

BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

We're in... Unit 8: The God Who Loves

Unit 8 Big Question and Answer and Song:

"What Is God's Love for His People Like?"

PFI NIV Songs 8, Tracks 3,4

Unit 8 Bible Verse and Song: 1 Chronicles 16:34 NIV 1984

"Give thanks to the LORD for He is good. His love endures forever."

PFI NIV Songs 8, Track 5

BIBLE TRUTH

We're learning... Bible Truth 5:

God Uses Everything in His People's Lives for Their Good and His Glory

When we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior, God becomes our Heavenly Father and we become His adopted children.

God promises His children to use everything that happens to them in their life on earth for their good and His glory. Ahead of time, God prepared special good works for each of them to do. He has also planned to carefully allow hard times and suffering in their lives for His special, good purposes.

What are these special, good purposes? To bring glory to His name, showing the world what He is like. And, to change them so that they become more like Jesus, who loves His Father completely and delights in Him and His perfectly good will. These are the two things God's people want most of all!

No one likes to suffer--not even for the best of purposes! But, God's people are so happy to know that there is nothing in their lives--from the easiest, most enjoyable thing to the very saddest, hardest thing--that their loving Father has not chosen very carefully to use for their good and His glory.

BIBLE VERSE

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

Bible Truth 5 Bible Verse: Romans 8:28-30:

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose. For those God foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those He predestined, He also called; and those He called, He also justified; those He justified, He also glorified."

CASE STORY

Our story is called:

The Case of the Blind Cliff-Walker.

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

1. Who was the Blind Cliff-Walker? How did he become blind? What cliffs did he walk on?
2. How did God use the boy's blindness for his good? How did God use the boy's cliff-walking for His own glory?

This story doesn't take place in Bible times. It starts out in 1980 in Nepal.

Down the steep trail trekked a young man and his wife, carrying all of their simple belongings. All around them towered the great, snowy mountains of Nepal. Mountains like Mount Everest, the tallest mountain in the world. But as amazing as view was, the young couple kept their eyes on the narrow path. looking down. One wrong step and they could easily fall hundreds of feet to their death.

How sad this couple were! They loved Nepal, but they had to leave. They couldn't find jobs to make enough money for their family. So they packed their belongings, left their home and headed to Darjeeling, India to work in the tea gardens there.

After many miles, the couple came to the rolling hills of Darjeeling! The man got a job in the tea gardens that paid well. At last they could settle down!

Not long after arriving in Darjeeling, the couple's first child was born-- a little boy they named Titus. How happy there were! The man and his wife brought offerings of fruit and incense and bowed low before their Hindu gods: "We dedicate our son to you," they prayed. "Bless him, protect him and make him strong that he may bring honor and glory to your great names."

For many years it seemed like the Hindu gods honored the prayers of Titus' parents. Titus grew up happy and strong. But when Titus turned twelve, everything changed. His eyes started hurting him a lot. Titus' parents called for the only help they knew of: the village witch doctor. The witch doctor chanted prayers and put his magical mixtures on Titus' eyes, but nothing helped. Titus' eyesight kept getting worse until at last he was completely blind!

Things quickly went from bad to worse for Titus. Not long after he had lost his eyesight, both of his parents died. What would happen to him now? Who would care for this lone, blind boy?

Some of the villagers felt sorry for Titus. They decided to send him to a school for the blind run by a Christian mission in another village in Darjeeling. They would give Titus food, clothing and a place to live. They could also teach him how to read and write with special raised dots, called Braille. And even teach him a skill to make money, such as how to make furniture out of cane.

At the school, Titus felt more alone than ever. His parents were gone. The villagers he had grown up with were miles away. And because this was a Christian mission school, Titus did not even have the Hindu gods and goddesses he had worshiped.

Titus was confused. Why had all these bad things happened to him? What about the prayers his parents had long ago offered up to the Hindu gods for him: Had the gods forgotten him? Had they rejected him? Was this how they honored and glorified their names through him? Titus could not understand why the gods would treat him this way.

But the problem with Titus' Hindu gods wasn't that they had forgotten Titus or rejected him. The problem was that those Hindu gods were only fake ones--made of wood, stone and gold. They couldn't bless or protect Titus. They couldn't make him strong, no matter how many prayers and offerings his parents had made.

But there was a true God. His name is the LORD. He loved His people and made all things in their lives work for their good and His glory. He knew and loved Titus, as Titus was soon to find out.

Titus began to go to classes at his school. His teachers taught him how to read and write Braille, and how to make furniture out of cane to make a living for himself. But since they were Christians, they also taught Titus about the Lord, the one true God, and His Son Jesus, who He sent to save all who would ever turn from their sins and trust Him as their Savior.

As Titus learned about Jesus, the Holy Spirit worked in his heart. He turned away from his sins and trusted Jesus as His Savior. Peace and joy flooded into Titus' heart as Jesus took away his fears and guilt. Titus' life was changed. Long ago his parents had dedicated his life to glorifying the Hindu gods. Now he was dedicating his life to glorifying the Lord.

