

Be Holy Like Mary
Supplement to BAD TO THE BONE by Miles McPherson

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Introduction: **BAD TO THE BONE** by Miles McPherson

BAD TO THE BONE, is about “fifteen young Bible heroes who lived radical lives for God.” Miles McPherson helps teenagers to relate to the struggles and victories of these young people in the Bible, and to connect with them as peers and even “role models”. He encourages teens to know that their problems and temptations are the same ones that teenagers have faced for thousands of years...and the Bible gives timeless hope and advice for conquering them!

“The Fine Print” Quote from McPherson

Okay, before the truth police come knocking, I need to tell you that even though th(e) book shines a spotlight on teenagers in the Bible, not everyone featured here is necessarily between the ages of thirteen and nineteen. Some are younger . . . For others we don’t know their exact ages, partly because Hebrew and Greek words for children are sometimes imprecise...All in all, though, the stories in th(e) book feature young people or the lessons they learned when they were young.

The **Bad to the Bone** devotional is set up primarily to be used Monday through Friday. But, as McPherson states,

“. . . rebels for God don’t take weekends off. That’s why I’ve included an important section each week called **Weekend Warriors**. Here, too, you’ll learn about young people in the Bible. But there’s a twist. Not all of them are positive role models; just like the kids around you today, some are living for God, others are not. Either way, you can learn from their victories and their mistakes.”

Here’s Life Inner City is please to present the following material which contains games, read-aloud biographical stories, illustrations, experiential activities and questions that supplement the daily devotionals in Bad to the Bone.

Be Holy Like Mary

INTRODUCTION

As an extra-credit activity during the week that you are studying Mary, a wonderful novel for teens is *Two From Galilee* by Marjorie Holmes. It is “historical fiction”, the story of Mary and Joseph in a very reverent and respectful way, told by a woman who truly believes in the divine infallibility of the Bible. The reading level will be challenging to any students with less than an 8th grade reading level, so reserve it for your students who are up to the challenge.

"Fruit of the Womb" – An Activity Noble Vessels

RECREATION
NOBLE VESSELS
Interject this activity
before the
"Interaction" on page
112 of BAD TO THE BONE

What's Gonna Happen:

This lesson will help teenagers learn the importance of filling themselves with good thoughts and living out noble purposes.

What You Need:

1 glass, cup or mug for each kid (use the fanciest ones available to you)

A bowl of water

A bowl of dirt or potting soil

Something to drink that your group would really enjoy: soda, juice, milkshakes, smoothies, etc.

What You Do:

As you are preparing snacks, ask the kids what their favorite drinks are, and why they like them. As the kids talk, you will take each glass, dip it in the water, and then dip it in the dirt to coat it, especially around the lip. Reserve one clean glass for yourself (or for each leader.) Don't explain what you are doing.

If you have a variety of special drinks, go around the room and take drink orders, and then fill the glasses with the selected beverages. Again, don't explain what you're doing, and ignore any questions kids have about the condition of the glasses and mugs. Once you've distributed all the drinks, say a brief prayer of thanks and take a drink from your [clean] glass. Observe what the teens do.

DISCUSS

1. What's wrong with drinking from a dirty glass or mug? **Read aloud 2 Timothy 2:2-22.**
2. What are some "wicked purposes" that different containers in our lives have? (*Seeking selfish desires; pursuing only physical pleasures and ignoring spiritual matters*).
3. What are wicked things that distance you from God?
4. What are some "noble purposes"? (*Wanting to please God; reaching out to others*).
5. According to this passage, what makes a person's life noble or ignoble? (*The choices that person makes; who and what that person associates with*).
6. How is this experience with the glasses sometimes like God's experience with us when He wants to use us for noble purposes in real life? (*We may be involved in activities or thoughts that make us not suitable for the work that God may want us to be doing. Our bad habits may stand in the way of God using us*).

Have your kids go to the kitchen or bathroom to wash their glasses, then refill them with the special beverage. As you all enjoy your drinks, ask:

7. In what ways can you become a nobler vessel, like Mary, so that God can use you for whatever noble purpose He so desires?

Noble Vessels is adapted from Small Group Body Builders, pp.17-18 by Michael D. Warden ©1998 Group Publishing Inc.



FIELD TRIP

Interject this field trip suggestion before the "Prayer" on page 112 of BAD TO THE BONE

"Fruit of the Womb" – A Field Trip Field Trip

Visit a "foundling hospital" or the ward of a hospital that treats babies who are born addicted to drugs.

