Peace and Love, I would have scalped you. But He has made me a different person and I obey Him. I forgive you. I give you my best things. You will be like my father; and I, like your son. And when you go back to your fort, tell everyone that this is how Chief Maskipaton treats his enemies because he loves and obeys the Creator God!"

Our Bible Truth is: God's People Obey Him

Our Bible Verse is: John 14:23-24

"Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching."

The Lord did a mighty work in Chief Maskipaton's heart. By the Holy Spirit, He gave Maskipaton the strength to obey His good laws, even when it was very hard. In the end, many Cree and white men turned to the Lord because of Maskipaton's obedience to the Lord.

What about you and me? If we are to be God's people, we must turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior. We must obey his good laws, too, even when it is very hard. How will we have strength to do this? The same way Maskipaton did: by the Holy Spirit working in our hearts.

Let's ask the Lord to work in our hearts that we might turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Let's ask Him to fill us with His Holy Spirit and give us strength to obey Him, just like He gave Chief Maskipaton.

<p align="center">SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU</p>	<p align="center">BIBLE TRUTH HYMN</p>
<p>1. A Question about the Bible Truth, True or False: God's people confess their sins to God and desire to turn away from disobeying Him. <i>Answer: True. God's Holy Spirit can help us do this, too. Ask Him!</i></p> <p>2. Crack the Case Questions a. What was a porcupine roach? Who had one? What did it mean when he picked it up? Answer: A porcupine roach was a special headdress made of porcupine quills that the Cree Indians. When it was picked up and put on, it meant they were going to battle to kill an enemy.</p> <p>b. Who chose to put down his porcupine roach when he wanted to pick it up? What happened? Why did he choose to put it down instead? Answer: Maskipaton chose to put his down. A soldier came and cruelly killed his father, the chief, and many others in his village for no reason. He put it down and chose to forgive, because he had become a Christian. He wanted to obey God, even more than he wanted to get revenge.</p> <p>3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse: John 14:23-24 "Jesus replied, "If anyone loves ____, he will obey my ____. My Father will love him, and we will ____ to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my ____."</p>	<p>Take My Life and Let it Be <i>PFI NIV Songs 12, Track 18</i></p> <p>Verse 4 Take my will and make it Thine, It shall be no longer mine; Take my heart, it is Thine own, It shall be Thy royal throne, It shall be Thy royal throne.</p> <p>Words: Frances R. Havergal Music: Henri A.C. Malan</p> <p>Obedience to God means choosing to have our wills and our hearts be guided by God's good ways instead of following our own sinful ways. This is not something we can do in our own strength. We have to turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. We must ask Him to take our wills and our hearts and make them want to joyfully obey His good ways. God delights to answer prayers like these! He promises to answer them!</p>
<p align="center">AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY</p>	<p align="center">BIBLE VERSE SONG</p>
<p><i>A=Adoration, C=Confession, T=Thanksgiving, S=Supplication</i></p> <p>A God, we praise You for being the giver of strength to obey You and Your good laws.</p> <p>C God, we confess that we many times, like Maskipaton, we don't want to turn away from our sins and obey You. Many times we want to keep on living our own way.</p> <p>T God, we thank You for sending the Holy Spirit to work in Your people's hearts, so that they, like Maskipaton, do turn from their sins and trust in Jesus as their own Savior. And, thank You that You can give them strength to obey You even when it is very hard. Nothing is too hard for You!</p> <p>S God, work in our hearts. Help us to confess our sins, turn away from them and trust Jesus as our own Savior. Fill us with Your Holy Spirit and give us the desire and strength to obey You, even when it is very hard.</p>	<p>Jesus Replied <i>PFI NIV Songs 12, Track 19</i></p> <p>Jesus replied, "If anybody loves me, He will obey my teaching," Jesus replied, Jesus replied, "My Father will love him and we will come, And make our home with him," Jesus replied.</p> <p><i>But that's not all Jesus said....</i></p> <p>Jesus replied, He who doesn't love me, Will not obey my teaching," Jesus replied, John Fourteen, twenty-three and twenty-four.</p> <p>Words adapted from John 14:23-24 Constance Dever © 2011</p> <p>In these verses, Jesus teaches that love for God is more than just a good feeling in our hearts or saying that we love Him. True love for God shows itself by obeying Him. This is the kind of person who gets to know the wonderful fellowship of God through His Holy Spirit living in their heart.</p>