



**DiscipleLand**

*Missionary Biography Questions*

Level 5, Quarter A—Don & Carol Richardson

Integrate these questions and activities into your **DiscipleLand** Missionary Biography time. Expand your children's understanding of each story segment.

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## 5A—Missionary Biography

Don & Carol Richardson

### Teacher Intro—DON and CAROL RICHARDSON

For thousands of years, darkness hung over the jungle peoples of New Guinea. The ways of their ancestors included fear, violence, and betrayal. For the Sawi (saw-wee), the highest ideal was to “fatten a victim with friendship” before taking his head in treachery and feasting on him. Into this world of headhunters and cannibals ventured Don and Carol Richardson, bearing the Gospel of peace.

God has set eternity in the hearts of men (Ecclesiastes 3:11). The Living God has prepared the hearts of unreached peoples, like the Sawi, to understand and respond to the Gospel. God embedded the “redemptive analogy” of the peace child into the ceremonies and mythology of Sawi culture. The darkness finally lifts when the Sawi joyfully receive the Good News of Jesus, the true Peace Child.

### Lesson 1—Sharing God’s Story

Read the story from page 12 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* God uses people today to reach others for Jesus.

#### Discussion Questions:

**Why is the Bible God’s greatest story?**

**Can you mention other great Christians who were not in the Bible?**

**What kinds of dangers do missionaries face? Why do they take such great risks?**

**Don and Carol began serving God at a young age. Why did they not become missionaries right away?**

**What might God be preparing you for?**

### Lesson 2—A Dangerous Call

The story so far... **Don and Carol Richardson became Christians when they were teenagers. They did not know it, but God was preparing them for a great adventure.**

Read the story from page 18 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* God calls certain people to tell about Him in faraway lands.

#### Discussion Questions:

**What specific call did Don hear from God? What two things did Don do first to answer God’s call?**

Show kids where Papua New Guinea is on a map or globe. **Whom did God use to speak to Don? Who was God also speaking to at the same time?**

**How would you feel if God called you to serve Him among cannibals?**

**Did God send Don and Carol to New Guinea right away? Why do you think He made them wait, even though they already knew His call?**

**Why do you think God calls certain people to be missionaries and not others?**

### Lesson 3—Preparations

The story so far... **God was preparing Don and Carol to be missionaries in New Guinea. Even though they knew God's call, they spent time preparing and waiting for God to tell them the time was right.**

Read the story from page 24 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* God trains people to serve Him in the best way possible.

#### Discussion Questions:

**God was calling Don and Carol to more than just missionary work. What happened to them? What are other ways God can use marriage for a man and woman to serve Him together?**

**What special training did Don and Carol receive. Why is this training important?**

**What must missionaries first do before taking the Good News to an unreached people group? Why?**

**What is the second thing missionaries must do? Why is this important?**

**Don and Carol have already been through a lot, and they are not even in new Guinea yet. Why do you think their lives have gone on the paths they have?**

### Lesson 4—The Sawi

The story so far... **Don and Carol marry and then begin language training. They are preparing themselves to learn the language of the people they'll be reaching with Jesus' message.**

Read the story from page 30 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* Serving Jesus can be difficult and dangerous.

#### Discussion Questions:

**What has changed in Don and Carol's world? How do you think a baby would change your family?**

**What decision do Don and Carol have to make? What are the "pros and cons" of each decision?**

**What did Don and Carol do to reach a decision?**

**What answer did they receive? How were they able to be at peace and enthusiastically choose to be with the Sawi people?**

**In what other ways can serving Jesus be dangerous? Why is it always the best choice?**

### Lesson 5—God's Timing

The story so far... **Don, Carol, and their new baby, Stephen, have arrived in New Guinea. The Holy Spirit directed them to go live among the Sawi, even though it would have been safer to stay with the other missionaries.**

Read the story from page 36 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* God orchestrates all situations.

#### Discussion Questions:

**What were Don and the other missionaries looking for?**

**Why do you think the Sawi were so hard to find? How would you enjoy exploring a jungle?**

**Why were the Sawi men traveling? How did Don and the Sawi meet? What was remarkable about this meeting?**

**Given that they could not speak the Sawi language, how do you imagine Don and the others convinced the Sawi men to ride in their boat?**

**What did Don immediately begin doing? What did he tell Hadi that he wanted to do? How did Hadi respond?**

### Lesson 6—A Jungle Home

The story so far... **Don and some other missionaries have finally encountered the Sawi! Don works hard to earn their trust and to communicate that he would like to live near their village.**

Read the story from page 42 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* God created all the earth and is in control of nature.