As Miles McPherson describes on page 111, discuss how the mother's choices (and the father's choices) have a profound and life-long impact on the baby.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITY:

With your teens, view a video or movie that shows the effect that drugs and alcohol have on the health and development of babies.

"Holy" – An Experiment

Keep Your Eye on the Prize

EXPERIMENT

KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE PRIZE

Interject this experiment at the very beginning of the lesson on page 113 of **BAD TO THE BONE**

What's Gonna Happen:

The teens in your group will try to drink some liquid with two straws.

What You Need:

Liquid to drink (soda, water, juice, etc.)

2 straws for each kid

A glass for each kid

What You Do:

Pour for each kid, a glass of soda or juice, about $\frac{3}{4}$ full.

Put one straw in the liquid and the other straw outside the glass.

Have kids try to drink through the two straws at the same time.

What You Say:

The Bible tells us to seek God first in our lives. That is good advice. Luke 12:29 tells us to focus on just one thing – pleasing God. The problem comes when we try to have God, plus everything else.

To show you that this doesn't work, let's do a little experiment. Let's pour some soda/juice into each of our glasses. This liquid represents the things of God. Now let's each take one straw and take a drink of our soda/juice. How does it taste? Good – you are taking in the things of God.

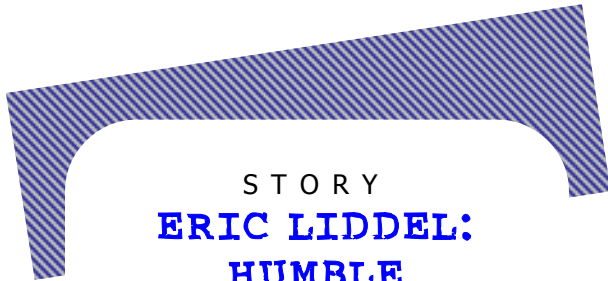
Let's do it again. This time we'll each use 2 straws; the first will be inside the glass, the second outside the glass, which represents the things NOT of God, but of the world...things that take our eyes off of God. Let's see what happens this time. Go ahead and drink. What happens? What? It's not working?

You're right – it doesn't work. And that's the way it is with us, too. If we try to have God and other things too, we end up not having anything. We cannot divide ourselves between God and the world and gain both.

Let's talk about Mary.

Mary understood what it meant to be "set apart" entirely for God's use – to be *holy*. As Miles says on page 113 "Mary was holy. She was set aside entirely for God's use. She did not split her affections between God and desires of the world."

Keep Your Eye on the Prize is adapted from [Our Love for God](#), p.5 by Heno Head, Jr. ©2000 Standard Publishing, Cincinnati, Ohio



STORY
**ERIC LIDDELL:
HUMBLE
OBEDIENCE**

Interject this story
before the “Interaction”
on page 116 of
BAD TO THE BONE

“Humble Pie” – A Story
**Eric Liddell: Humble
Obedience**

**Read the following true story aloud
(or ask a student to read it aloud)**

ERIC LIDDELL (1902-1945)

When Eric Liddell ran, he tilted his head back and looked at the sky. When someone jokingly asked him how he knew where the finish line was, he replied, “The Lord guides me.”

Liddell qualified to run for Great Britain in the 1924 Olympics by winning the 220-yard dash and the 100-yard dash at the London AAA Championships. In fact, his time in the 100-yard dash stood as a record for the next 35 years.

Liddell would be running in the Olympics in Paris. He planned to compete in a number of races, but his best event was the 100-meter. In that race, Liddell was considered a strong contender for Olympic gold! Liddell and the other runners waited excitedly to see when they would run. When the schedule of events was posted, Liddell couldn’t believe his eyes. The preliminary races for the 100-meter sprint, 4x100 relay, and 4x400 relay – his best events – were on Sunday.

Eric Liddell took very seriously God’s command to keep the Sabbath. He believed Sunday was a sacred day to be set-aside for the Lord. “I’m not running,” he said. Eric risked the disapproval and pressure from his teammates and coaches, and he was even willing to give up his dream of Olympic gold in order to keep himself holy for God. As the Olympic athletes were running the 100-meter sprint that Sunday morning, Eric Liddell was humbly preaching in a Paris church.

