

## BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

*We're in... Unit 10: The Holy Spirit, the Indwelling*

**Unit 10 Big Question and Answer:**

**What Does the Holy Spirit Do In God's People?**

***He Changes Their Hearts to Be Like Jesus!***

PFI NIV Songs 10, Tracks 3,4

**Unit 10 Bible Verse: Ezekiel 36:26, NIV 1984**

"I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you."  
PFI NIV Songs 10, Track 5

## BIBLE TRUTH

*We're learning... Bible Truth 3:*

**The Holy Spirit Gives God's People Wisdom**

The Holy Spirit gives God's people the wisdom they need to know God and to live for Him.

How does the Holy Spirit give God's people wisdom? He works in their hearts as they read the Bible, when they listen to Bible teaching, when they talk with other Christians, and when they pray.

This is one of the reasons why God's people set aside time to regularly read God's Word and pray. They know this keeps their heart open to hear the wisdom of the Holy Spirit. This is also one of the reasons why God's people gather together in churches: so they can learn God's Word from godly leaders; and, so they ask each other for help understanding what God's Word means and how to live it out. The Holy Spirit especially uses these things to help them understand God's truths and how God wants them to live them out.

There may be many things about God and His plans that God's people do not completely understand, but God will always give them the wisdom they need to live for Him. They only need to ask, and He promises to give it to them.

## BIBLE VERSE

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

**Bible Truth 3 Bible Verse: Ephesians 1:17, NIV 1984**

"I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better."

## CASE STORY

*Acts 7-8*

**Our story is called:**

**The Case of the Abandoned Highway.**

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

1. Where was the Abandoned Highway? Who was told to go there?
2. Who did this person find on the Abandoned Highway? What was he doing? How did the Holy Spirit work in him and in the person sent to him?

This story takes place in New Testament times, not long after Jesus rose from the dead and went to heaven.

What a great day Pentecost had been! On that day, God sent His Holy Spirit to live in the hearts of His people in a new way. He gave the disciples courage to stand up and tell others about Jesus. And so they did! Thousands heard and thousands believed! The church was growing rapidly!

As the number of people who believed in Jesus grew, so did the number of people who persecuted them! Many Christians in Jerusalem were arrested, beaten, and put in prison. Before long, almost all except Jesus' first eleven disciples had left town and scattered throughout Judea and Samaria.

Had something gone wrong? Why would God let this happen to them? No, nothing had gone wrong. The opposite was true! God was fulfilling the plan He had always had for the world. What had been Jesus' last words to his disciples before He went into heaven?: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

No, this was no mistake. God was using this persecution to send His people out to tell the gospel of Jesus to the whole world, beginning right there with the towns of Judea and Samaria!

Philip was one of the disciples who fled Jerusalem. In Jerusalem, he had been one of seven men chosen to be deacons. He made sure that the needs of the believers in the Jerusalem church were properly taken care of. He was a man full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, with a humble servant's heart.

But now the persecution, Philip was leaving Jerusalem. Where would he go, what would he do? Philip was a man full of the Holy Spirit: he would seek God's wisdom and would go wherever God wanted him to go.

And where did God want Philip to go? To Samaria-- one of the last places Philip probably would have chosen! Samaria was the home of the Samaritans: a group of people who disgusted Jews. The Samaritans were Jews who had long ago broken God's command to marry only people who worshiped Him. The Samaritans married their sons and daughters to people who worshiped Baal and golden bulls and other idols. And then, before long, they became worshipers of those idols, too. The Jews believed it dishonored God to have anything to do with Samaritans. Many believed Samaritans were so sinful that they could never be forgiven by God.

But Jesus had shown this was not true. He had gone into Samaria and urged them to believe in Him, the Messiah, come to save sinners. Many had already turned from their sins and trusted in Jesus. And now, God was sending out Philip to share the good news of Jesus with even more Samaritans. How amazing is the Lord! How kind He is to all sinners!

