



**Unit 1 Prontos--NIV**  
**The God Who Reveals Himself**



Curriculum for preschool and elementary age children,  
training tools, music and other resources  
are available for download or to order at:  
[www.praisefactory.org](http://www.praisefactory.org)

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## The PFI Companion Resources

While all the PFI resources are available for download at [praisefactory.org](http://praisefactory.org), many of the resources are available for purchase as hard copies, too.

There are three companion resources for each of the sixteen PFI units:

### **PFI Core Curriculum Book (ESV/NIV) --offered for each unit**

The PFI Core Curriculum book contains the curriculum introduction, the lesson plans, stories and the activities for each Bible Truth in a unit. There are three stories and resources per Bible Truth: an Old Testament, New Testament and church history/missions story. All three reinforce the key Bible truth concept.

### **PFI Song Book (ESV/NIV) --offered for each unit**

The PFI Unit Song Book provides lead sheets and sign language for every song used in the unit. The audio music is available online for download.

### **➔ PFI Prontos (ESV/NIV) --offered for each unit**

The PFI Prontos book provides all of the unit's take home sheets. They are offered separately from the rest of the curriculum because they are usually photo-copied. These take-home sheets include the key concepts, lyrics to the songs, the session story, some review questions, a prayer and an activity sheet.

All of these materials may be photocopied for non-commercial church, classroom or school use by licensed users.

## About the PFI Prontos

The PFI Prontos are the take-home devotionals for each session of PFI.

They include the Bible Truth, its related Bible verse, the lyrics and meaning blurb for the hymn and Bible verse song, three quiz questions, a prayer and two activity sheets for every story in the curriculum.

While the Prontos are designed as a reinforcement tool for parents to use with their children after session, the resources are so substantial as to be used as a curriculum by themselves. Additional activities can be downloaded online with each Bible truth.

## Other Praise Factory Resources

PFI: Praise Factory Investigators is the third in a family of three, inter-related curriculums:

- Hide 'n' Seek Kids (focus group: ages 2-4; adaptable range: ages 2-pre-K 5's)
- Deep Down Detectives (focus group: ages 4--6's; adaptable range: ages 3-2nd grade)
- PFI: (focus group: grades K-5th grade; adaptable range: pre-K 5's-6th grade)

Each curriculum teaches the same biblical themes, but are presented in greater depth as the children grow and develop. Together, the curriculums work like an expanding spiral of truth that returns to reinforce the same truths with each curriculum, yet leading the children to deeper understanding with each step up.

Learn more about these curriculums as well as other resources and ideas for reaching children with the gospel at: [www.praisefactory.org](http://www.praisefactory.org).





**Unit 1 Prontos**





## BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

*We're in... Unit 1: The God Who Reveals Himself*

**Unit 1 Big Question and Answer:**  
**How Can I Know What God Is Like?**  
**He Shows Me What He's Like!**

PFI NIV Songs 1, Tracks 3,4

**Unit 1 Bible Verse: Amos 4:13, NIV 1984**

"The LORD reveals His thoughts to man."

PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 5

## BIBLE TRUTH

*We're learning... Bible Truth 1:*

**God Made Our Hearts to Know and Love Him**

When God created people, He made them with a special heart so they could know and love Him. This isn't the heart that pumps blood through our body. This is something very different. We can't feel this heart inside of us in the same way as we feel the heart that beats in our chest. This heart is even more amazing! THIS heart will never die--it lives forever!

The Bible also calls this heart, a spirit or a soul. And it's in this very special heart that God reveals Himself to us. God's Holy Spirit works in our heart, helping us to believe in God, turn away from our sins and to trust in Jesus as our Savior. When we do, God will work in our heart even more, making it brand new, and filling it with knowledge of Him and with more love for Him and others.

## BIBLE VERSE

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

**Bible Truth 1 Bible Verse: Psalm 42:1,2**

"As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?"

## CASE STORY

Acts 17

**Our story is called:**

**The Case of the Stone and the Seekers.**

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

1. Who first laid down this stone and who did they seek?
2. How did Paul use the stone? What did he tell the people of Athens about their hearts?

This story is a New Testament story. It takes place about 20 years after Jesus died on the cross and was raised from the dead.

What a place ancient Athens was to visit! Its white, stone temples and buildings were beautiful to look at. Its people were smart and loved to talk about interesting things... for hours! No wonder so many people travelled great distances to visit Athens!

The people of Athens loved to build beautiful buildings and talk about important things, but also they loved to worship, too. Did you know the people of Athens worshipped HUNDREDS of gods and goddesses?! They would carve beautiful, stone statues of them. Some statues were put in the big temple buildings. Other statues were put in little shrine buildings. And many more statues were put along the streets and in gardens. Everywhere you looked in Athens, there seemed to be a statue to another god!

When Paul went to Athens, he was shocked by these hundreds of gods. And, he wasn't just shocked. He was so, so sad! So many gods, yet none of them was the LORD, the one, true God. The LORD was the one who had made these people with a heart to know and love Him; yet, He was completely unknown to them. So many gods, but none could save! How the people of Athens needed to hear the good news of His Son, Jesus! But how?

The answer came to Paul as he looked down among all those statues and saw a very old, very simple stone. On it, someone had carved the words, "To an Unknown God."

There was an amazing, old story behind that simple, little stone. A man named Laertius wrote it down. Many years earlier, a terrible sickness had spread through Athens. Many people were dying. The leaders tried everything they could think of. The people brought worship gifts and prayed to every god. But still the sickness continued. Things seemed hopeless.

They called for a wise man named Epimenides to come help them. Epimenides listened to their problem and came up with a very surprising idea. "You worship many gods...hundreds of gods...but there must be another. An Unknown God who has power to heal this illness. We must seek Him and ask Him to help you," he told them.

"Meet me tomorrow morning at Mars Hill-- that grassy hill where you have put the statues of your many gods," Epimenides said. "Bring a flock of sheep of all different colors. Make sure they are healthy and very hungry. Bring stonemasons with their carving tools. Bring lots of stones and mortar (like cement), too," Epimenides ordered. "We will cry out to this Unknown God and offer Him worship gifts. Perhaps He will hear us and help us, even though we do not know His name," he told them.

"We will do what you ask," the leaders agreed, then sent off servants to make the necessary preparations.

The next morning, the leaders of Athens met Epimenides on Mars Hill with everything he had asked for. Many of the people of Athens came, too. Everyone watched and hoped.

"Very good," Epimenides said, as he looked at the hungry sheep. "Don't let them eat until I say so," he told the shepherds. "They must stay hungry!" This was not an easy job! The sheep kept trying to nibble the juicy grass of Mars Hill.

"Quiet!" Epimenides said, "I'm going to pray to the Unknown God and ask for His help." Everyone listened as Epimenides prayed: "Great Unknown God! Please hear our prayers and help us! These sheep are our offering to You. Show us that You hear us and accept our worship gifts by causing these hungry sheep to lie offering to You. Show us that You hear us and accept our worship gifts by causing these hungry sheep to lie down on the grass instead of eating it. Please help us, though we do not know Your name. Please stop the plague," Epimenides begged.

