

BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

We're in... Unit 5: God, the Good Creator

Unit 5 Big Question and Answer:

Can You Tell What God Made?

God Made All Things Good!

PFI ESV Songs 5, Tracks 3,4

Unit 5 Bible Verse: Genesis 1:1,31, ESV

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth...God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good."
PFI ESV Songs 5, Track 5

BIBLE TRUTH

We're learning... Bible Truth 2:

God Created People Perfectly Good in the Beginning

People were God's last creation when He created the world. In some ways, God made people like the other earthly creatures. He gave them wonderful, perfect bodies. They were just right for all He wanted them to do and to be--just like He had done for the other creatures.

But in another way, God made people very different from everything else. You see, God created the other creatures after their own kind, but God chose to make people in His own image.

They were to be a one-of-a-kind reflection of who He is. So God gave to them alone a mind that could learn about the world and see how it showed what He was like--a bit like His great mind. And, He gave them alone a everlasting spirit that could know and love Him and each other--a bit like His Spirit. And because God created them good, they could know and love Him and each other without any sin or sadness. How wonderful that must have been!

God put these first people He made--Adam and Eve-- in charge of the earth. They and their children were to enjoy it, care for the creatures in it, explore it and fill it with people until they made all of it their home."

BIBLE VERSE

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

Bible Truth 2 Bible Verse: Genesis 1:26-28, ESV

"Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness... So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

CASE STORY

Our story is called:

The Case of the Mixed Up Man.

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

1. Who was the Mixed Up Man? What was he mixed up about?
2. Who helped him not be mixed up anymore? What did he learn?

This story doesn't take place in Bible times. It takes place in the 1970's, starting out in the United States.

"I can't believe those Christian missionaries! Who do they think they are going all around the world changing people's beliefs! Why do they think their religion is better than everyone else's?" Sam Turner angrily thought as he walked out of his anthropology class.

In class, his teacher told about native peoples who stopped worshiping their tribe's gods and became Christians when missionaries told them about Jesus. This may sound like something good to us, but not to this teacher. He didn't believe in the Bible nor the good news of Jesus. He thought it was very bad for people to change the gods they worshiped.

"There is no one, true God who made people in His image," the teacher told Sam and the other students. People are just very smart animals who make up their own gods and their own rules about right and wrong," he said. "Christians are all wrong! They shouldn't try to change these native people's beliefs" he told the class.

He thought his teacher was right. Sam didn't believe in the Bible or Jesus either. "One day, I am going to one of those faraway places where Christians have gone to tell people about Jesus," Sam decided. "I am going to see how they have ruined people. I want everyone to see that Christianity is not true and Christians shouldn't be allowed to tell native peoples about Jesus," Sam thought.

Sam got on an airplane and flew all the way from New York in America to Irian Jaya in Indonesia. Irian Jaya is on a large island with some of the wildest land and tallest mountains in the world (over 15,000 feet high!). There are rivers full of crocodiles and even fresh-water sharks. There are spiders big enough to eat birds. And deep in jungly mountains lived hundreds of tribes of people, still living in simple grass huts, hunting with spears and farming with stone tools. Many were fierce warriors who kept their

enemies' heads as prizes. Some even ate their enemies for food! Sam knew that Christians had been coming to Irian Jaya to tell these peoples about Jesus. Many were turning away from fierce ways and trusting in Jesus as their Savior. As they did, their whole lives changed.

"This will be the perfect place to see how the missionaries are ruining people," Sam thought. "I can't wait to tell others about all the bad things the Christians are doing to these native peoples. Maybe I can help stop missionaries from ruining other tribes," he decided.

Sam's plane glided below a circle of towering, green mountain peaks and landed on the tiny airstrip at Wamena village. Sam got out of the plane and felt like he had stepped back thousands of years in time. Men and women of the Dani tribe ran out from grass huts to greet him. They were dressed in almost nothing, their faces decorated with paint markings, and they wore wearing pig bone necklaces and nose pieces. These were the kind of native people Sam longed to see! Untouched by missionaries!

But it wasn't the Dani people who Sam had come to see. He had come to find the Nduga tribe. The Ndugas were a people feared for being cruel warriors. They were known for quickly killing strangers who came into their village. Like the other peoples of Irian Jaya, the Ndugas feared evil spirits. In the last few years, missionaries had come to their village and told them about Jesus. Sam was going there to see how Christianity had ruined the Ndugas. He wanted to prove his teacher right—and the missionaries wrong!

Sam strapped on his backpack and began the long, dangerous hike over the mountains and into the heart of wild Irian Jaya. He crossed deep mountain gulches on flimsy rope bridges. He grunted his way up steep, rocky trails and swam deep rivers filled with blood-sucking leeches and crocodiles. Huge swarms of mosquitoes pestered him every step of the way, but nothing would stop Sam from getting to the Ndugas in Mbuwa Valley...or would it?

