

**GOD IS**

**A SERVANT**

**Missionaries**

**Year 8**

**Term 3**

## Thinking Skills

### Year 8 Servant

<p><b>Serving 1</b></p> <p>What if ...</p> <p>All transport workers resigned from their jobs?</p>	<p><b>Serving 2</b></p> <p>Make a jobs list (Monday to Friday), for all the children in your family.</p>
<p><b>Serving 3</b></p> <p>Make a list of the things that the first missionaries to Fiji did NOT have.</p>	<p><b>Serving 4</b></p> <p>What if...</p> <p>You gave up your bed to a homeless person.</p> <p>Where would you sleep?</p> <p>How would you feel?</p>
<p><b>Serving 5</b></p> <p>Make a list of countries that are in most need of missionaries.</p>	<p><b>Serving 6</b></p> <p>List 5 items that a missionary could use to spread the Gospel.</p>

# Don Richardson - (New Guinea)

## Biography

This is a true story of a whole group of people who changed their life-style from one of killing and cheating to a life of peace and happiness as they came to know the true peace-maker, Jesus Christ.

In 1962, Don and Carol Richardson went to live among the Sawi people of West Papua (New Guinea). West Papua is the western part of New Guinea. The Sawis had only occasionally seen white people. These were the men sent by the Dutch government to observe the area. The Sawis lived in deep tropical jungle on the edge of the crocodile infested Kronkel River. The Sawis stood in awe of white people, with their planes and helicopters, their jet-propelled rafts and their precious gifts of steel axes and razor blades.

It was a great privilege to have Don and Carol as their very own white residents in their small village. However, for Don and Carol, life was unpredictable, completely foreign to their own way of life, and very dangerous. Only their faith in God gave them the courage they needed to live among the Sawis. They had an inner certainty that Jesus had sent them on a special mission... to bring the Good News to people who lived a life of violence and fear.

At the foundation of all Sawi life was treachery and mistrust. Children were brought up to hold in high esteem the killing of another human being. The Sawis, along with their surrounding tribes, were head-hunters. At least this was the case until the mid-sixties, when Don and Carol penetrated the world of the Sawi.

The Sawis used a tactic of 'fattening with friendship'. To befriend a member of the enemy tribe, gain his confidence, and then kill him when he was not suspecting it, was a deed highly honoured among the Sawis. It was not surprising then, that as Don started to share the Gospel story, Judas was the hero, not Jesus. Judas had done the very thing that the Sawis honoured. That is, to become a friend of Jesus, and then later, turn Him over to the enemy to be killed.

"How can the Gospel be shared with these people?" thought Don. The whole foundation of their society would have to change before the Sawis could even begin to understand why Jesus had to die for them. It was a task too difficult for Don and Carol. They knew that only the Lord could open the minds of the Sawi people by some enormous miracle.

Don and Carol concentrated their work on three Sawi tribes. These were the Haenam, Kamur and Yawi tribes. To these tribes they gave medicine, supplied implements and worked at learning their language so that they could share the Gospel with them. They also taught some of the Sawis to read, in their own language, for the first time.

Working with the three tribes, however, brought about some problems. Don and Carol's work brought the three tribes into closer contact. This meant that fighting among them was becoming more common, and contagious diseases were spreading more rapidly. Don concluded that their past habit of living in small isolated groups had been the key to their survival. Before Don and Carol arrived, potential enemies were out of sight and there were fewer occasions to shed blood. Don and Carol decided that for the good of the people they should leave them. Otherwise the three tribes could die out altogether.

The leaders from two of the warring groups confronted Don.

"Tuan," as they called him, "don't leave us!" they pleaded.

"But I don't want you to kill each other," replied Don.

"Tuan," one of them said, "We're not going to kill each other." "Tomorrow we are going to make peace!"

Don and Carol hardly slept that night, wondering what daybreak would bring. Few of the Sawis slept either. All through the night voices could be heard. Then as daylight broke all was deathly quiet, just as it had been before previous battles.