When Epimenides finished praying, he turned to the shepherds and said, "Release the sheep! Watch them carefully! Notice which ones eat and which ones lie down. We will offer the ones who lie down as worship gifts to the Unknown God," he told them.

"This is crazy!" many thought. "These sheep are straining to eat the grass! It would truly be an act of God for sheep as hungry as these to not eat!"

But sure enough, sheep all over the hillside lay down

instead of eating! "It's a sign from the Unknown God! These are the sheep to offer to Him as worship gifts!" everyone shouted in excitement.

"Come, stonemasons!" Epimenides ordered. "Bring your stones and tools. Make an altar where each sheep is lying down. On the side of each altar, carve these words: 'To an Unknown God,'" Epimenides told them.

Soon the air was filled with the loud banging of chisels and hammers of the stonemasons. When they finished, the sheep were placed on the altars as worship gifts. Then everyone prayed and waited.

Within a week, the plague had stopped completely! The people of Athens were overjoyed! The Unknown God had heard their prayers and helped them. They offered Him more worship gifts on the stone altars. They prayed to Him, saying, "Thank You for stopping the plague."

This was the story of the great sickness that was stopped and the great, mysterious One who rescued the people of Athens, as Laertius wrote it down. And now, six hundred years later, Paul would use that old story and one of the simple, little stone altars left on that hill to tell the people of Athens the good news of Jesus.

Paul stood up and said, "I can tell by your hundreds of gods that you are seeking to find God. But the true God you are looking for is the one you call 'The Unknown God.' I want to tell you about Him," he told them. The people listened eagerly. Could it be, after all these years, would they finally hear more about the Unknown God?

"The God you worship as the Unknown God is the Creator of heaven and earth," Paul told them. He made everything that you see and enjoy. He is why we live. He created people to know Him, that they would seek him and find Him," Paul told them. "He sent His Son Jesus to die on the cross for the sins of all who put their trust in Him as their Savior. He rose from the dead in victory over sin and death. Turn away from your sin and seek after this true God! Be saved from your sins!" he urged. "Be ready, for one day He will come back on the clouds of heaven. Yes, the Lord Jesus, Himself, who rose from the dead, shall come to judge all the world," he said.

"Ha!" laughed many. "A god who died on a cross and rose from the dead! How silly!" they said and left. They wanted to worship gods, but not one like this! They liked their fake gods who let them do what they wanted to do—like have wild parties to honor them. They wanted nothing to do

with this Unknown God, even if He was the one, true God, as Paul claimed.

But others, like Damaris and Dionysius, listened to Paul and stayed. As Paul told them more about Jesus, the Holy Spirit worked in their hearts, helping them believe. They turned from their fake gods and began to follow the Lord Jesus. At last these thirsty hearts were fully satisfied with knowing the one, true God!

**Our Bible Truth is:**

**God Made Our Hearts to Know and Love Him**

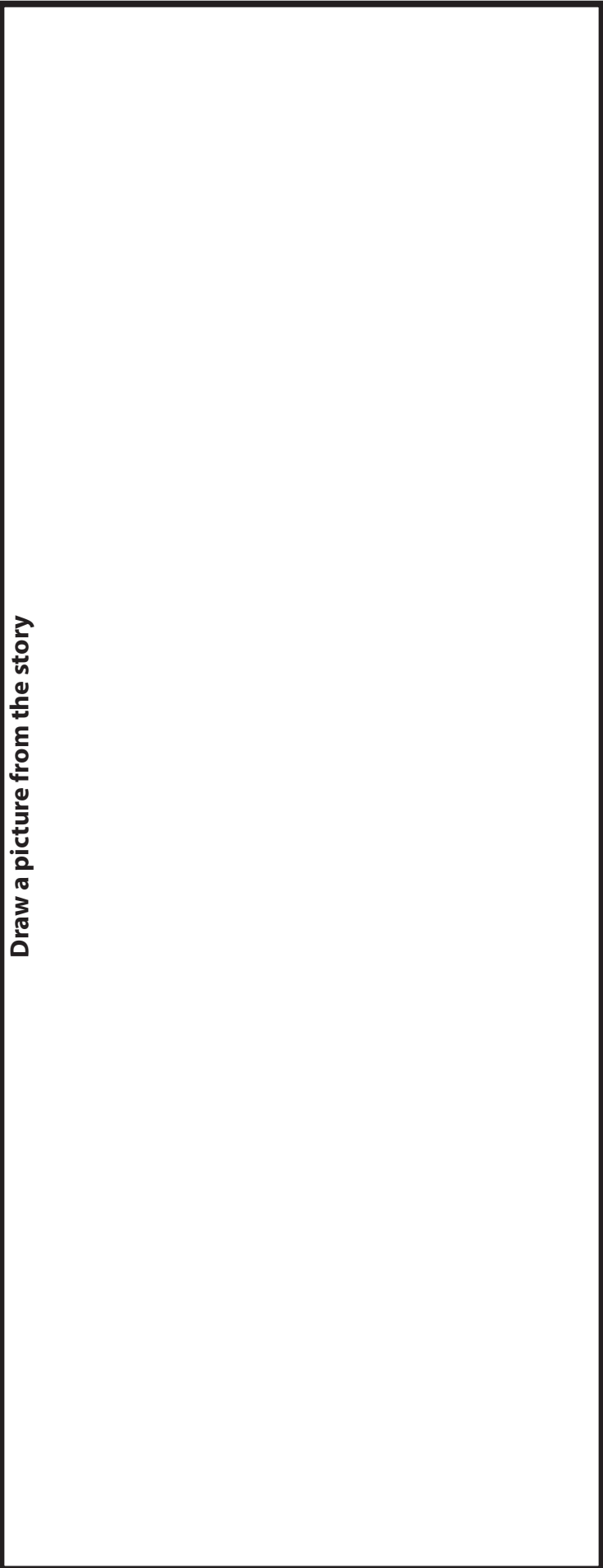
**Our Bible Verse is: Psalm 42:1,2**

“As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?”

Our Bible Truth tells us that God gave us a heart to know and love Him. That include you and me! Who will we be like today? Will we be like the people of Athens who laughed when they heard the good news of Jesus? Or will we be like Damaris and Dionysius, with hearts thirsty for God? They wanted to know more about Jesus. They turned from their sins, trusted in Jesus as their Savior and were saved!

**A Note on the Source of This Story:**

Don Richardson, author of Eternity in Their Hearts, cites this incident in Greek ancient history. Diogenes Laertes is the Greek historian who records the plague and Epimenides' solution in his book, Lives of the Philosophers 1.110. Paul's quote in Titus 1:13, "All Cretans are liars..." is actually a quote from Epimenides, himself. Even though this story may be new to us, the Greeks would have been familiar with Epimenides as a philosopher, and the incident with him and the altar to the Unknown God.



