

BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

We're in... Unit 5: God, the Good Creator

Unit 5 Big Question and Answer:

Can You Tell What God Made?

God Made All Things Good!

PFI NIV Songs 5, Tracks 3,4

Unit 5 Bible Verse: Genesis 1:1,31, NIV 1984

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth...God saw all that He had made, and it was very good."
PFI NIV Songs 5, Track 5

BIBLE TRUTH

We're learning... Bible Truth 1:

God Created All Things Good in the Beginning

God created everything in the beginning. There was nothing but Him, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Then He spoke, and it all came to be. He created everything in the world around us and everything in the great universe of stars and planets we see in the sky. He created all the creatures of heaven, too. He created it all through Jesus and for Jesus.

When God made everything, He called it very good. It was delightful to Him. It was pure and perfect. It was all exactly made according to His perfectly wise plan. There was nothing wrong or bad in God's creations when He created them. Nothing got sick or died. Nothing disobeyed Him. Everything did what He created them to do, and they did it joyfully. They did everything without wearing out or even making mistakes.

Everything God created points back to Him, their Creator. They are little pictures of something about Him. Look around you. What do God's creations tell you about Him?

BIBLE VERSE

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

Bible Truth 1 Bible Verse: Nehemiah 9:6

"You alone are the LORD. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship you."

CASE STORY

Matthew 24; Luke 21:25-33; Mark 13:24-28; 2 Peter 3; Revelation 20-22

Our story is:

The Case of the Second New.

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

1. What was new? Who was making it new? When?
2. What was different about the second New from the first New?

Our story takes place in New Testament times, just after Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead. It starts out the Mount of Olives, just outside of Jerusalem.

What a wonderful forty days it had been for Peter, John and the other disciples! Jesus had risen from the dead and had appeared to them again and again. He comforted them, taught them, and answered their many questions. Now they understood so much more of God's plan of salvation for the world, but oh, there was still so much more they wanted to know! And on this particular day, as they walked with Jesus up the tree-covered Mount of Olives, the future was on their minds.

Before His death, Jesus had told them what it would be like before He would come back and bring the kingdom of God. "There will dark days of war, hunger and earthquakes. God's people will suffer and die at the hands of their enemies. The good news of salvation will be preached to every people in the world, and then the end will come," Jesus said.

"At that time, I will come on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. All will see Me. I will send My angels to gather up all My people to be with Me. The heaven and earth God created long ago will be no more, but My words will last forever," Jesus promised.

Now that Jesus had saved God's people and risen from the dead, the disciples wondered if it was time for those days to come.

They decided to ask Jesus: "Lord, are You going to restore the kingdom to Israel now? Now will You start ruling here as king?"

Jesus answered them—but not at all the way they expected. "It is not for you to know the times or dates that God the Father has planned," He told them. "What you need to know is this: God is going to send the Holy Spirit to you. He will give you power to be My witnesses here in Jerusalem, and all the way to the ends of the earth.

Tell the whole world the good news of salvation!"

If Jesus' words had not been what they expected, what Jesus did next was even more of a surprise. For right then, right before their eyes, Jesus was taken into heaven, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

Peter, John and the others just stood there looking up into the heaven. They could hardly believe it! Jesus was gone!

"Suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them [--they were angels!] "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1:10-11, NIV 1984)

Peter, John and the others left the Mount of Olives and headed back to Jerusalem with minds full of what they had seen and heard. "When would they see Jesus again? When would He bring His kingdom? When would the old be gone and the new come?" they must have wondered. Oh, how they longed for that day! But until it did come, they knew what they were to do: tell all people, everywhere, the good news of salvation through Jesus. And so after receiving the Holy Spirit, that's just what the disciples did. Starting in Jerusalem, then traveling further and further away.

There was much to rejoice about in those days. Many people listened to the disciples' good news of salvation and believed. Many little churches of believers sprouted up, not just in Jerusalem and Israel, but in other countries, too, as the disciples and others took the good news of Jesus far and wide. How happy they were to see so many saved!

But I'm sad to say, life wasn't just rejoicing for those believers. It was hard, too. Jesus had warned them that they would suffer at the hands of their enemies, and they did! People began to make fun of them for believing in Jesus and for saying He was coming back. Sometimes they were not allowed to work or even to buy food because they were Christians. Some were beaten. Others were killed. It was easy to be discouraged as all these terrible things happened.

God used Peter to comfort them. "Don't be discouraged! Remember what God told us through his prophets! He told us enemies would make fun of us, saying, "Where is this 'coming' Jesus promised? Everything is going on the same as it has since the beginning of the world!" But there

is something those people are forgetting. Back in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth by His word. By that same word, God has promised to bring an end to this world and to those who keep on rebelling against Him," Peter reminded the believers.