So Philip left Jerusalem and went north to a city in Samaria and began to tell the people about Jesus. Crowds would gather around Philip as he told them the good news of Jesus. People with all kinds of sicknesses and problems came to Philip and God healed them through him. The Holy Spirit gave Philip wise words to say and He opened the hearts of the Samaritans to understand and believe in Jesus. Soon there was great joy in the city as many people turned from their sins, believed in Jesus and were baptized. Yes, it was clear: the Holy Spirit had wisely guided Philip to Samaria and had blessed Philip's words to bring many Samaritans to know Him!

With hundreds of Samaritan people becoming Christians, why would Philip ever think of leaving? Yet, one day, an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza."

What a strange command! Here Philip was in Samaria, where he could tell hundreds and hundreds of people about Jesus. Was he really to leave Samaria and start walking south, fifty miles down some road? Especially THAT road! Why almost no one traveled THAT road out of Jerusalem. It only led past a deserted town called Old Gaza. Now everyone took the other, the new road, south to New Gaza. It didn't make sense! But Philip was a man full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom. He obeyed the angel and trusted the Holy Spirit's wisdom.

Philip set out from Samaria and walked and walked and walked. After about four days of walking, Philip made it to Jerusalem and started down the road to Old Gaza. This walk seemed useless. There was no one in sight as far as the eye could see! But Philip was a man full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom. He would believe the angel's words and keep trusting that God was guiding him.

At last, Philip picked up a faint, clattering noise behind him. It was a chariot coming towards him! "A chariot! No one but very, very rich and important people have a chariot!" Philip knew. "What is it doing coming this way on THIS road? Perhaps this is why the Lord guided me to this road."

It was! "Go to that chariot and stay near it," the Holy Spirit guided Philip.

As the chariot neared, Philip could see a richly dressed, African man reading a scroll aloud to himself, as his servants drove the chariot's horses. This was none other than one of the most important men in all of Ethiopia. He took care of all the money of Candace, Queen of Ethiopia!

Ethiopia! Why that was so far away that people in Jerusalem called it 'the ends of the earth!' It was a good sixty-day (2-month) journey by chariot to get to Jerusalem from there!

What would bring this important Ethiopian so far away from his home and his Queen? One reason only: this man was a seeker of the LORD who had traveled all that way from Ethiopia to Jerusalem just to worship Him at the Temple in Jerusalem in the Temple courts.

And now, as he was making the long trek back home, he read aloud the scroll of the Bible he had. The man read: "He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as lamb before the shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth. In his humiliation he was deprived of justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth."

Philip could hear the man reading. "I know that Bible passage!" Philip thought to himself. "This man is reading from the book of Isaiah in the Bible. He's reading the part that tells how Jesus would be the Lamb of God who would be sacrificed to pay for His people's sins!" Philip could see that God had indeed been guiding him down this dusty, deserted road for a very good reason: to tell this man about Jesus!

Philip ran up to the chariot and said, "You're reading from Isaiah. Do you understand what you are reading?"

"How can I," the man answered, "unless someone

explains it to me? If you can explain it to me, please join me up here in my chariot."

Philip most certainly could. The Holy Spirit had given him wisdom to understand. Philip climbed up in the chariot and beginning with those verses, he shared the good news of salvation through Jesus.

The Ethiopian official had never heard such things before, but the Holy Spirit worked in his heart, too. He gave him wisdom to understand and faith to believe Philip's words, as they traveled along the road.

"Stop this chariot!" the Ethiopian suddenly said to his servant. "Look, here is water," he said to Philip. "Why shouldn't I be baptized?"

So Philip and the Ethiopian official went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away: He was guiding Philip to other work, in a far away place called Azotus.

And what of the Ethiopian official? He didn't see Philip again, but went on his way rejoicing back home to the "ends of the earth." Now the good news of Jesus would spread out to peoples in even more, far away places through this man. God was fulfilling His plans!

Philip was a man full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom. What wonderful things the Lord did through Philip because he listened and obeyed.