Draw a picture from the story

**SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU**

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

We know God through the heart that pumps blood through our body.

Answer: False. We know God through a special, invisible heart that is different from the heart that pumps blood. It's also called a spirit and it never dies!

**2. Crack the Case Questions:**

**a. Who first laid down this stone and who did they seek?**

Answer: The people of Athens sought an Unknown God. They wanted Him to stop the plague. They laid down this stone (and many others) as altars on which to sacrifice sheep as worship offerings to this Unknown God.

**b. How did Paul use the stone? What did he tell the people of Athens about their hearts?**

Answer: Paul used the stone many years later to tell the people of Athens about the Lord, the one, true God, they had long ago worshiped as the Unknown God. He told them that the Lord made their hearts to worship and know Him.

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

**Psalms 42:1-2**

"As the \_\_\_ pants for streams of water, so my soul \_\_\_ for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and \_\_\_ with God?"

Answers: deer; pants, meet.

**BIBLE TRUTH HYMN**

**Be Thou My Vision**

*PFI NIV Songs 1, Tracks 6,7*

**Verse 1**

Be Thou my vision,  
O Lord of my heart;  
Naught be all else to me,  
Save that Thou art:  
Thou my best thought,  
By day or by night,  
Waking or sleeping,  
Thy presence my light.

**Verse 2**

Be Thou my Wisdom,  
And Thou my true Word;  
I ever with Thee  
And Thou with me, Lord;  
Thou my great Father,  
I, Thy true son;  
Thou in me dwelling,  
And I with Thee one.

Words: Samuel J. Stone Music: Samuel S. Wesley

God's people want God to be their vision—the one they think about most of all, the one who is the best thing they can think of. They keep thinking about Him, both in a special time of praying and reading...and all through the rest of the day and night. They think about Him and know He is with them. His presence guides them, like a light in darkness. He lives inside their heart, giving them wisdom and showing them what He's like.

**AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY**

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

**A** God, we praise You for being our Creator who gave us a heart to know You.

**C** God, we confess that we are sinners, like the Athenians were. And, even though we know that You are the One, True God, too many times we still do not seek You as we should. We need Jesus to be our Savior!

**T** God, we thank You for showing us who you are, especially in Jesus. Thank You for showing Yourself to us so we can know You.

**S** God, we ask that You would work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to know You and love You more and more.

**BIBLE VERSE SONG**

**As the Deer**

*PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 8*

As the deer pants for streams of water,  
so my soul pants for you, O God.  
As the deer pants for streams of water,  
so my soul pants for you, O God.  
My soul thirsts for God.  
My soul thirsts for the living God.  
When can I go and meet with God?  
Psalm Forty-two, one and two.

Words: Psalm 42:1-2, NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012

A thirsty deer searches for a stream of water to satisfy his thirst. He must have it if he is to live. That's how God made his body. In the same way, our heart (or soul) longs for God because He made us to need Him. We may try to satisfy ourselves with other things, but until we know God, we will still long for something more. That's how He made us. He is the living God and there's nothing in the whole world that we need or want more than Him.

## BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

*We're in... Unit 1: The God Who Reveals Himself*

**Unit 1 Big Question and Answer:**  
**How Can I Know What God Is Like?**  
**He Shows Me What He's Like!**

PFI NIV Songs 1, Tracks 3,4

**Unit 1 Bible Verse: Amos 4:13, NIV 1984**

"The LORD reveals His thoughts to man."

PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 5

## BIBLE TRUTH

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## BIBLE VERSE

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## CASE STORY

Adapted from *Religious Stories for Young and Old, vol. IV*,  
compiled by Joel Beeke

**Our story is called:**  
**The Case of the Prayerless Man.**

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

1. Who was the man who wouldn't pray and who wanted him to pray?
2. How did he change and why?

This story doesn't take place in Bible times. It takes place in the 1860's in London, England.

What a busy, crowded city was London! People rushed to and fro on foot and by horse-drawn carriages along the cobblestone streets. Clackety-clack! Clackety-clack! You could hear the carriage wheels over the streets day and night.

Our story is about two men: a pastor named Charles Spurgeon and a Streetlayer. What is a pastor? He's a man who preaches God's Word and cares for the people in his local church. But Mr. Spurgeon wasn't just any pastor. He was one of the greatest, most famous preachers of God's Word, not only in London, but all over the world! Did you know that even today, people still love to read and learn from his sermons!

But in Spurgeon's time, people didn't just read his sermons. They went to hear him preach in person. And that's what thousands of people would do every Sunday. They would jam into the Metropolitan Tabernacle—Spurgeon's church—and listen to him tell about Jesus from the Bible. Everyone wanted to hear him preach—even the Prince of England himself! Wow!

Well, ALMOST everyone wanted to hear Spurgeon preach. The other man in our story--the Streetlayer--certainly did not. Let me tell you about him. A streetlayer is someone who lays down the big, heavy cobblestones that made up the roads of London. Streetlaying was a hard, tiring job, but this Streetlayer was pretty cheerful about it. As he pulled up damaged stones and laid down the new ones on the streets of London, he would sing in a loud, happy voice. But this Streetlayer didn't always sing as he worked. If he smashed his hand between stones, his happy singing changed to a bad temper and bad words! People covered their ears as they listened to the awful words that came out of his mouth!

But far worse than the Streetlayer's bad words, was



what was going on in his heart! This Streetlayer may have been made to know and love God, but he did not want to know Him...at all! Yet God, in His kindness, had even given this man a wife and three children who loved God. Each day, he could watch them and see how good it was to know and love God, but still he wanted nothing to do with God! What a very hard heart this Streetlayer had!

No, the Streetlayer didn't want to know or love God, but his family did! They prayed for him and urged him to join them in praying and worshiping God, too. But no matter what they did or said, the Streetlayer's answer was always the same: "No! I will not pray!"

And no, the Streetlayer did not care about God, but God cared about him. God wanted him to know and love Him and He planned to change this stubborn man's heart. And so He did, using a sickness, three pounds (a pound is the name of English money, like American dollars), and Mr. Spurgeon.

It all started when the Streetlayer sat down to eat lunch with his family one day. His wife and children gave thanks before eating, as usual. And also as usual, the Streetlayer refused to pray with them. His little girl did not like this and said, "Mommy, Daddy never prays with us; you must also teach Daddy a little prayer."

This made that Streetlayer very mad! He lost his temper and yelled at his sweet little daughter, "Say, you little rascal, don't worry about me and my prayers! I will not pray!" That silenced them all, but how sad he made his little girl by his harsh words!

The next day the Streetlayer went to work laying cobblestones. As usual, he sang cheerfully, until something bad happened, then, as usual, out came all those bad words again! But then something happened that was not usual at all. For in God's great plan, the Streetlayer was working on Mr. Spurgeon's street that day!