#### Discussion Questions:

**What do you think would be hard about living in a jungle? What would be fun?**

**Don heard the "voice of the jungle." What do you think this voice was? What did it tell Don? Why did it say those things?**

**How did Don counteract this voice? Who is really in control of nature? What did Don choose?**

**What happened when Don chose to trust God? How much braver do you think you could be when you know that God is "on your side"?**

### Lesson 7—Funny Mistakes

The story so far...**Don has gone to the jungle near the Sawi to build a home for his wife, Carol, and his son, Stephen. Even though the jungle is intimidating, Don chooses to trust God for his safety.**

Read the story from page 48 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* Building good relationships is key to reaching people for God.

#### Discussion Questions:

**Describe Don and Carol's new home. How would you feel, living in a home like that?**

**What does Carol do to "get in good" with the Sawi people? What does Don do?**

**How does Don go about trying to learn Sawi words? Why does this technique backfire? What do you think Don learned from this experience?**

**Why are good relationships important when telling others about Jesus?**

### Lesson 8—The Wrong Hero

The story so far...**Don and Carol are living with the Sawi. Carol helps care for the sick while Don tries hard to learn the Sawi language.**

Read the story from page 54 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* God reveals things to people in His own time.

#### Discussion Questions:

**Don and Carol were finally ready to share the Gospel. How do you think they felt?**

**How did the Sawi respond? How do you think Don and Carol must have felt at such a frustrating response. Why did they keep going?**

**Why did the Sawi become so excited at the story of Judas? The Sawi culture honored betrayal and traitors. Does God let people continue to live in ignorance?**

**Don and Carol must have felt frustrated and a little lost. What did they do? Do you believe God could make a way for the Sawi to understand His love?**

### Lesson 9—The Peace Child

The story so far...**Don and Carol had shared the Gospel with Sawi, but they had completely misunderstood. Because of their culture, the Sawi believed that the traitor, Judas—not Jesus—was the hero of the story!**

Read the story from page 60 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* Jesus bridges barriers of language and culture.

#### Discussion Questions:

**What aspects of Sawi culture caused the two villages to war with each other? How did Don and Carol add to the tension?**

**What do Don and Carol decide to do? Do you think their decision was the right one? Why or why not?**

**How do the Sawi feel about their decision? What do they tell Don?**

**What amazing thing happens the next day? Why does this act cause peace among the Sawi? What does this act remind you of?**

### Lesson 10—A Redemptive Analogy

The story so far...**Don and Carol were ready to leave the Sawi. Two villages were warring because of their culture and because of the missionaries' presence. The villages make peace with each other when one man gives his son to a man in the other village. This son is called "the peace child."**

Read the story from page 66 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* God sent Jesus as humanity's "Peace Child."

#### Discussion Questions:

**Why were Don and Carol excited?**

**What is a "redemptive analogy"?**

**How is the peace child an analogy for the Gospel?**

**Can you think of other redemptive analogies from your own or other cultures?**

### **Lesson 11—Jesus Comes In**

The story so far... **God has brought Don and Carol a “redemptive analogy”—the peace child is a Sawi custom that they can use to understand the Gospel.**

Read the story from page 72 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* God can transform the lives of all people.

#### Discussion Questions:

**How did Don use the peace child to explain the Gospel?**

**How did the Sawi respond at first? What were they afraid of?**

**Why didn't Don or Carol give up? What finally happened? How did God respond to Hato's declaration?**

**What happened to Sawi culture as more and more people trust Jesus as their Peace Child?**

**Why do you think people change so much once they become a Christian?**

### **Lesson 12—The Unreached Are Waiting**

The story so far... **Don and Carol finally see the fruit of their labor for the Lord—several Sawi accept Jesus as their Peace Child! God's Spirit transforms the Sawi culture as more and more people become Christians.**

Read the story from page 78 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* There are more people to reach for God's kingdom.

#### Discussion Questions:

**Did Don and Carol “rest on their laurels” after their success with the Sawi? What did they do?**

**When they returned to America, what became their focus? Why do you think redemptive analogies are important in missionary work?**

**After his wife died, did Don stop his work for the Lord? Why not?**

**How is God at work in people even now who have never heard about Jesus? Why is it important for us to do our part to make sure the Gospel message is heard?**