"But what could Titus do to glorify the Lord?" perhaps you are thinking. "He's little, alone and helpless. What good

could God work through his sad, little life? How could Titus bring God glory?

A huge amount of good to Titus and others, and a huge amount of glory to Himself, that's what! For the greater the weakness or difficulty God's people face, the greater room there is for God to be glorified as He turns something bad or something hard into something good and God-glorifying. And that's just what God did through Titus.

Titus spent long hours moving his hand over the raised bumps of words in his Braille Bible, learning all he could. Before long, Titus became a Bible teacher at the school.

As a teacher, Titus taught the new students about Jesus. He urged them to turn away from worshiping idols and trust in Jesus as their Savior. He told them of God's wonderful plans to use everything thing in His people's lives for their good and His glory. He told them how God had used his blindness and the deaths of his parents to God to save him. Many students turned from their sins and trusted in Jesus, too.

This was just the beginning. God stirred Titus' heart to spread the good news of Jesus to others. First, blind Titus made his way down the road to tell the people in the nearby villages about Jesus. Then, he made his way down the road to faraway villages in Darjeeling. And then, most amazing of all, all the way to Nepal!

Along narrow, treacherous mountain paths. Down through hilly jungles known for robbers and fierce, wild animals. Across raging rivers. Blind Titus traveled them all, depending upon God to keep him safe. And God did, sometimes in most amazing ways.

Once Titus accidentally took a road under construction. The workers had just laid dynamite on the part he was walking on. Of course, blind Titus couldn't see the workers or the dynamite; and the workers didn't see him until it was too late.

"Kaboom" went the dynamite! "Crash!" went huge rocks flew up in the air and shook the earth as they hit the ground, all around Titus. The blind man could do nothing but stand where he was and trust God. Was he killed? No! Was he even injured? No! Did even a single stone hit him? No! The Lord protected him completely.

When the construction workers saw what happened they asked the same question everyone else asked: "How could this blind man fearlessly pass along these paths that many people with good eyesight dared not travel? How

could he stand in the middle of a dynamite blast and not be harmed?"

Titus delighted to tell them. "My parents dedicated me to Hindu gods when I was a child, but it is the Lord who is the one, true God. He sent His Son to save all would ever turn from their sins and trust Him as their Savior. He saved me."

"Now I am one of His people. He loves me and uses everything in my life for my good and His glory, even my blindness. He is the one who protects me and gives me strength to travel all these dangerous places. He has brought me here to tell you about Him that you might see His glory and power through my weakness and trust Jesus as your Savior, too," he told them.

God worked in the hearts of many who saw what He had done in Titus. Many in Darjeeling and Nepal have turned from their sins and trusted in Jesus, believing that the God who loved Titus and worked such wonders in his life, surely must be the one, true God. He alone should be worshiped. He alone would they trust with their lives.

Titus rejoiced to see God use his life—and most of all his blindness-- to show others about His glory and power. How wonderful that God could do such great things through his weakness!

And it seems that God is still working through Titus. For at last report, Brother Titus is still alive, traveling and teaching everywhere the Lord leads him, bringing glory to the One who has used everything in his life for his good.

Our Bible Truth is: God Uses Everything in His People's Lives for Their Good and His Glory

Our Bible Verse is: Romans 8:28-30:

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose. For those God foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those He predestined, He also called; and those He called, He also justified; those He justified, He also glorified."

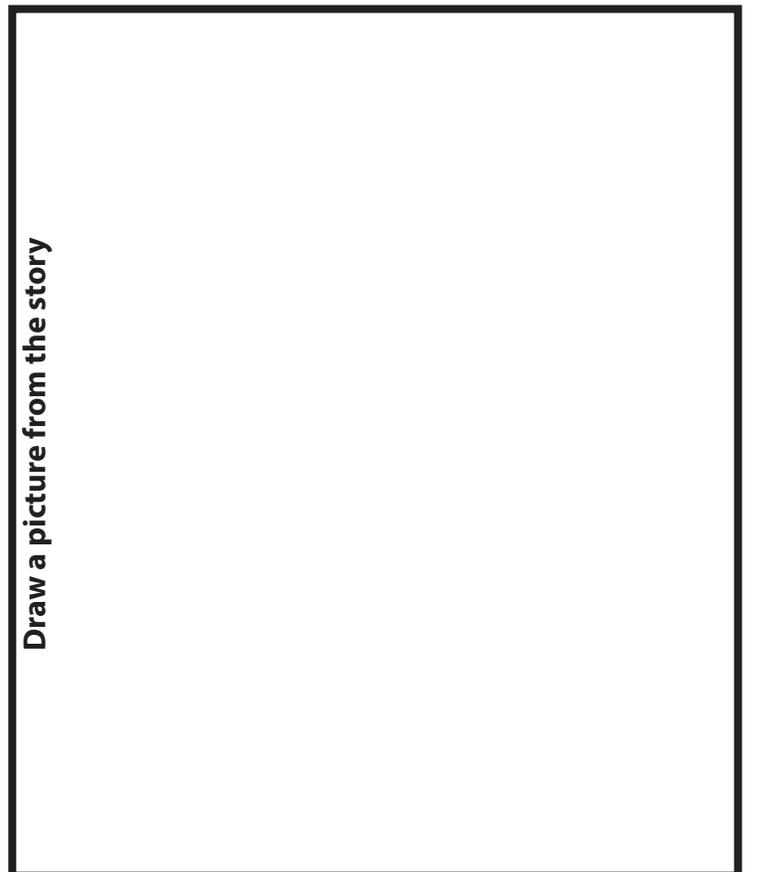
Losing both of his parents, becoming blind, being taken away from everyone he knew, were such very, very hard things for young Titus to bear! But Titus saw God use them all for his own good and God's own glory?