Later, he had a chance to race in the 200-meter and 400-meter sprints, but they weren’t his best races, and he wasn’t expected to do well in either. Amazingly, Liddell won a bronze medal in the 200-meter, and won a gold medal in the 400-meter! In fact, he set a world record of 47.6 seconds! He gave all of the credit for his speed to God, and is quoted as saying “God made me fast.”

If you have time, watch the movie *Chariots of Fire* with your group.

DISCUSS

Discuss with your teens whether or not they think Eric Liddell made the right choice.

How is Liddell’s attitude similar to Mary’s?

Eric Liddell is adapted from Character Counts, pp.71-72 by Karl Leuthauser ©1999 Group Publishing Inc.



G A M E
**WHAT'S WRONG
WITH THIS
STORY?**

Interject this game at the very beginning of the lesson on page 117 of **BAD TO THE BONE**

What's Gonna Happen:

Kids will have a fun time discovering what the Bible really says about Christmas. The game: Our culture has so modified and sanitized the Christmas "story" that it's no longer understood as God invading history in the form of a baby being born in an unscrubbed animal pen. Instead, the story has become a thin heart-warming fable of a tiny baby visited by shepherds, wise men, and probably even Santa. To help your kids discover what really happened two thousand years ago, challenge them to identify what's wrong with the typical Christmas story.

What You Need:

(2) Large sheets of paper (2ft by 3ft or bigger) taped to wall and markers

What You Do:

Have kids form two teams.

Have each team choose a recorder.

Ask the following questions and read them aloud.

**"Have It Your Way, God!" – A Game
What's Wrong with
this Story?**

Questions:

1. **Why do we celebrate Christmas?** *It is the birthday of Jesus.*
2. **What relationship did Mary and Joseph have with one another?** *They were engaged to be married.*
3. **How did Mary find out that she was pregnant?** *Even though she was a virgin, she was told by an angel.*
4. **How did Mary feel when she found out that she was pregnant?** *She was afraid because she might be stoned to death for this, and she knew that Joseph would be upset and wonder how she had gotten pregnant; nevertheless, she said, "Let it be as you have said."*
5. **How did Joseph respond when he found out that Mary was pregnant?** *He was going to quietly divorce her, but then an angel appeared to him and told him that the baby was the Messiah, so he went ahead and married her.*
6. **How did the neighbors respond when they found out Mary was pregnant?** *The Bible doesn't say, but they would not have accepted it as normal for an unmarried girl to get pregnant; they could have stoned her to death, according to Jewish law.*

7. **Where was Jesus born?** *In Bethlehem, the city of David.*
8. **Who all was present?** *Mary and perhaps Joseph was with her.*
9. **How tall was the wooden stable in which Jesus was born?** *It may have been a cave and not a stable.*
10. **How did Mary and Joseph decorate their Christmas tree?** *There is no tree in the Bible account.*
11. **How did Santa Claus hear about Jesus' birth?** *Santa Claus is not in the Bible account.*
12. **To whom did the angels appear to announce Jesus' birth?** *To shepherds out in the field watching their sheep.*
13. **What did the Little Drummer Boy bring to Jesus?** *He is not in the Bible account.*
14. **What Christmas carols did the shepherds sing?** *The Bible says they "returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, " but it does not mention carols.*
15. **Who baked the first Christmas cookies and what flavor were they?** *This is not part of the Bible account.*
16. **How many wise men were there?** *The Bible doesn't say how many, just that "Magi from the east came..."*
17. **How did the wise men find Baby Jesus?** *They followed a special star that lead them to the baby.*
18. **What kind of animals did they ride?** *The Bible doesn't say.*
19. **What were their names?** *Their names are not given.*
20. **Who was the first person to hang up a stocking in which they hoped to receive presents?** *This is not part of the Bible account.*
21. **Who was the first person to receive a lump of coal for Christmas?** *This is not part of the Bible account.*
22. **How does Santa Claus know what every child wants for Christmas?** *This is one of the greatest fairy tales ever made up; Santa is not part of the Bible.*
23. **What color were the first candy canes?** *The first candy canes were red and white, but they are not part of the Bible account.*

The Christmas Story As Told in the Gospels

The Angel's Reassuring Message to Mary Concerning the Birth of Jesus

(Nazareth; the end of B.C. 6 or beginning of B.C. 5)

Luke 1:26-38

²⁶In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

²⁹Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. ³¹You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."

³⁴"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

³⁵The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month. ³⁷For nothing is impossible with God."

³⁸"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.