Then one of the tribe members, Mahaen, and his wife climbed down from their houses. Mahaen was carrying a child, one of his own sons on his back. His wife Syado was sobbing violently. The people of the tribe also started descending from their houses. All eyes were on Mahaen, Syado and the child. Suddenly Syado wrenched the boy from her husband's shoulders and ran off with him. She was not going to give him up. Now all the other women of the Haenem tribes clutched their babies close to their breasts. Someone had to give up their baby.

Finally a man named Kaiyo decided that he would be the one.

"It is necessary," Kaiyo reminded himself. "There's no other way to stop the fighting. And if the fighting does not stop, the Tuan will leave."

Kaiyo reached down and picked up his only child, six-month-old Biakadon. He held the soft, warm gurgling body of his son close to his chest one last time. Kaiyo's wife, Wumi, did not yet know of the decision. Then her eyes flashed towards her husband, who, with Biakadon in his arms, was running towards the other tribe. Wumi screamed and ran after Kaiyo, but Kaiyo did not look back. Wumi felt her feet sinking into the bog. She had missed the trail. There was no hope now. He was too far ahead.

As Kaiyo reached the Haenam tribe his heart was breaking. The men of the village were grouped together waiting to receive the child. The peace ceremony began.

"I give you my son, and with him my name," Kaiyo said as he held forth little Biakadon. Mahor, of the Haeman tribe received him gently into his arms.

"It is enough!" said Mahor. "I will surely plead for peace between us."

Then a father from the Haenam tribe held up one of his sons.

"Will you plead peace among your people?" Kaiyo was asked.

"Yes!" replied Kaiyo.

"Then I give you my son and I give you my name," said the father.

Kaiyo took his newly adopted son, Mani, into his arms and ran quickly back to his own tribe. In each village young and old, male and female, filed past the babies and laid their hands upon them, sealing their acceptance of peace with the other tribe. The adopted babies were then decorated, ready for a peace celebration.

Don tried to comprehend what had just taken place. He questioned one of the men.

"Why is this necessary?" he asked.

"Tuan," was the reply. "Don't you know that it is impossible to have peace without a peace child?"

"What will happen to Biakadon and Mani?" asked Don. "Will they be harmed?"

"They will not be harmed, Tuan," was the reply. "In fact both our villages will guard the lives of these children even more carefully than they protect their own children."

The exchange of the two babies did actually cause the two warring groups to cease fighting. But for Don and Carol, the peace child illustration meant so much more. Now, finally a way of explaining the sacrifice of God's son had been demonstrated before their very eyes. Don was now able to explain the Gospel in a way in which the Sawis would understand.

"Like Kaiyo," said Don, "God had only one son to give, and like Kaiyo, He gave Him away. The son you gave was a son you loved. The Son that God gave was a son He loved even more. God has sent me to tell you that God has sent a peace child. His name is Jesus. From now on, let Sawi mothers keep their own babies. God has given His Son for YOU! Ask His Spirit to live in your hearts and He will keep you in the way of peace."

For three months Don kept telling the Sawis about the Peace Child of God, but still no one had committed their life to Christ.

"What else will it take to draw these men and their families to Jesus? he thought. And then it happened.

One afternoon Don and Carol and their two baby boys took a boat trip upstream with their Sawi house-boy. Suddenly the boat hit a submerged log and the boat capsized. All four were thrown into the strong currents of the crocodile infested Kronkel River. Both parents holding the babies, they managed to grab hold of the up-turned boat. Then, by a miracle, a man in a canoe came by and rescued them before they were swept away. The Sawi people could see from this experience that God really did give peace and protection. As a result, one whole family gave their lives to the Lord.

"When I saw that God could give you peace, even when your two sons almost drowned, I knew that everything you said about the Peace Child was true," said one of the Sawi leaders. "I decided that He could take care of us too."

As Don and Carol continued to live among the Sawi people, they saw more miracles as people gave their lives to Christ. Gradually old customs and evil practices gave way to a new life of peace and happiness. Because of the Peace Child story, the Sawis had a new hope. Instead of hate and mistrust between villages, they developed a bond, which kept them from war. That bond was peace through Jesus Christ.

*Story retold from 'Peace Child' by Don Richardson, (Used by permission).*

## Discussion: Don Richardson

How was the Sawis experience of giving up the peace child similar to God's sacrifice for us?