Traveling alone and blind through tall mountains with wild, hungry animals, steep, dangerous cliffs and robbers

would cause most people to worry. But not Titus. He knew God was all-powerful and that He loved him. He trusted that God's plan for his life would be for his good and God's glory, no matter what it was. And even today, God is using Titus' life tell more people about Him and to bring more glory to His name.

What about you and me? What kind of hard things have we had to go through or may yet happen to us? Could the Lord use those things for our good and His glory? Could He use them to make us more like Jesus? Could He use our lives to tell others about Him and bring glory to His name? Yes, without a doubt, He can and He will--when we are His people, those who have turned from their sins and trust Jesus as their Savior. For the Lord loves His people so much; and it is His promise that He will use absolutely everything that happens to them for His good and His glory.

Let's praise God for loving His people so much and being so powerful as to make everything in their lives work for their good and His glory. Let's ask Him to work in our hearts, helping us to turn from our sins and trust in Him as our Savior. Let's ask Him to use even all the difficult things in our lives to work for our good and His glory; and, to help us not to just be sad or worried about troubles we may have, but excited that He will use them all in a glorious way.



Draw a picture from the story

SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU

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

Ahead of time—even before He created the world, God prepared special good works for each of His people to do.
Answer: True.

2. Crack the Case Questions

a. Who was the Blind Cliff-Walker? How did he become blind? What cliffs did he walk on?

Answer: A boy named Titus. From an illness when he was twelve years old.

b. How did God use the boy's blindness for his good? How did God use the man's cliff-walking for His own glory?

Answer: Titus was sent to a special school to learn Braille and there he learned about Jesus and became a Christian. Titus' brave trust in God to guide him even along the steep, cliff-roads of Nepal showed many just how great God is to take care of His people.

3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse: Romans 8:28-30

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who ___ Him, who have been called according to His purpose. For those God ___, He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His ___, that He might be the firstborn among many ___. And those He predestined, He also called; and those He called, He also justified; those He justified, He also glorified."

Answers: love; foreknew; Son; brothers.

AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY

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

A God, we praise You for being the Perfect User of all the things in Your people's lives, for their good and Your glory.

C God, we confess that many times we complain about hard things that happen to us rather than ask You to use them for our good and Your glory. We need a Savior!

T God, we thank You for promising to use everything in the lives of Your people for Your good purposes.

S God, work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Use all the things in our lives for our good and Your glory.

BIBLE TRUTH HYMN

How Firm a Foundation

PFI NIV Songs 8, Tracks 15,16

Verse 3

"When thro' fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all sufficient, shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

Verse 4

"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;
That soul, tho' all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no, never, no, never forsake!"

Words: John Rippon's Selection of Hymns

Music: Joseph Funk's Genuine Church Music

God's people know all God has an unbreakable plan to use all things in their lives for their good. He has planned that even their "fiery trials"—the hardest things that happen to them—that God will use them all to make them like Jesus. They do not have to like the fiery trials, but they can praise God for how He will use them for their good and His glory.

BIBLE VERSE SONG

All Things

PFI NIV Songs 8, Track 17

All things, yes, all things,
And we know that in all things, God works for the good,
Of those who love Him, Who have been called,
Called according to His purpose.
(*But why? What was God doing for His people?*)

For those God foreknew,
He also predestined, He predestined,
To be conformed, to be conformed,
To the likeness of His Son.
(*But why? What was God doing for Jesus?*)
That He, That He might be,
The firstborn among many, many, Of many, brothers,
So He might be, firstborn of many brothers.
Romans Eight, twenty-eight and twenty-nine.

Words: Romans 8:28,29 NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2015

God's people are those who love Him. In His great love, He has called them to turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins. This is what it means to be justified. But being justified in just the beginning of God's good forever plans for His people. He also planned for all things in their lives—both enjoyable things and hard things—for the good purpose of making them more like Jesus. Yes, He would use all of them to prepare them for life with Him in heaven, where they would be glorified: forever freed from sin and a pure reflection of God's glory. This is God's wonderful plan for making everything in His people's lives for their good and His glory.