"I know it seems like God is being slow in sending Jesus back to set up God's kingdom, but He's not. He's just being patient and merciful, that many more people might turn away from rebelling against Him and be saved," Peter explained.

"Don't worry, the day is coming! Jesus will come back and bring God's kingdom. The heavens and earth God created long ago will be destroyed, but He will create a new heaven and earth. It will be the wonderful place where we live with God forever. So don't give up!" Peter urged them. "Keep telling others about Jesus! Keep looking for His return!"

Peter's words were comforting, but John's were even more comforting! For one Sunday, God gave John a most amazing vision to encourage God's people with. It was a picture of the wonderful life God's people would have with God in His kingdom in the new heavens and earth. John wrote it all down for the suffering believers to read over and over: "...I saw God seated on a great white throne," John wrote. "Earth and sky went away. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth God created.

"I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. It was as beautiful as a bride on her wedding day. It shone with the glory of God, like a shiny beautiful jewel, like jasper, clear as crystal. The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide. An angel measured the city with the stick. It was huge, perfect square: 1400 miles as wide and high and long! Its walls were tall and 200' thick. They were made from others jewels of many colors. Its gates were each made from a giant pearl and its main street was made of pure gold.

God's very throne will be in the city, and His people will serve and worship Him, face to face. There will be no more sun or moon or night. No one will need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the glory of the Lord God will be their light.

And coming out from the throne of God and running right down the city's main street, stands the river of life, crystal clear and pure. On both sides of the river, stands the tree of life, bursting with the fruit of eternal life.

This is where God’s people will live with God forever,” John told wrote. “They will be his people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old way of things has passed away.”

Then from the throne, King Jesus made this promise to God’s hurting people on earth: “I am making everything new! He who [keeps on obeying Me to the end will receive] all of this. I will be his God and he will be My dearly, adopted child. Tell all these things to God’s people, John,” Jesus said. Remind them that the best is yet to come! Urge them to keep enduring and keep being patient. Behold, I am coming soon!”

These were but pictures of what life in the new heaven and earth of God’s Kingdom will be like, For no eye has seen, no mind has conceived of all that God has prepared for His people when they come to live in the new heavens and earth with Him forever. How wonderful that will be! Come, Lord Jesus, come!

Our Bible Truth is:

God Created All Things Good in the Beginning

Our Bible Verse is: Nehemiah 9:6

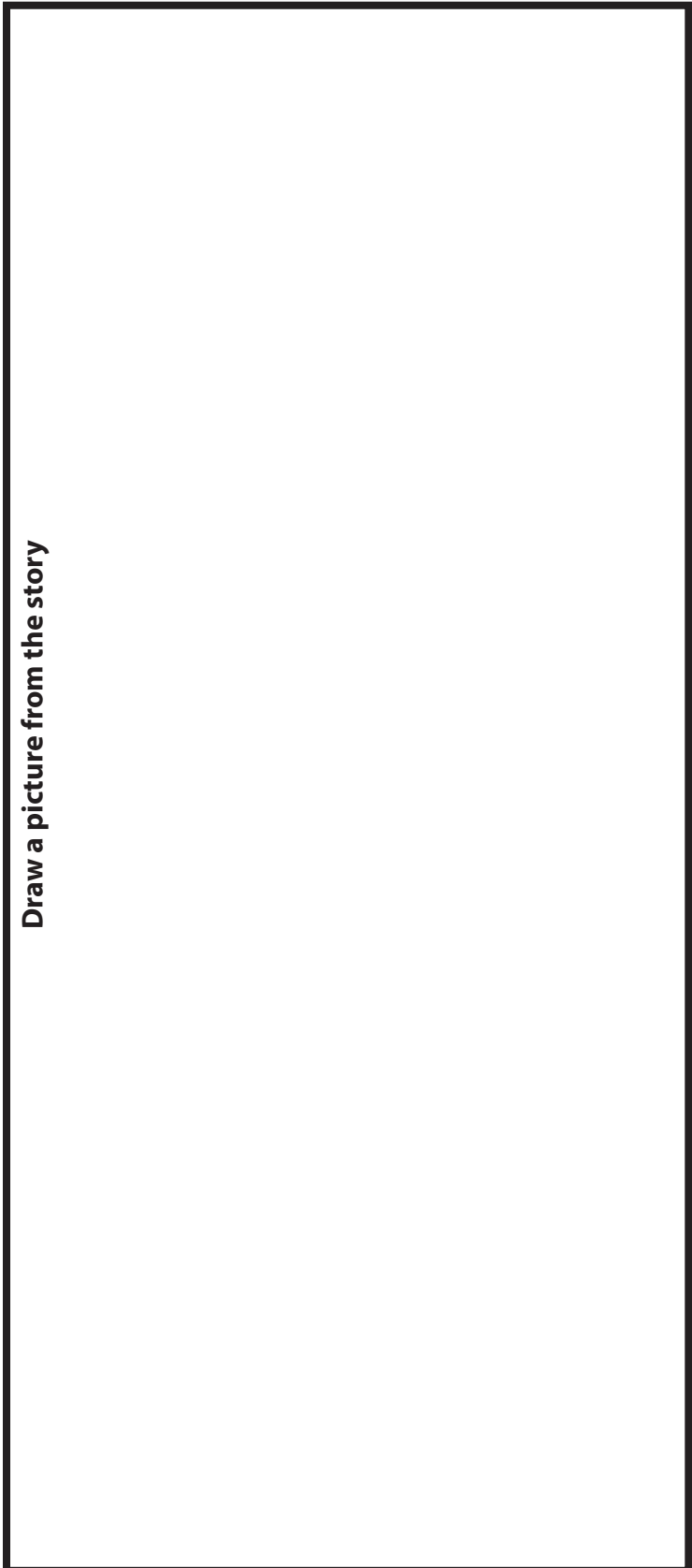
“You alone are the LORD. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship you.”