Mary's Visit to Elizabeth

(Judea; the beginning of B.C. 5)

Luke 1:39-56

³⁹At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, ⁴⁰where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴²In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! ⁴³But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished!"

⁴⁶And Mary said:

"My soul glorifies the Lord

⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸ for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant.

From now on all generations will call me blessed,

⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name.

⁵⁰ His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation.

- 51 He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.
- 52 He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.
- 53 He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.
- 54 He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful
- 55 to Abraham and his descendants forever, even as he said to our fathers.”
- 56 Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.

The Birth of John the Baptist

(Judea; the spring of B.C. 5)

Luke 1:57-79

57 When it was time for Elizabeth to have her baby, she gave birth to a son. 58 Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy, and they shared her joy.

59 On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him after his father Zechariah, 60 but his mother spoke up and said, “No! He is to be called John.”

61 They said to her, “There is no one among your relatives who has that name.”

62 Then they made signs to his father, to find out what he would like to name the child.

63 He asked for a writing tablet, and to everyone’s astonishment he wrote, “His name is John.”

64 Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue was loosed, and he began to speak, praising God. 65 The neighbors were all filled with awe, and throughout the hill country of Judea people were talking about all these things. 66 Everyone who heard this wondered about it, asking, “What then is this child going to be?” For the Lord’s hand was with him.

67 His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied: 68a Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people. 69 He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David

70 (as he said through his holy prophets of long ago),

71 salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us—

72 to show mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant,

73 the oath he swore to our father Abraham:

74 to rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and to enable us to serve him without fear

75 in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

76 And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him,

77 to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins,

78 because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven

79 to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.”

The Angel's Explanatory Advice to Joseph About the Savior's Approaching Birth

(Nazareth; B.C. 5)

Matthew 1:18-25

¹⁸This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.

¹⁹Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

²⁰But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"—which means, "God with us."

²⁴When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

The Birth of Jesus

(Bethlehem; the autumn of B.C. 5)

Luke 2:1-7

¹In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ²(This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³And everyone went to his own town to register.

⁴So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

The Angelic Announcement to the Shepherds and their Response

(Near Bethlehem)

Luke 2:8-20

⁸And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.

⁹An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

¹³Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

¹⁶So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

The Visit of the Wise Men

Matthew 2:1-12

¹After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ²and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

³When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵"In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

⁶"But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel."

⁷Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

⁹After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

The Flight of Joseph and his Family into Egypt and the Slaughter of Bethlehem Children

Matthew 2:13-18

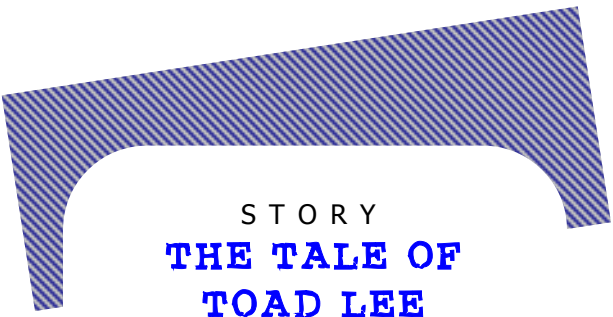
¹³When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."

¹⁴So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, ¹⁵where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son."

¹⁶When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. ¹⁷Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

¹⁸ "A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more."

The Christmas story is taken from [A Harmony of the Four Gospels](#), pp.5 -12 by Orville E. Daniel ©1986 Baker Book House Co.



STORY
**THE TALE OF
TOAD LEE
PURRHART:
A TOAD WITH A
PURE HEART**

Interject this story
before the “Interaction”
on page 120 of
BAD TO THE BONE

**“Good is Good Enough” – A Story
The Tale of Toad Lee
Purrhart: A Toad with
a Pure Heart**

**Read the following true story aloud
(or ask a student to read it aloud)**

(Although it is a “tale”, it is based on the author’s real life.) An alternative option is to have your group listen to the “dramatic” reading available on audiotape or CD.

STORY TO COME



DISCUSS

1. In what ways is Toad Lee like Jimmy from San Diego that Miles talks about?
2. What things in your life make the kind of “powerful testimony” that can change other people’s lives like Jimmy and Toad Lee’s testimonies can?

Continue with the Interaction on page 120.

Toad Lee Purrhart is adapted from [O. Whillikers in the Hall of Champions](#), pp.72-84 by Jay Carty with Phil Nash ©2000 Gospel Light; Ventura, California