The parents of the peace child made a great sacrifice to bring about peace. As each gave their son, and the peace-child was received by the other tribe, the people were able to experience peace. We could also say that receiving the peace child was a kind of promise that they would stop fighting and instead, be friends with the other tribe.

God our Heavenly Father made a great sacrifice in giving His only Son, Jesus. As people receive God's Son, they experience peace in their hearts and lives. Receiving God's Son, Jesus, is making a promise that we will, from this point on, to stop going against God, and instead, become His friend. Being a friend of God means doing what HE wants us to do, and not always what WE want to do.

2 Corinthians 5:19

*For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. (NLT)*

Imagine two friends who have a fight or argument. They are no longer friends. They stop speaking to each other. The friends gradually become strangers. To become friends again there must be reconciliation. To be *reconciled* is to be restored to friendship. When old friends forget about their differences and restore their relationship, reconciliation has happened.

Now let's think about the broken friendship between people and God that occurred in the Garden of Eden. Every person born after that event has sin in their life. One of God's laws is, "no one who has sinned can be a friend of God". But God sent Jesus to give people an opportunity to become friends again with God. When people receive Jesus, and ask Him to take their sin, He looks on us as if we have no sin, and therefore we can be friends with God.

2 Corinthians 5:18

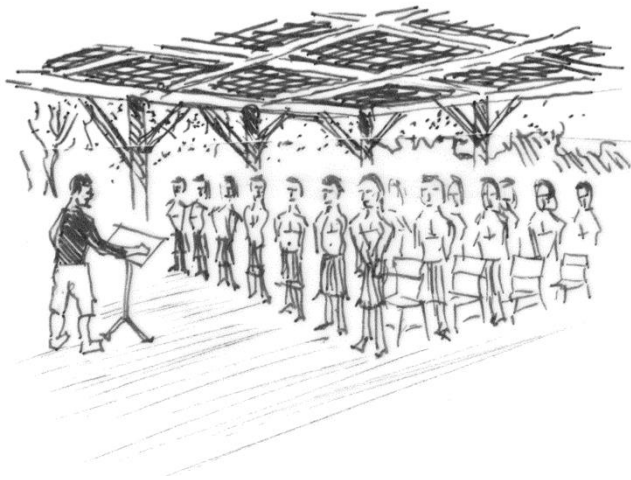
*And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. (NLT)*

### Activities

1. Find West Papua on a map. Name a country that borders it.
2. Why did the Sawi tribe stand in awe of white people?
3. Why do you think the Sawis wanted Don and Carol to live with them?
4. How did the Sawis "fatten with friendship"?
5. Why do you think the Sawis saw Judas as the hero in the gospel story, and not Jesus?
6. Why did Don and Carol almost decide to leave?
7. What stopped them?
8. What had to happen for peace to be made between two tribes?
9. How was the practice of giving up a baby similar to God's great sacrifice?
10. Unjumble this message, based on 2 Corinthians 5:17:

YNOEAN HWO GEHLSON OT SCHIRT SI DAME WEN.

# The Fijian call to New Guinea



By the mid 1870s Fijians as a whole had embraced the Christian faith and the church was asking itself, “All the people have turned away from heathen idols and have begun to worship Jehovah God and His Son, Jesus. What do we do now?”

As they thought and prayed about it they began to see the answer to their question. “The Tongan Christians left their homes to bring the message of Jesus to us. We must do the same and take the Christian gospel to others who have not heard it yet.”

The Methodist Church in Australia was pleased that the young Fijian church had a vision to extend their borders beyond their own islands. They came to an agreement that the church in Australia would supply the ships, materials and money whilst the Fijian church would supply the missionaries from among their own people.

At about this time a measles epidemic hit Fiji. Measles was previously unknown in the Pacific Islands so they had no immunity to the disease. When their bodies burned with the high temperature the natural thing for them to do was to go down to the sea and cool off in the water. This brought on pneumonia for which they had no remedy, and thousands of Fijians died at that time. Many Christian pastors and teachers were among the victims.

When the epidemic had passed its peak the church leaders began to assess their situation.

“What will happen to our plans to take missionaries to the islands to the west?” some asked.