Mr. Spurgeon was working in his study when first he heard the Streetlayer's loud singing, and then all those bad words. "This is terrible! I can't work with that man yelling those bad words outside my house!" Spurgeon said to himself. "I must do something about this man, but what? If I tell him to stop saying bad words, he probably won't listen. Besides, what he really needs is to know the God who made him. What shall I do?"

Then an idea came to him. He got up from his desk and

went out to the Streetlayer. "Good morning, sir. I am Mr. Spurgeon," he greeted the man cheerfully. "What wonderful work you are doing on my street! It will be so much easier to travel on now," he told the Streetlayer. "Everyone enjoys your cheerful singing as you work, but sir, when you get angry, your bad words are terrible to listen to! I suppose it shall be of no use to ask you to stop talking like this because you would not be willing or able to stop it. But, may I ask you something: Do you ever pray?"

"Oh, no, here come more questions about prayer!" thought the Streetlayer. "Pray? No, I will not pray!" the man replied to Spurgeon. "That would never work for me, because you cannot pray and say bad words at the same time," he said.

"Listen here," answered Mr. Spurgeon. "I shall give you three pounds in English money, if you will promise to NEVER pray in your whole life. I would offer you two pounds more if you will promise not to say bad words anymore, but I don't think you will do that. So, let's just leave it at this: these three pounds are yours to keep, if you promise to never pray! But, as soon as you pray, you must promise me that you will give me back the three pounds," Spurgeon said, as he held out three pounds to the man.

"What a strange request! Who would expect a pastor to ask someone to promise to never pray?!" the Streetlayer thought, but that didn't stop him from wanting all that money. "Yes, I give you my word. I will not pray!" he told Mr. Spurgeon. He put the money in his pocket and went back to work. Mr. Spurgeon went home, too, and waited for what would happen next.

The rest of the morning, Mr. Spurgeon already noticed the Streetlayer's bad words had stopped. How nice! At last he could get good work done! But what had Mr. Spurgeon really done? Had he really wanted this man to never pray? Didn't he remember that the Streetlayer had a heart made to know and love God? If he wouldn't pray, how could he ever seek after God and know Him? But let's see what happens. Perhaps there was more to this promise than first it appears.

The Streetlayer went home to join his family for lunch, but this time he didn't sing as usual. He was worrying about his promise to never pray. In his heart the Streetlayer knew there was a God and he should seek Him. Yet he had promised to never speak to this God for just three pounds and this bothered him!

As the Streetlayer joined his family at the table for lunch,

he noticed that the chair of his little girl was empty. "Where is Mary?" he asked.

"She's in bed," his wife replied. "She had such a bad headache this morning that I had the doctor come. She's to rest with a wet cloth on her head," she replied.

The Streetlayer worried about his little girl. He thought about how he had treated her the day before and wished he hadn't lost his temper with her just because she wanted him to pray. He worried about her sickness. Would the doctor heal her? Would she die? Could God help her if they prayed? But then the Streetlayer's promise to Mr. Spurgeon came to mind: "I will never pray," he had promised.. So the Streetlayer did not pray.

The Streetlayer didn't tell his wife about his promise to Mr. Spurgeon or the money, but it bothered him. Would he really not ask God to help his sick, little girl...all for three pounds and a promise? Soon he was so upset he couldn't even eat. He went upstairs to see his little girl instead.

"How are you? Do you have a headache?" he asked. "I hope you get better quickly," he told her.

Hello, Daddy," she sweetly replied. How sick she looked! The Streetlayer worried even more for her.

That afternoon the Streetlayer went back to work, but he did little work. He thought of his sick, little daughter. But would he pray for her? No, he would not...He COULD not! "I will not pray!" he had promised, but it was getting hard to keep it now.

At the end of the day, the Streetlayer hurried home to check on his daughter again. She was sicker! Now she thrashed about from side to side in her little bed with a terribly high fever. The doctor feared she had meningitis and might die!

At dinner, the youngest boy prayed. "Lord, bless this food, and please make Mary better."

The Streetlayer wanted to pray with them, but he remembered his promise and forced himself to stop.

He went to see his daughter. "Oh, Lord," he began to pray; but, quickly he caught himself: "No! I must not pray!" He went to the barn, then to the house. He tried to read the newspaper. But all he could think about was not praying about Mary. "Ah ha! I've got it! I cannot pray," thought the Streetlayer, "but others can! I will get my wife to pray again for her. Perhaps this will help me feel better," he decided.

He went straight to his wife and said: "Wife, how is Mary now? You've been praying for her, haven't you?"

The Streetlayer's wife could not believe her ears. "When did you begin to care that I pray?" she asked him. Then the Streetlayer told her the whole story and together they decided what to do.

The next morning, the Streetlayer went to Mr. Spurgeon's house. "Mr. Spurgeon, here are your three pounds back," the Streetlayer said. "I cannot keep my promise," he confessed. "I must pray!" He told Mr. Spurgeon about his daughter and what the Lord had done in his own heart. Mr. Spurgeon went to see little Mary and pray for her, too.

What a lot Mr. Spurgeon, the Streetlayer and his family had to praise God for! Mary got well. And the Streetlayer turned away from his old life of wanting to disobey God and trusted in Jesus as his Savior. No longer was the Streetlayer a man who would not pray to God. Now he was a man who knew God and loved Him in his heart...and he stayed that way the rest of his life!

**Our Bible Truth is:**

**God Made Our Hearts to Know and Love Him**

**Our Bible Verse is: Psalm 42:1,2**

"As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?"

Like the Streetlayer, we are made to know and love God. And like him, we can know God. How? By turning from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our Savior. If we do, God will forgive us and make us His own special people! He will fill us with the Holy Spirit so that we know Him, love Him and live for Him more and more! And one day, He will bring us to live with Him in heaven, forever happy!

„

**SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU**

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

God made our bodies with daily needs, but not our hearts. We don't need to spend time with God each day.  
 Answer: False. Our hearts will grow to love and know God best when we spend time with Him each day.

**2. Crack the Case Questions:**

**a. Who was the man who wouldn't pray and who wanted him to pray?**

Answer: The Streetlayer wouldn't pray to God. His family, Mr. Spurgeon (and God!) wanted him to pray.

**b. How did he change and why?**

Answer: The Streetlayer became a praying man. His family and Mr. Spurgeon prayed for him and encouraged him to pray. God worked in his heart, helping him to turn to Him and pray.

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

**Psalms 42:1-2**

"As the deer pants for streams of \_\_\_\_, so my \_\_\_\_ pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for \_\_\_\_, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?"

Answers: water, soul, God.

**BIBLE TRUTH HYMN**

**Be Thou My Vision**

*PFI NIV Songs 1, Tracks 6,7*

**Verse 1**

Be Thou my vision,  
 O Lord of my heart;  
 Naught be all else to me,  
 Save that Thou art:  
 Thou my best thought,  
 By day or by night,  
 Waking or sleeping,  
 Thy presence my light.