Two thousand years have passed since the days of Paul, John, and those other first believers in Jesus, and still we are waiting for Jesus to return and the new heaven and earth to be created. God’s plan to save people has included many, many more millions of people throughout all these thousands of years than Peter, John, or those other first believers would have ever imagined. God is so good and merciful!

There are people who make fun of Christians today, just like there were back then. People who do not believe that Jesus will ever come back. But, God’s people know that He will return, on just the right day, at just the right time, when God’s plans are complete. Then, the earth and heaven created so long ago by God, will pass away. It will be time for God to create a new heaven and new earth, and for the glorious, never-ending happiness of King Jesus

with God’s people to begin.

There are people who make fun of Christians today, just like there were back then. People who do not believe that Jesus will ever come back. But, God’s people know that He will return, on just the right day,



Draw a picture from the story

SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU

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

Everything God created point back to Him, their Creator. When we look at God's creations we can learn something about Him.

Answer: True.

2. Crack the Case Questions:

a. What was new? Who was making it new? When?

Answer: Heavens and earth were being made new. God was making it new at the end of time, when God's plans for this world are completed.

b. What was different about the second New from the first New?

Answer: When God creates the heavens and earth the second time, it will be perfect and stay that way. It will be the home of God and His people forever. It will be filled with God's glory and presence in a greater way than in this world.

3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse: Nehemiah 9:6

"You alone are the LORD. You made the heavens, even the ___ heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the ___ and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the ___ of heaven worship you."

Answers: highest; seas; hosts.

BIBLE TRUTH HYMN

O, Worship the King

PFI NIV Songs 5, Track 7

Verse 3

Thy bountiful care what tongue can recite?
It breathes in the air,
it shines in the light,
It streams from the hill,
It descends to the plain,
And sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.

Words: Robert Grant Music: Attr. Johan Michael Haydn

This hymn reminds us that all of creation reflects God's goodness to us. We see His goodness in the bountiful way He cares for us. When we look at the light streaming down from heaven to give us warmth and light; when we see the dew and the rain that feeds thirsty plants so we will have food to eat; in the beautiful hills God gives us to look at; in the flat plains that make good ground to grow crops. Seeing His goodness in His creation makes His people want to worship and praise Him.

AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY

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

A God, we praise You for being the God who has perfect timing and complete control over everything. He will come back and create the new heavens and earth at just the right time.

C God, we confess that many times we do not think about being ready for Jesus to come back. We act like we don't care. Many times we don't tell others about Jesus so they can be ready for His coming.

T God, we thank You that Jesus will come back and make a new heavens and earth for His people to live in with Him forever. There will be no sin or death in it; and, He will live with them forever. How wonderful that will be

S God, work in our hearts! Help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to be ready for His return.

BIBLE VERSE SONG

You Alone Are the LORD

PFI NIV Songs 5, Track 8

You alone are the LORD.
You made the heavens, the highest heavens
and all their starry host, and all their starry host.
You give life to everything,
and the multitude of heaven worship You,
You give life to everything,
and the multitude of heaven worship You.
You, alone are the LORD.
You made the earth and all that is in it,
the seas and all that is in it, the seas and all that is in it.
You give life to everything,
and the multitude of heaven worship You.
You give life to everything,
and the multitude of heaven worship You.

Words: Nehemiah 9:6, NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012

The Bible tells us that there is nothing that God did not make in the heavens or the earth in the beginning. He made all things and He gave life to it all. He is the one that keeps everything going. No wonder the angels--the host of heaven-- worship Him. Who is like the LORD! And this is why we should worship Him, our Creator, too.