“We have lost so many pastors and teachers. There aren’t enough to serve our own home churches at present. Why should we send any to other islands? Shouldn’t we look after our own churches first?”

Then a ship arrived from Australia bringing Dr. George Brown, the head of the Mission Board of the Methodist Church in Australia. He had come to seek for volunteers who would come with him to help establish the New Guinea Mission. This was the first ship to arrive in Fiji since the measles epidemic took hold, so it was the first anyone outside Fiji knew of the devastation it had caused. As Dr. Brown listened to the missionaries’ accounts of the losses of people to the epidemic, he was shocked. He began to review his plans. “I don’t have the heart to ask these people to give up any of their pastors and teachers. They have so few left,” he said. “But I’ll go to the training school and tell them why I have come here. There might be someone who will go with me to the west, to New Guinea.”

That evening the students were called together and Dr. George Brown was introduced. “You know how we had planned to send some of your pastors and teachers on a mission to New Guinea,” began Dr. Brown. The students were all listening attentively. “Since we decided on this plan you have suffered great losses in the measles epidemic. I really don’t know what to do. It is hard to ask the church here to send out men when your home church has lost so many. However, I’ll put this question to you tonight. Don’t make any decision until you have prayed about it with your wives. I am asking if there is perhaps one among you who would volunteer to go with me to New Guinea. I must warn you that there will be many trials and hardships. There are sicknesses there that you don’t know here. The people will most likely be hostile when we first arrive. You may never see your homes in Fiji again. You must count the cost of going, but if God calls and you agree to go, He will help you all the way.”

The principal spoke to the students. “Don’t make any decision now. Please think carefully about all that Dr. Brown has said. Pray with your wives about this question. We’ll talk about it further tomorrow.”

Next morning the 84 students gathered together and sat down. There was a quiet stillness in the room. The principal addressed the students: “You heard Dr Brown’s request last night. I’m sure you have all prayed about it with your wives. Now, I’d like to hear from you. Is anyone among you willing to go with Dr Brown to New Guinea? If so, would he please stand up.”

An amazing thing happened. All 84 students stood up! This solved one problem, but created another. Not all of the 84 students could go, so there had to be a selection of the ones most suitable to go, and the equally important ones whose calling was to stay home and serve God and their own people in the home church.



They had begun to get visas and traveling papers ready for those who were preparing to go to New Guinea when some outside gossip was passed around.

“You know, these poor Fijians are being forced to go to New Guinea. They’re going against their will,” was the word coming from some people in government circles. As a result, the Administrator of Fiji called together the men who were preparing to go.

“You know you don’t have to go if you don’t want to,” he told them. “I want you to know that nobody can make you go unless you really want to.”

The only response was, “Yes, we do want to go. We have decided to go of our own free will. God has called us and we will obey Him.”

The Administrator began talking more strongly. He was doing all he could to discourage them. “Do you people want to die in a foreign land?” he asked, knowing that a Fijian’s one desire if he is dying, is to be in his own land. Dr Brown later wrote in his diary that when he heard that question, he was afraid it would change the men’s minds. The discouraging talk went on for some time until a Fijian spokesman for the group, Aminio Bale, asked permission to speak.

“Dr. Brown told us of all the hardships we will meet when we go to New Guinea. We know there will be sicknesses, the people will be hostile to begin with and they might try to kill us. We have fully considered the matter and our minds are made up. No one has pressed us in any way. We have heard the call of God, we have given ourselves to God’s work and it is our mind to go to New Guinea. If we live, we live. If we die, we die.”

That was the end of the matter, and they went. Most of them did die there, mainly from tropical diseases. Over the years hundreds more have followed. They planted a church in New Guinea that is still there today, and very much alive.

Adapted from:

*An Autobiography, George Brown, Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1908*

*Deep Sea Canoe, Alan R. Tippett, William Carey Library, Pasadena, California, 1977*

## Thomas Baker (Fiji)

Thomas Baker, was the only white missionary killed by the Fijians.

Thomas was born in England in 1832, and when he was seven years old, his family sailed to Australia to make a life there as farmers.