**Verse 2**

Be Thou my Wisdom,  
 And Thou my true Word;  
 I ever with Thee  
 And Thou with me, Lord;  
 Thou my great Father,  
 I, Thy true son;  
 Thou in me dwelling,  
 And I with Thee one.

Words: Samuel J. Stone Music: Samuel S. Wesley

God's people want God to be their vision—the one they think about most of all, the one who is the best thing they can think of. They keep thinking about Him, both in a special time of praying and reading...and all through the rest of the day and night. They think about Him and know He is with them. His presence guides them, like a light in darkness. He lives inside their heart, giving them wisdom and showing them what He's like.

**AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY**

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

**A** God, we praise You for being our Creator who gave us a heart to know You.

**C** God, we confess that we are sinners, like the Streetlayer was. And, even though we know that You are the One, True God, too many times we still do not seek You as we should. We need Jesus to be our Savior!

**T** God, we thank You for showing us who you are, especially in Jesus. Thank You for showing Yourself to us so we can know You.

**S** God, we ask that You would work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to know You and love You more and more.

**BIBLE VERSE SONG**

**As the Deer**

*PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 8*

As the deer pants for streams of water,  
 so my soul pants for you, O God.  
 As the deer pants for streams of water,  
 so my soul pants for you, O God.  
 My soul thirsts for God.  
 My soul thirsts for the living God.  
 When can I go and meet with God?  
 Psalm Forty-two, one and two.

Words: Psalm 42:1-2, NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012

A thirsty deer searches for a stream of water to satisfy his thirst. He must have it if he is to live. That's how God made his body. In the same way, our heart (or soul) longs for God because He made us to need Him. We may try to satisfy ourselves with other things, but until we know God, we will still long for something more. That's how He made us. He is the living God and there's nothing in the whole world that we need or want more than Him.



## BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

*We're in... Unit 1: The God Who Reveals Himself*

**Unit 1 Big Question and Answer:**  
**How Can I Know What God Is Like?**  
*He Shows Me What He's Like!*

PFI NIV Songs 1, Tracks 3,4

**Unit 1 Bible Verse: Amos 4:13, NIV 1984**

"The LORD reveals His thoughts to man."

PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 5

## BIBLE TRUTH

*We're learning... Bible Truth 1:*  
**God Made Our Hearts to Know and Love Him**

When God created people, He made them with a special heart so they could know and love Him. This isn't the heart that pumps blood through our body. This is something very different. We can't feel this heart inside of us in the same way as we feel the heart that beats in our chest. This heart is even more amazing! THIS heart will never die--it lives forever!

The Bible also calls this heart, a spirit or a soul. And it's in this very special heart that God reveals Himself to us. God's Holy Spirit works in our heart, helping us to believe in God, turn away from our sins and to trust in Jesus as our Savior. When we do, God will work in our heart even more, making it brand new, and filling it with knowledge of Him and with more love for Him and others.

## BIBLE VERSE

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

**Bible Truth 1 Bible Verse: Psalm 42:1,2**

"As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?"

## CASE STORY

Psalm 19, 23, 24, 62; 1 Chronicles 29; 2 Samuel 5-6,15

**Our story is: The Case of the Man After God's Heart.**

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

1. Who was the man after God's own heart? What does that mean?
2. How did God reveal himself to this man and help him?

This story takes place in Old Testament times, about 1000 years before Jesus lived on earth.

Out in the hills of Judah, not far from the village of Bethlehem, lived a man named Jesse and his family. Now Jesse's family might not have seemed special at first glance. They were farmers and shepherds, just like many others who lived in Bethlehem. But in God's eyes, there was something very special about this family—and particularly, the youngest son in this family.

It wasn't something on the outside that made this son special to God. It didn't have to do with how handsome or strong or smart he was. The "something special" had to do with something that was inside him. For there inside his heart was something that pleased God so much that God gave this son of Jesse the highest compliment of all: God called him "a man after His (God's) own heart."

What does it mean to be a man after God's own heart? It means to have a heart full of wanting to know, love and obey God. It's a heart that is thirsty for God, just like we are thirsty for water on a hot day. Nothing but God would satisfy the heart of young man!

What was the name of this son? Perhaps you can guess. It was David. He was the man after God's own heart! God had done a wonderful work in David's heart. He helped David know that He was the one, true God. He gave David faith in Him and love for Him. He helped David want to live for Him. So much so, that only knowing and loving God truly satisfied David. And so, everywhere he went, and everything he saw and did, David was reminded of his wonderful God.

Sometimes David would take out his harp and make up his own songs to sing to God. He sang: "The earth is the LORD's and everything in it, the world and all who live in it" (Psalm 24:1). At night when he was out with his father's flocks of sheep, David would look up at the skies and think: "The heavens declare the glory of God, the skies proclaim the work of his hands" (Psalm 19:1). During the

day, David would look up at the blue sky and puffy, white clouds as they floated above the beautiful, grassy hills and he would exclaim: "Your love, O LORD, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the skies. Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your justice like the great deep. O LORD, you preserve both man and beast. How priceless is your unfailing love!" (Psalm. 36:5-6).

David thought about God as he took care of his father's sheep. He led them to grassy meadows to feed and rest. He rescued them out of holes with his shepherd's staff. He chased away hungry lions and bears with the sharp, spiky nails of his rod. As David took care of the sheep, he thought about how God cared for him: "The LORD is my shepherd, I will not be in need. He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters....His rod and his staff they comfort me," he sang. (Psalm 23:1-2, 4)

God blessed David in many ways. He chose David to be king over His people, Israel, and He helped him to lead them well. God gave David and his soldiers victory over all their enemies. He gave David the love of the people of Israel! He blessed David with a big family; a beautiful, cedar palace to live in; and lots and lots of money. Oh, how great were God's blessings to David!

But what would all these blessings do in David's heart? Would they make him proud? Would he stop seeking God and just be satisfied with all of God's blessings instead? No, he would not! Even when all these good things happened to David, David just praised God more. David made up new songs to praise God, the true King and the Giver of all the good things he enjoyed.

But David wasn't satisfied with just worshipping God himself. He wanted everyone to worship the LORD. So David made plans to build a big, beautiful Temple where all could come to worship God. David didn't even wait until the Temple was built to lead the people in praising the LORD. No! Long before even the first stone of the Temple would be put in place, David had 16,000 men come and serve before the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant.

Each day these men would lead the people in offering sacrifices and praising God. Did you know that David chose 4000 of these men just to be teachers, singers and musicians? Their job was to teach the people about God and to lead them in singing praises to Him. Lyres, harps, flutes, trumpets and cymbals would sound out as the great

choirs of these worship leaders led the people in praising the LORD. David would stand in front with them, saying, "Praise be to you, O LORD, God of our father Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Yours is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is Yours. Yours, O LORD, is the kingdom; You are exalted as head over all. Wealth and honor come from You: You are the ruler of all things. In Your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all. Now, our God, we give You thanks, and praise Your glorious name" (1 Chronicles 29:10-13).