**Our Bible Truth is:**

**The Holy Spirit Gives God's People Wisdom**

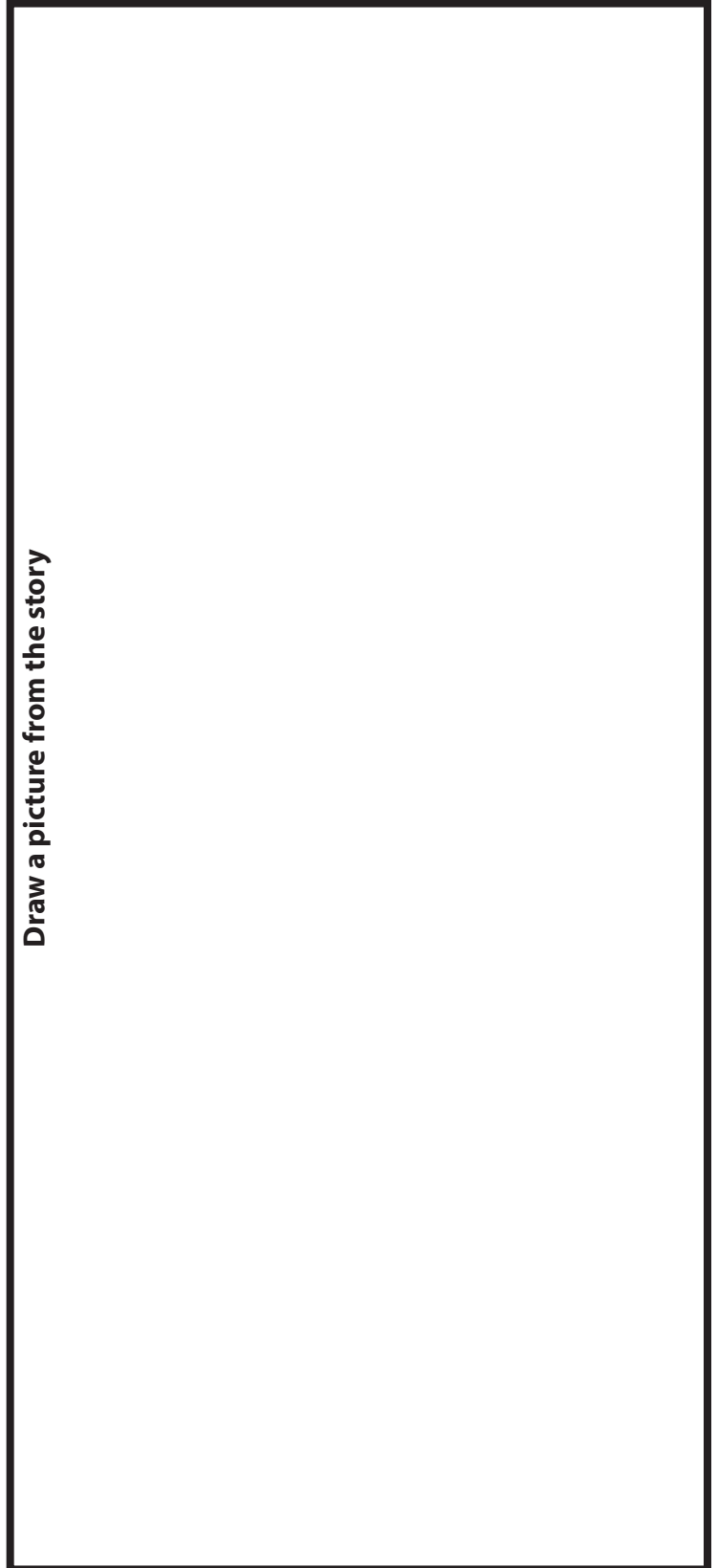
**Our Bible Verse is: Ephesians 1:17**

"I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better."

