



DiscipleLand

Missionary Biography Questions

Level 5, Quarter C—Church History Vignettes

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

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5C—Missionary Biography

Church History Vignettes

Teacher Intro—CHURCH HISTORY VIGNETTES

Throughout every era of church history, the Kingdom of God has been advancing as the message of the Gospel spreads to the ends of the earth. Beginning with the Jews in Jerusalem, the message spread to the Gentiles of the Roman Empire, then to the Barbarians of Europe, to the Vikings of the north, to the Muslims of the Mediterranean, and finally across the oceans to the peoples of Africa, India, East Asia, and the Americas.

In every century, the Holy Spirit has sent out men and women as missionaries. Consider Bartolomé de Las Casas, a Spanish missionary who stands up against the abuses of the conquistadors. Learn about Boniface, who opposes the false gods of the north and devotes his life to sharing the Gospel of peace. Then, eavesdrop on the Haystack Prayer Meeting that thrusts the fledgling American nation into foreign missions for the first time in history.

Lesson 1—Bartolomé de La Casas 1484-1566

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

Discussion Questions:

Show kids where Spain and the West Indies are on a map or globe. **What is a Spanish conquistador? What do you think it would have been like to live in an age of discovery?**

How was La Casas' attitude changed toward slavery? What other changes did La Casas make in his life?

Why did Bartolomé return to Europe? Was his mission successful? What did he choose to do in response?

How can you explain the change in someone who was once a warrior and conqueror to become a missionary seeking freedom for the lowliest people? What kind of changes has Jesus made in your life?

Lesson 2—Gregory of Armenia 3rd Century

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

Discussion Questions:

Gregory's father assassinated a king! What were the consequences of his sin for baby Gregory? How did God make good come from that situation?

Show kids where Armenia was on a map or globe—the region between the Black Sea and Caspian Sea. **Why did Gregory want to return to Armenia? Why was it a risk for him to return?**

Gregory spent fifteen years in a filthy dungeon for being a Christian. What things might have sustained him during that time?

How did God intervene on Gregory's behalf? After fifteen years in prison, how did Gregory use his opportunity to talk with the king? How did the king respond?

God was behind big changes in Armenia, but it took a long period of time and difficult hardship for Gregory before those changes occurred. How can this story help you the next time you face a difficult situation?

Lesson 3—Martin of France 319-367

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

Discussion Questions:

Martin was little more than 13-years old when he was forced to serve in the Roman army. How would you feel, being forced to be in the army right now?

Why did Martin treat his servant like an equal?

Why did Martin cut his cloak in half? Why do you think he didn't give his entire cloak to the beggar?

Why did Martin see a vision of Jesus wearing the half-cloak? (See Matthew 25:34-40.)

Why did Martin leave the army? What makes a monastery different from a church? How would you like living in a monastery?

Did Martin stay "holed up" in the monastery? Why or why not?

Lesson 4—Boniface 675-754

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

Discussion Questions:

Thor was worshiped by the Norse people as the god of thunder. Why did Boniface chop down the oak tree dedicated to Thor? What happened next? How did the people respond?

Boniface wanted to tell others about Jesus who had never even heard of him. How many people like that do you think there still are in the world? (More than you think! Hundreds of people groups have still not heard about Christ.)

At the time, why was it unusual for Boniface to include and encourage women in missionary work?

Show kids where Holland is on a map or globe. What price did Boniface ultimately pay for preaching the Gospel and destroying pagan temples? Why was the price worth it, both personally to Boniface and to God's Kingdom?

What price would you be willing to pay to bring others to Christ?

Lesson 5—Cyril and Methodius 9th Century

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

Discussion Questions:

Why were Cyril and Methodius chosen to serve in Moravia? Why is Bible translation important?

Many Christians have made great contributions to the betterment of the world as they have served the Lord. What contribution did Cyril and Methodius make?

Some people wanted Christian services (and Bible translations) to be only in Latin. What reasons might they have had for this? Did these reasons truly honor God? Why or why not?

How did the Pope of the Roman church respond to their activities? What did he recognize?

After Cyril died, what did Methodius do? How can you show similar dedication in your walk with Christ?