Yes, David was a man who wanted to know and love God with all his heart. But let's get one thing straight: that didn't mean David was a perfect man. David was a sinner, just like you and me. And don't think that just because he loved God that he lived a perfectly happy life. Sad things happened to David, just like they do to you and me, too.

One of the saddest things in David's life happened when he was an old man. His son Absalom came up with a plan to kill him and make himself king in his place. Absalom talked many people into rebelling against David, too--even some of David's closest friends! Can you imagine how sad David was? His own son getting some of his best friends to help kill him!

Absalom's plan worked, in part. He didn't kill David, but he made him leave his beautiful palace in Jerusalem and run away to the dry, lonely desert of Judah for safety. As David ran away, some people yelled mean things and threw rocks at him! He! Their king!

What was inside David's heart as all these sad things happened to him? Would he stop thinking about God? Would he stop wanting to know and love Him now?

No, David would not! David picked up his harp, even out there in the wilderness and sang this song, "O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water... Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you. So I will bless you as long as I live; in your name I will lift up my hands. My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food, and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips." (Psalm 63:1,3-5)

Maybe he did not have a palace any more. Maybe his son didn't love him any more. Maybe people threw stones at him and called him bad names. But David still knew God in his heart. He knew God would always be with him and

He was all that David really needed.

David was right! God did sustain him through all those hard days. And after a while, Absalom and his helpers were defeated. David returned to Jerusalem and ruled as king until he was a very old man.

At last it came time for David to die. What was inside David's heart then? Did he worry what would happen to him when he died? Would God take care of him even in death? David didn't worry. He knew God would take care of him! Once he wrote a song about this. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever," he wrote (Psalm 23:6). How happy David knew he soon would be! Yes, he would have to die, but then he would get to be live face to face forever with the God he had loved and known in his heart for so many years! And that would be best of all!

**Our Bible Truth is:**  
**God Made Our Hearts to Know and Love Him**

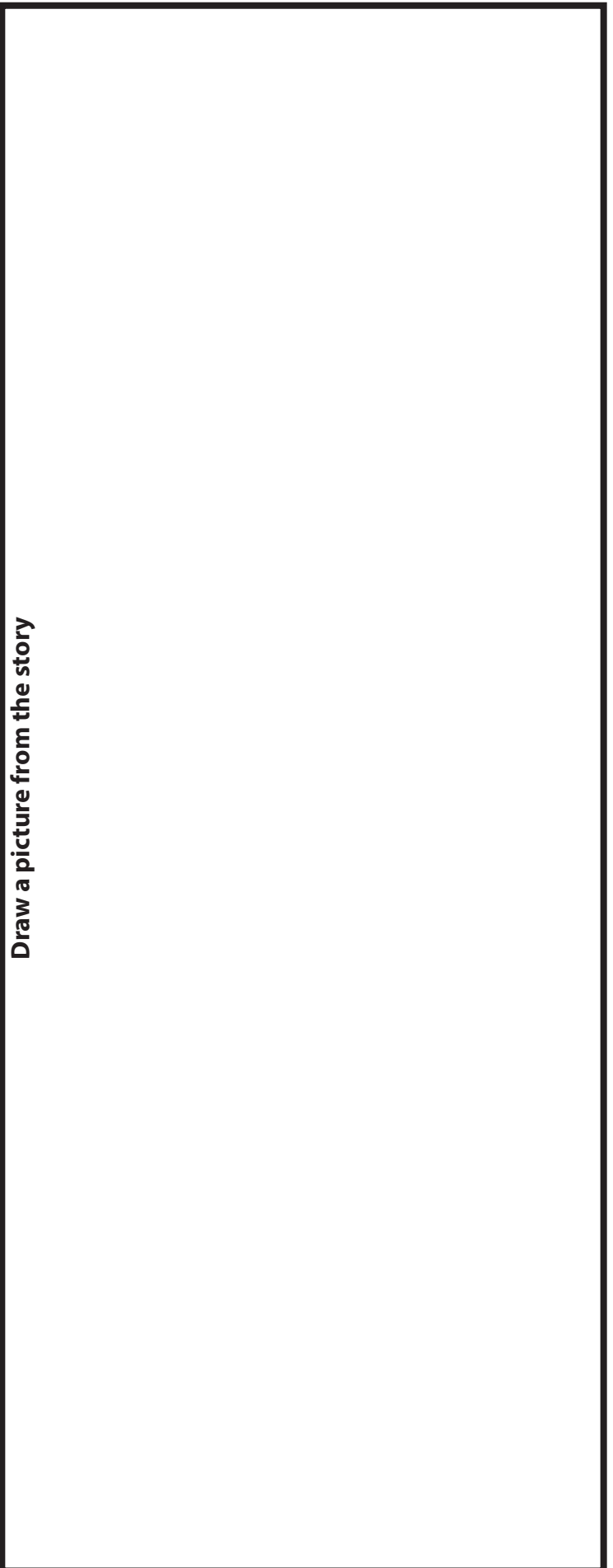
**Bible Truth 1 Bible Verse: Psalm 42:1,2**

"As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?"

The words of this psalm were a song written by some priests, the Sons of Korah, for the Temple choirs to sing. Like David, their hearts desired to know and love God more than anyone or anything else!

What about you and me? What will we do with the special heart that God has put in us to know and love Him? Let's ask God to work in our heart today, helping us to know, love and obey God, like David did.

Draw a picture from the story



**SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU**

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

God's Holy Spirit works in our hearts to help us know God and love Him more and more.

Answer: True!

**2. Crack the Case Questions:**

**a. Who was the man after God's own heart? What does that mean?**

Answer: David. It meant that David loved God and trusted Him to be who He was--the one, true God!

**b. How did God reveal himself to this man in his heart and help him?**

Answer: God's Holy Spirit whispered into David's heart the truths he had learned from the Bible. He reminded David that God could be trusted to be who He said He was. He would always take care of David. This helped David step out in faith and do courageous things to the glory of God.

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

**Psalms 42:1-2**

"As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for \_\_\_\_, O God. My soul \_\_\_\_ for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with \_\_\_\_?"

Answers: you, thirsts, God.

**BIBLE TRUTH HYMN**

**Be Thou My Vision**

*PFI NIV Songs 1, Tracks 6,7*

**Verse 1**

Be Thou my vision,  
O Lord of my heart;  
Naught be all else to me,  
Save that Thou art:  
Thou my best thought,  
By day or by night,  
Waking or sleeping,  
Thy presence my light.

**Verse 2**

Be Thou my Wisdom,  
And Thou my true Word;  
I ever with Thee  
And Thou with me, Lord;  
Thou my great Father,  
I, Thy true son;  
Thou in me dwelling,  
And I with Thee one.