Sam got very sick with malaria. His head pounded and his body burned with fever. His muscles ached and he kept throwing up. Sam wanted to stop, but he knew he had to keep going or else he would die. He must get help!

Somehow Sam made it to the Nduga village; but as soon as he did, he passed out on the ground and would not wake up! What would the Ndugas do to this stranger? Kill him like they did other strangers?

No, they would not! The Ndugas were a changed

people. The missionaries had told them the good news of Jesus and they believed! God had forgiven their sins and by His Holy Spirit, changed their hearts. No longer did they hate and kill. Now they loved God and others. They would even love this stranger. They gathered around Sam and tried to help him.

"Whoever this man is, he is very weak and near death," they realized. "We must do something quickly if we are to save him," they said.

They went to Aser, the one man in the village they thought could save Sam and said, "Aser, the missionaries trained you in medicine. Take this man and try to keep him alive."

Aser scooped up Sam's limp body in his strong arms and carried him away to his family's hut.

Day and night Aser and his family cared for Sam, doing everything they knew to keep him alive. Finally, days later, Sam began to stir. As he opened his eyes he was confused to see the plain, wooden plank walls and grassy roof of Aser's hut. "Where am I? What happened to me?" he thought.

Then he remembered: his journey, his sickness and then collapsing with sickness at the Nduga village. "Someone must have brought me here to take care of me, but who?" wondered Sam. "It must be this man," Sam realized, as Aser came toward him. Aser smiled at Sam and said something to him in a strange language. "Thank you!" Sam said to Aser. Aser nodded. Even though Aser did not know English, he seemed to understand.

Sam was getting better, but he still was very, very weak. Aser knew it would take many more days of rest and good food for Sam to get well. Each day he had children bring Sam steaming hot sweet potatoes to eat. When Aser saw that sweet potatoes would not be enough nourishment for Sam to get well, he went out and killed some of his own very precious chickens and ducks to feed him.

Sam could not believe the love and kindness of Aser and the Nduga people for him. "Weren't these people supposed to be fierce warriors? Weren't they known for killing strangers?" Sam puzzled. "What would have happened to him, if the missionaries hadn't come to train Aser in medicine? What had happened to change them into the caring, generous people who sacrificed so much to nurse him back to life?" Sam wondered.

Aser and the others tried to tell him, even though they

did not know much English: "It is the Creator God who changed us through Jesus. He took away our hate and sin. He made our hearts clean and changed us to what He meant us to be when He created us. We love and know Him. His love in us goes out to love you," they told Sam.

Sam could hardly believe what he saw and heard. He remembered what he had been taught in college: "There is no one true God who made people in His image. People are just really smart animals." Hadn't he come all the way to Irian Jaya to prove the missionaries wrong? But now Sam wondered if perhaps he was the one who was wrong. The Ndugas did not think the good news of Jesus had ruined them. They believed it had made them into who they had always meant to be!

Sam got well and stayed on with the Ndugas. They taught him how to farm sweet potatoes with simple, stone tools and how to make twig traps to catch wild pigs. Best of all, they taught Sam more about the God who had saved them and changed them.

The more Sam saw of the wonderful changes in the Ndugas, the more confused he was about what his teacher had taught him. "I must leave the Ndugas and find some English-speaking missionaries who can answer my questions," Sam decided. "I have to know the truth about humans. Are they just very smart animals or are they really created in God's image as the Christians say?" Sam decided. So very reluctantly, he said goodbye to his good friends, the Ndugas, and headed back over the mountains.

After days and days of traveling, Sam finally found some English-speaking missionaries at Jayapura. Sam told them his story and asked them lots of questions about the Bible and the good news of Jesus.

"Take this Bible and these books, Sam, they will help you to understand the truth about the one true God who made us in His image to know and to love Him," the missionaries said.

Sam thanked them and boarded a ship for America. Sam had come to Irian Jaya to prove that the good news of Jesus ruined people, but he left knowing how it changed their lives for the good.... He could how it had begun to change his life, too.

Our Bible Truth is:

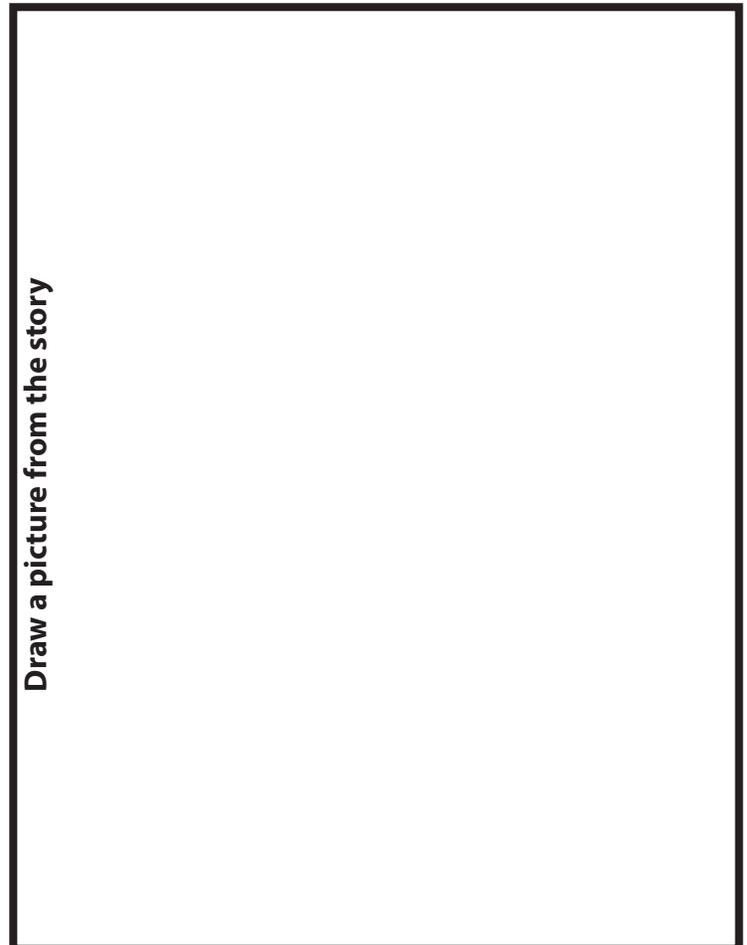
God Created People Perfectly Good in the Beginning

Our Bible Verse is: Genesis 1:26-28

"Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness... So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

God used the changed lives of the Ndugas to show Sam Turner the truth about God, about Jesus and about people. God promises to transform our lives, when we repent of our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

And if we do, He will use our transformed lives to show the people around us the truth about Himself, too. Let's praise God our Good Creator for choosing to make us far more than just smart animals, but unique creatures made in His own image. Let's ask Him to work in our hearts and help us to turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Let's ask Him to use our lives to show others the wonderful changes God makes when His Spirit is at work in our heart.



Draw a picture from the story

SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU

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

God put people on the earth to enjoy it, to fill it with people and to take care of it.

Answer: True.

2. Crack the Case Questions:

a. Who was the Mixed Up Man? What was he mixed up about?

Answer: Sam Turner. He was mixed up about people. He thought they were animals, no different from the other mammals.

b. Who helped him not be mixed up anymore? What did he learn?

Answer: The Nduga people. When he saw the great change God's Holy Spirit did inside their hearts, God worked in his heart, too, helping him see that people are made in God's image. They are not just animals. He began to seek God, too.

3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse: Genesis 1:26-28

"Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our ____... So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and ____ he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have ____ over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Answers: likeness; female; dominion.

AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY

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

A God, we praise You for being the Creator who gave us a spirit to know and love You. You made us so very different from the animals.

C God, we confess that many times we don't want to know and love You, even though You gave us a spirit so that we can. Many times we use our spirit to rebel against You and to do things our own way--even if it's wrong. We need a Savior!

T God, we thank You for giving us a spirit to know and love You. Thank You for sending Jesus, who brings us forgiveness of sins and sends the Holy Spirit to work powerful changes in our hearts. He transforms even the worst of sinners into people who love You and others.

S God, we ask that You would work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Give us a new heart, change our lives, like you did the Nduga people. Help us to love You and live for You like they did.

BIBLE TRUTH HYMN

All People Who on Earth Do Dwell

PFI ESV Songs 5, Track 11

Verse 1

All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;
Him serve with fear, His praise forthtell;
Come ye before Him and rejoice.

Verse 2

The Lord, ye know, is God indeed,
Without our aid He did us make;
We are His folk, He doth us feed,
And for His sheep He doth us take.

Words Psalm 100; Paraphrased, William Kethes
Music Genevan Psalter, 1551 Edition, attr. Louis Bourgeois

This hymn reminds us that we, along with peoples of the earth, should serve and praise the Lord because He is our Creator. He made us to know Him and worship Him. Of all people, God's people, have reason to rejoice in God, their Creator. He saved them through Jesus. He has made them His very own, special people, who He takes special care of.

BIBLE VERSE SONG

Then God Said

PFI ESV Songs 5, Track 12

Then God said, "Let us make man,
Let us make man in our own image."
Then God said, "Let us make man,
Let us make man in our own image."
Male and female, He created them,
Male and female, He created them.

Then God said, "Let us make man,
Let us make man in our own image."
Then God said, "Let us make man,
Let us make man in our own image."
Genesis One, twenty-six and seven.

Words: Genesis 1:26-27, NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012

The Bible tells us God made people in the beginning. He made them in His image, that means, they reflect Him in a very special way. Of all the earthly creatures, they alone were created with a spirit, like God's Spirit, that can know and love God. God created people to be able to see God's glory in everything He made. And, He created them to care for the world He created as caretakers under Him.