Lesson 6—Francis of Assisi 1181-1226

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

Discussion Questions:

Francis wanted to know what it was like to be poor. How does this parallel what Jesus did by coming to earth?

Which of Jesus' examples greatly influenced Francis? How did he respond? How many of you think you could give up all your worldly possessions to serve God?

Why did Francis care for the poor and sick?

How did Francis believe that Muslims could be reached with the Gospel? How did he put his plan into action? How did God reward his efforts?

Francis believed that living simply would help further the cause of the Gospel. How do you think this could work? Are there ways you could live more simply to show Jesus more clearly to others?

Lesson 7—Raymond Lull 1235-1315

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

Discussion Questions:

Raymond Lull was still preaching the Gospel when he was 80-years old! What do you imagine you will be doing when you are 80?

Why had Muslims not associated Christians with God's love? What reasons would people have today for not associating the Church with the love of Christ?

Raymond felt called specifically to reach Muslim people. What particular people groups do you have a special heart for?

What risks did Raymond take to bring the Gospel to Muslims? What trials did he endure?

Raymond's life ended in a public stoning. How could his death be considered a victory for God?

Lesson 8—Francis Xavier 1506-1552

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

Discussion Questions:

How could the tasks Francis Xavier performed in the hospital prepare him for missionary work?

Francis had to leave for India at a moments notice. What does this teach us about God's timing?

Why did Francis live and work among the poor in Goa? What did he do for the people besides telling them the Good News?

Show kids where Japan is on a map or globe. What key difference in the Japanese culture makes Xavier change his approach? Why was he able to engage in intellectual debates when he once humbly served and worked lowly jobs?

Francis served God in many different capacities. How ready are you to follow Christ in whatever way He leads you?

Lesson 9—Matteo Ricci 17th Century

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

Discussion Questions:

Father Ricci dressed in Chinese clothes. Why would this practice make it easier for a missionary to share the Gospel?

Why were the Chinese people so resistant to Christian missionaries? How is this similar to people's resistance to God in general?

How did Ricci work around Chinese arrogance? How is it similar to what Paul did in Acts 17:16-34?

How did God ultimately reward Matteo's efforts? What tract of Ricci's was instrumental in winning over the Chinese emperor?

People usually think of Jesus' Gospel as primarily appealing to the heart, but Ricci's experience shows that the intellect can also respond to the Good News. How would this story change the way you might tell someone about Jesus?

Lesson 10—William Carey 1761-1834

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

Discussion Questions:

Why was William's wife afraid to get off the boat? What things scare you the most?

How did William encourage her?

William was originally a poor shoemaker. Can you think of other examples of people with humble origins who did great things for God?

What things did William do that prepared him for missionary work? Who (besides God) inspired William to leave his smaller world and reach the lost?

William accomplished many things for Christ. Which of his feats most impresses you? Why?

What things can you imagine God doing through you that excite you the most? How can you prepare yourself to help some of those dreams come true?

Lesson 11—Adoniram Judson 1788-1850

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

Discussion Questions:

A group of young people committed themselves to God—not in a church or cathedral, but under a haystack in the pouring rain. Do you think God still honored their commitment?

Why did these young men have trouble fulfilling their call to be missionaries? What roadblocks do you imagine someone like you might face today?

How did Adoniram finally convince a church to send him and others out as missionaries?

How did God reward the young men's persistence? Show kids where Burma (Myanmar) is on a map or globe. Do you feel God might be calling you to serve Him as a missionary? Why or why not?

Lesson 12—Gladys Aylward 1904-1970

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

Discussion Questions:

Gladys had felt the Lord was calling her to China, but she failed her mission board exams. Did she give up? When you failed, are you more likely to give up or try something else to succeed?

What opportunity did God bring to Gladys?

Gladys, a young woman, traveled by land across Europe and Asia! Show these continents on a map or globe. Where did she find the courage and strength she needed to make such a journey?

How did Gladys support herself and tell others about Jesus at the same time? Gladys made every day of life about serving God. How can you do the same?

How did God expand Gladys' ministry? In what ways did she learn to trust in Him?

God had even bigger plans for Gladys than she ever could have realized—she became a true hero of World War II! Why do you think Gladys continued to serve God?

How can you trust God to bring you to bigger and better things?