Words: Samuel J. Stone Music: Samuel S. Wesley

God's people want God to be their vision—the one they think about most of all, the one who is the best thing they can think of. They keep thinking about Him, both in a special time of praying and reading...and all through the rest of the day and night. They think about Him and know He is with them. His presence guides them, like a light in darkness. He lives inside their heart, giving them wisdom and showing them what He's like.

**AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY**

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

**A** God, we praise You for being our Creator who gave us a heart to know You.

**C** God, we confess that many times when bad things happen to us, we are not like David. We get upset with You and do not trust You. We need Jesus to be our Savior!

**T** God, we thank You for inspiring David to write down his psalms so we can know them and sing them, too.

**S** God, work in our hearts! Help us turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Work in our heart like you worked in David's, helping us to love and know You, more and more. Help us to trust You like David did, even when very hard things happened to him.

**BIBLE VERSE SONG**

**As the Deer**

*PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 8*

As the deer pants for streams of water,  
so my soul pants for you, O God.  
As the deer pants for streams of water,  
so my soul pants for you, O God.  
My soul thirsts for God.  
My soul thirsts for the living God.  
When can I go and meet with God?  
Psalm Forty-two, one and two.

Words: Psalm 42:1-2, NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012

A thirsty deer searches for a stream of water to satisfy his thirst. He must have it if he is to live. That's how God made his body. In the same way, our heart (or soul) longs for God because He made us to need Him. We may try to satisfy ourselves with other things, but until we know God, we will still long for something more. That's how He made us. He is the living God and there's nothing in the whole world that we need or want more than Him.

## BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

*We're in... Unit 1: The God Who Reveals Himself*

**Unit 1 Big Question and Answer:**  
**How Can I Know What God Is Like?**  
***He Shows Me What He's Like!***

PFI NIV Songs 1, Tracks 3,4

**Unit 1 Bible Verse: Amos 4:13, NIV 1984**

"The LORD reveals His thoughts to man."

PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 5

## BIBLE TRUTH

*We're learning... Bible Truth 2:*  
**God's Creations Tell Us about Him**

Creations tell you something about the person who created them. God is the creator of our world and His creations tell us about Him. God's creations show us many things about Him. They show us that He is mighty, glorious, beautiful, good, wise, infinite, perfect and so much more. God loves for us to learn about Him from His creations and praise Him for what He's like.

## BIBLE VERSE

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

**Bible Truth 2 Bible Verse: Psalm 19:1-4**

"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the works of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world."

## CASE STORY

1 Kings 17:1-18:46

**Our story is called:**

**The Case of the Speaking Rain**

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

1. How did the rain "speak"?
2. What the rain "tell" the people of Israel?

This story is a Old Testament story that takes place in Israel, about 900 years before Jesus lived on earth.

Mount Carmel. That name might not mean much to you. It is the name of a little mountain range in Israel, 1800 feet high, sixteen miles long and four miles wide, right near the Mediterranean Sea. No, that name might not mean much to you, but to the people of Israel, it was about the closest thing they had to paradise.

Unlike the rest of Israel, which was fairly dry and rainless except during the short rainy season, Mount Carmel stayed green all year round. Men took advantage of Mount Carmel's richness and planted vineyards all over its slopes. They named these mountains "Mount Carmel," meaning "Vineyards of God," because God certainly had blessed them with so much fruitfulness.

But, at the time of this story, Mount Carmel was brown and liveless. Its slopes had lost their greenness. the trees were leafless, the grass was dead. The grapevines were bare and dry. What had happened?! The prophet Elijah knew. It had to do with King Ahab's sin.

"King Ahab," Elijah said, "the LORD made you king over Israel. You should worship Him, but you have led the people to worship the fake god, Baal, instead! You worship him as the god of rain and lightning. You've built altars to him on the hilltops and even on Mount Carmel. You think he's the one who brings the rain that grows all your crops and makes your families and animals happy and healthy. But you're wrong! The LORD is the creator of all things and now He will prove it to you," Elijah told Ahab. "He is going to withhold rain from Israel for a few years. It will not come back until he says so. Then you will see that He, not Baal, is the one, true God."

Everything happened, just as Elijah said. No rain fell for the next two years. Plants didn't grow. Wells dried up. Some people and animals even died!

"Bring us rain, oh great Baal!" the prophets of Baal, King Ahab and the people prayed. They offered sacrifices, too. But no matter how much they prayed or how many



sacrifices they made on the altars, no rain came. The LORD was sending a message loud and clear through the rain – or lack of it. He, not Baal, was the one, true God. King Ahab and the people should turn back and worship Him alone. When they did, the rain would come.

At last the LORD spoke to Elijah: “It’s time. The people are ready to repent. Go to Ahab. I’m going to make it rain.”

King Ahab was far from happy to see Elijah. The king blamed all this trouble on him. “Why have you come here, you troublemaker?” he said to Elijah, when he appeared before him.

“I’m not the troublemaker. You are,” Elijah replied. “You and your father’s family turned away from the LORD and worshiped Baal instead. But now it’s time for you to see that the LORD is the one, true God. Have all of the people of Israel and all the 450 prophets of Baal meet me up on top of Mount Carmel. There’s going to be a showdown between Baal and the LORD up there.”

The king sent the message throughout Israel. Before long, the prophets of Baal and all the people joined King Ahab and Elijah up on Mount Carmel.

“Is the LORD God or is Baal?” Elijah asked them all. “It’s time for you to decide who you will worship.”

The people just stood in silence.

“Get two bulls,” Elijah told them. “The prophets of Baal can choose one to sacrifice to Baal. Let them cut it up and put it on the wood of Baal’s altar, but not set fire to it. I will prepare the other bull, put it on the wood of the LORD’s altar, but not set fire to it,” he instructed.

They will call on the name of Baal and I will call on the name of the LORD. The god who answers by fire is the one, true God,” Elijah told them.

Everyone agreed to the contest. The prophets of Baal prepared their bull and put it on the wood of Baal’s altar, just as Elijah had told them too. They cried out to Baal from morning until noon. “Oh Baal, answer us!” they shouted, as they danced around his altar. But Baal did not answer.

At noon Elijah began to taunt them. “Shout louder!” he said. “Surely Baal is God! Perhaps he’s sleeping and must be awakened. Or maybe he’s thinking or busy.”

So the prophets of Baal shouted louder and louder. They even cut themselves with swords, as they sometimes did when they worshiped Baal. Surely this supposed god of rain and lightning could send down a spare lightning bolt to light the fire. But no. Nothing happened.

At last it was Elijah’s turn. “Come here to me,” he told the people. They gathered near and watched as Elijah repaired the LORD’s altar. He built it with twelve stones, one for each of the tribes of Israel. He dug a deep trench all the way around the altar. He put wood on the altar, then cut his bull into pieces, and laid it on top.

“Fill four, large jars with water and pour it on the offering and on the wood. Do this three times,” he ordered. At last there was so much water that it ran down the altar and filled the trench. No ordinary fire would burn up this wet wood and offering!