In those early days of the church, God used the Holy Spirit to lead the disciples in some amazing ways. But what about us, today? Will God give us wisdom, if we are His people? Yes, He will! To all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior, God promises to send the Holy Spirit to fill their hearts. And by that Holy Spirit, fellowshiping with them in their hearts, He will give them wisdom as they pray, read God's Word and speak with other Christians.

Let's praise God for giving His people His Holy Spirit so that they might have the wisdom they need to live for Him. Let's ask Him to work in our hearts, helping us to turn

from our sins and to trust in Jesus as our Savior. Let's ask Him to send the Holy Spirit to live in our hearts, that we might receive wisdom from Him to know and love God, and to live for Him.



Draw a picture from the story

**SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU**

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

The Holy Spirit gives God's people the wisdom they need to know God and to live for Him.

Answer: True!

**2. Crack the Case Questions**

**a. Where was the Abandoned Highway? Who was told to go there?**

Answer: It was the old road that lead south through Gaza.

**b. Who did this person find on the Abandoned Highway? What was he doing? How did the Holy Spirit work in him and in the person sent to him?**

Answer: Philip found the Ethiopian official riding in his chariot and trying to understand God's Word. The Holy Spirit helped Philip explain the passage about Jesus and He helped the Ethiopian official understand it, repent of his sins and trust in Jesus as his Savior.

**3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse: Ephesians 1:17**

"I keep \_\_\_ that the God of our Lord \_\_\_\_, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of \_\_\_ and revelation, so that you may know him better."

Answers: asking; Jesus Christ; wisdom.

**AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY**

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

**A** God, we praise You for being the Giver of the Holy Spirit to Your people.

**C** God, we confess that like the Samaritans, we have all chosen to disobey You. Perhaps not by marrying people who aren't worshipers of You, like they did. But still, we all choose to do things our own way instead of Your good way....even when we know them. We need a Savior!

**T** God, we thank You for sending Your people out into all the world so that all might hear the good news of Jesus and be saved!

**S** God, work in our hearts! Help us to turn away from our sins and trust Jesus as our own Savior. Send the Holy Spirit to live in our hearts and give us wisdom. Send out Your people to all the earth, that all may hear and believe in Jesus as their own Savior.

**BIBLE TRUTH HYMN**

**The God of Abraham Praise**

*PFI NIV Songs 10, Track 15*

**Verse 2**

His Spirit floweth free,  
High surging where it will:  
In prophet's word He spoke of old,  
He speaketh still.  
Established is His law,  
And changeless it shall stand,  
Deep writ upon the human heart,  
On sea or land.

Words: Daniel ben Judah Dayyan, Translated by Newton Mann

Music: Meyer Lyon

God's Holy Spirit is powerful to teach us and give us wisdom. Whether it is the words of the prophets or the laws or the words of the Psalms in the Old Testament; or, the words of Jesus in the gospels or the letters of people like Paul in the New Testament, God's Holy Spirit uses God's Word, the Bible, to give us His wisdom. And the wonderful thing is, He doesn't just help us understand it with our minds. We can ask Him to "write it on our hearts"--which means, change us by His wisdom that we love and live for God.

**BIBLE VERSE SONG**

**I Keep Asking**

*PFI NIV Songs 10, Track 16*

I keep asking,  
that the God of our Lord Jesus will give you,  
The Spirit of wisdom,  
I keep asking,  
that the God of our Lord Jesus will give you,  
The Spirit of wisdom, and revelation.  
So that you may know Him,  
You may know Him,  
That you may know Him, better.  
I keep asking,  
that the God of our Lord Jesus will give you,  
The Spirit of wisdom,  
I keep asking,  
that the God of our Lord Jesus will give you,  
The Spirit of wisdom, and revelation.  
Ephesians One, seventeen.

Words: Ephesians 1:17, NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012

God's people pray many things for each other. One of the best things they can pray for each other is for God to give them more of the Holy Spirit. He lives inside them and can give them God's wisdom. He reveals God's truths to them so they can know how to live. He reveals God, Himself, to them so they can know Him better.