Thomas Baker became a Methodist minister in 1859, at the age of 27. One month later, he and his new wife Harriet set off for Fiji a month later as missionaries.

After six years in Fiji, he settled his family into the new Methodist mission station at Davuilevu on the Rewa River.

In July 1867 Thomas Baker led a party of nine Fijians, to spread the Christian gospel into the interior of Viti Levu. His aim was to cross the whole island to Vuda in the west. In the interior hill country, the tribes were hostile towards Cakobau, who had become a Christian, and the coastal people around Suva. It was in the Navosa region, at the village of Naqaqadelavatu that the tragedy occurred.

Baker gave a tabua, (a whale's tooth), to the chiefs of the villages they passed through, with a request for their party to be kept safe as they traveled from village to village.

When they reached Naqaqadelavatu and presented the tabua, no good will was shown. No food was offered to the visitors, which was a sign of unfriendliness.

Meanwhile another tabua had been sent by one chief to another chief to kill the party, and for the body of Thomas Baker to be cannibalized and distributed in the old traditional village of Nabialevu (Nadrau).

Baker went to sleep that night, not knowing of the plot to kill him. He woke the next morning and conducted morning prayers as usual. While food was being prepared he looked through his telescope and saw people approaching the village from other places.

The party of missionaries left their camp and started walking in single file towards the village. They had only gone 100 metres when they saw about 30 warriors coming towards them. Some of the warriors were waiting in the bushes along the side of the track. The Fijian who was last in the line carried Baker's box of clothing. He was attacked first. Baker turned around to see what was happening. Baker was struck on the head with a long-handled axe, and killed instantly.

The two chiefs gave a loud scream and the warriors rushed in to kill six more of the Fijian men. Only two of the party escaped. They hid in the long grass, then later returned to Davuilevu and reported the tragedy.

The Fijians who were killed, cooked and eaten with Baker were: Setareki Seileka, Sisa Tuilekutu, Navitalai Torau, Nemani Raqio, Taniela Batirerega, Josefata Tabuakarawa, and Setareki Nadu. The two men who escaped were Aisea and Josefa Nagata. After Baker's death, the Davuilevu mission was temporarily closed in 1868.

The rock used to kill Baker is still displayed in the village of Nabutatau. The sole of his leather sandals, which were also cooked by the cannibal tribe, are in Fiji Museum in Suva.

Decades of witchcraft, worship of ancestral spirits and cannibalism brought a curse upon the land. Even when the days of cannibalism had finished, the spirits remained. Some still carried out worship of the ancestral spirits. Some practiced fire walking, unharmed because of the demonic powers. In 2003, the village of Nabutatau, the village responsible for the murder of Thomas Baker and his team, along with other horrific acts, set out to achieve a cleansing. Baker's descendants from Australia were invited to visit the village for a traditional matanigasau reconciliation ceremony and an apology to them for the killing.

During the ceremony, the scene was acted out by tearful Fijian warriors in grass skirts and armed with clubs. They begged forgiveness from the descendants of Thomas Baker.

The villagers presented woven mats, a dozen highly-prized whale's teeth and a slaughtered cow to 10 Baker's Australian relatives.

"Thomas Baker died in this place and we need to confess our sins," said a local woman, Elenoa Naiyaunisiga. "It is time for repentance and an apology."

During the six-hour ceremony in the village of Nabutatau, the locals pleaded with Baker's descendants to forgive them for the murder and help them lift a curse which they believe has been the cause of things going badly in their lives.

Thomas Baker's great-great-grandson, Mr. Lester, gave a speech in which he said, "The past is the past and we need to move ahead to the future. I feel that the spirit of Thomas Baker is at rest."

As a roll of thunder sounded across distant ranges, Mr. Lester added: "Perhaps the coming rain is a sign of a new beginning."

Also in the crowd was the great-grandson of the chief who ordered Baker to be killed.

As a result of repentance, reconciliation and turning back to God, the chains of guilt were removed, and land that had been unproductive started bringing for produce. The fishing grounds were once again prosperous.

## David Cargill and William Cross (Fiji)

The first missionaries to Fiji were from Tahiti. Their names were Hatai, Arue and Tahaara. They came to Lakeba in the Lau islands, via Tonga, in 1830, and had been sent by the London Missionary Society.

The first *European* missionaries arrived in 1835. Their names were David Cargill and William Cross. They were not received well by the Fijians. The Fijians already knew some Europeans. These were the European sandalwood traders who were often cruel and unkind to the Fijian people. Because of this the Fijians were often unfriendly towards European visitors.

David Cargill was born in Scotland in 1809 and educated in England. He did well at his studies and became a Wesleyan Methodist minister. He arrived in Lakeba in 1835 along with his wife and four daughters, and with them was another missionary, William Cross and his family.

As soon as they arrived they went ashore to meet the king of Lakeba, the Tui Nayau. David Cargill had been waiting for six months in Tonga for a boat to bring him to Fiji, and he had not wasted his time. He had carefully learned as much of the Fijian language as he could from Fijians living in Tonga. Because of this he was now able to talk to the Tui Nayau and tell him why he had come to Fiji. He told him that he wanted to help the people of the island. The king of Lakeba agreed to let them stay and even offered to build bures for them and their families.

The first night in Lakeba was not a very comfortable one. It was spent in an open boat shelter on the beach. The families could not sleep because the mosquitoes were biting them and pigs grunted all about them. When the captain of the ship invited them back on board until their bures were finished, they were very pleased to accept the invitation.

In a few days, they moved into their new Fijian bures with the things they had brought with them. David Cargill was eager to start his work among the people. William Cross was able to gain the confidence of the Fijian people, and helped Cargill to prepare the first alphabet in the Fijian language. The Fijian people had no written language of their own. Books and writing were very new and strange to them.

David Cargill printed the alphabet and began to translate parts of the English Bible into the Fijian language. The Fijian people were curious and wanted to learn how to read.

Translating the Bible into the Fijian language was hard work. It took a long time to write it all out. A lot of paper was used. Cargill and Cross asked for a printing machine and paper to be sent from England. They waited a long time and one day the printing press came on a ship. The Fijian people were very surprised to see it, for they hadn't seen a machine like this before.

This printing press was the first one in Fiji. Many books were printed. Schools were started and the new books were used to teach Fijians to read and write. These books were helpful to new missionaries too. Now they could learn the Fijian language before they even left England.

In 1839 Cargill decided to leave Lakeba and go to the town of Rewa on Viti Levu. Many people lived in this area and there was a lot of work for the missionaries to do there. Also, it was very hard for the families to get enough food in Lakeba. So the printing press was packed up and sent to Rewa.

When Cargill and Cross arrived, the town of Rewa was in turmoil with tribal war. It was not a safe place to be. However, they stayed and continued their work of teaching.

At first there was no church building. They held their church services outside. People threw stones at them. Sometimes things that belonged to them were stolen.

When the first European traders came to Fiji some years earlier, they brought diseases with them such as influenza, and measles. In those days, these were very serious diseases. While the Cargill family was in Rewa, many Fijians became ill with influenza. Mrs. Cargill went to them in their homes, and helped to nurse the sick people. She helped to save the lives of many who would have died. When the Fijian people saw David Cargill and his wife helping them, they began to like them. Soon many Fijian people became Christians. The schools became full of people who wanted to learn all they could.

Missionary wives had to be very brave people. They often had large families of their own to care for. They also helped their husbands in their missionary work. When any of their own children were ill they were worried because they had no medicine to cure them. It was not easy for them living in a country that was so different from their own.

Mrs. Cargill died while the family lived in Rewa. It was too difficult for David Cargill to care for a large family on his own, so he left for England to take his daughters home. In England Cargill took a new wife, and in 1841 they travelled to Tonga where they continued mission work. Two years later Cargill became ill with Dengue Fever. He died when he died in 1843. He was only 33 years old.

William Cross died of an illness in 1842. His wife and child had drowned a short time before.

The work of David Cargill and William Cross is still remembered today in Fiji. In the centre of the city of Suva stands a memorial stone with their names carved on it. It reminds us of the date in 1835 when these two brave men arrived in Fiji, the first European missionaries to do so.

*From "Stories of Pacific People", 1972, Longman Paul Limited, Auckland, New Zealand*