Then Elijah prayed: “O LORD, accept this sacrifice. Answer me, LORD, so that the people will turn back and worship You, the one, true God.”

Immediately, the LORD sent fire down and burned up not just the sacrifice and the wood, but the stones, the water in the trench and even the soil!

The people saw this and fell down to the ground, worshiping the LORD. “The LORD, He is God! Baal is just a fake god,” they declared.

“Seize the prophets of Baal Don’t let any get away!” Elijah commanded the people. The people quickly obeyed. These false prophets wouldn’t get to tempt the people to turn away from the LORD anymore.

Then Elijah said to Ahab, “Go, eat and drink! Celebrate! The LORD is going to send rain now. Heavy rain!”

As Ahab headed back to his palace in Jezreel, the sky began to change. First, only a tiny, black cloud was spotted in the distance. But before long, the wind began to blow and the whole sky became dark and stormy. Then whoosh! Down came the rain!

For over two years the rainless skies had proclaimed that it was the LORD, not Baal who was God. Now, the rain proclaimed that He was God, too. It drenched the earth and quenched the thirst of the people, the animals and even the dry slopes of Mount Carmel.

**Our Bible Truth is:****God’s Creations Tell Us about Him****Our Bible Verse is: Psalm 19:1-4**

“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the works of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.”

“The heavens declare the glory of God”... as do the birds in the sky, the insects buzzing among the flowers, the mighty mountains, the roaring seas and you and me! All were made by God and all tell us something about Him. He has filled both heaven and earth with wonderful things for us to enjoy and from which we can learn about Him.

But what will we do when we see God’s creations? Will we remember look for each can tell us about God and praise Him? Or, will we forget Him when we look at them? Too many times, we—like the Israelites, like all people—forget the LORD who made them all.

Let’s praise the LORD now: the great God who shows us what He’s like in all He’s created. Let’s ask Him to help us know Him better through His creations and always remember to praise Him. Let’s ask Him to work in our hearts that we might turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.

**Draw a picture from the story**



**SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU**

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

Creations tell us something about the person who created them.

Answer: True.

**2. Crack the Case Questions:**

**a. How did the rain “speak”?**

Answer: It showed who was the one, true God and who was not, as the LORD first withheld the rain, then brought it back, all at His command.

**b. What the rain “tell” the people of Israel?**

Answer: That the LORD was the one, true God, not Baal, who they called the God of Rain and Lightning. They learned that they should turn back and worship the LORD.

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

**Psalm 19:1-4**

“The heavens \_\_\_ the glory of God; the skies proclaim the works of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display \_\_\_. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into \_\_\_ the earth, their words to the ends of the world.”

Answers: declare; knowledge; all.

**BIBLE TRUTH HYMN**

**O, Worship the King**

*PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 9*

**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

All of God’s creation tells us about Him. We can look at everything from the air to the light, to the hills and plains, to the dew and rain, and see that God cares for us.

**AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY**

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

**A** God, we praise You for being the Creator of all things. We can see how wonderful You are in the many things You have made!

**C** God, we confess that we are sinners, just like the people of Israel. And, that even though we know about You and Your good ways, we still don’t seek You as we should or could. We need Jesus to save us!

**T** God, we thank you for telling us so much about You through Your creations. Thank You for being so merciful to the people of Israel long ago and to us. You want us to know and worship You!

**S** God, we ask that You would work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Use Your creations to help us know You better.

**BIBLE VERSE SONG**

**The Heavens Declare**

*PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 10*

The heavens declare the glory of God,  
The sky proclaims the works of His hands  
Day after day, they pour out speech,  
Night after night, they display knowledge,  
There is no language, where their voice is not heard.  
Their voice goes out into all the earth.  
The heavens declare the glory of God,  
The sky proclaims the works of His hands  
Psalm Nineteen: one through four.

Words: Psalm 19:1-4, NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012

God loved His people long before they loved Him. He loved them and chose to adopt them as His people, even before He created (founded) the world. Why did He do this? Because it pleased Him to do it! It would show how wonderful He is and how great the good gifts He gives His people because of Jesus. We think of what He’s done and we praise Him for being so good to people like us. People who are sinners, but through Jesus, are made to be holy--without sin and without blame in His sight.



## BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

*We're in... Unit 1: The God Who Reveals Himself*

**Unit 1 Big Question and Answer:**  
**How Can I Know What God Is Like?**  
*He Shows Me What He's Like!*

PFI NIV Songs 1, Tracks 3,4

**Unit 1 Bible Verse: Amos 4:13, NIV 1984**

"The LORD reveals His thoughts to man."

PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 5

## BIBLE TRUTH

*We're learning... Bible Truth 2:*  
**God's Creations Tell Us about Him**

Creations tell you something about the person who created them. God is the creator of our world and His creations tell us about Him. God's creations show us many things about Him. They show us that He is mighty, glorious, beautiful, good, wise, infinite, perfect and so much more. God loves for us to learn about Him from His creations and praise Him for what He's like.

## BIBLE VERSE

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

**Bible Truth 2 Bible Verse: Psalm 19:1-4**

"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the works of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world."

## CASE STORY

Adapted from *Religious Stories for Young and Old*, vol. IV,

compiled by Joel Beeke

**Our story is called:**

**The Case of the Chilly Camouflage.**

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

1. What was chilly? What was camouflaged?
2. What did the Lord show about Himself through the camouflage?

This story doesn't take place in Bible times. It takes place in the 1890's, just outside of Stralsund, a great city on the cold, northern coast of Germany. Stralsund was called the jewel of the Baltic Sea in those days. It was an important center for ship-building and trading. From Stralsund, it was easy to sail up to Russia for buy animal furs for coat-making; or, to other parts of Europe to sell fish and salt. The Kings of Sweden, Prussia and Pomerania fought each other for the great city. In battle after battle, they would send in their troops into Stralsund. Each time, many people would be hurt and everything they owned destroyed. Everyone dreaded these wars.

In a little cottage on the edge of Stralsund lived an old woman named Bertha Schmidt. Some would say Bertha had a hard life. Her husband had died. She was old and was often sick or in pain. She would be all alone in the world, if it were not for her son, Karl who lived with her and cared for her.

Bertha was grateful for Karl, but she was even more grateful for someone else--the Lord! Bertha knew and loved Him. She trusted Him to care for her every day of her life, and so, her heart was filled with joy.

One summer, Karl met and fell in love with a wonderful girl. A few months later, on a chilly winter's day, Karl married her. After the ceremony, Bertha, Karl and his bride returned to Bertha's cottage to celebrate.

The next morning should have been the bright beginning of their lives together, but it was not.

"Enemy soldiers are on the move!" spread the terrible news. "They're headed for Stralsund! They'll be here anytime! Prepare your homes and families!"

The day passed in watchful fear as everyone waited for the soldiers. As the sun went down, the people were still waiting and watching. As the night dragged on, a new problem arose. A terrible snowstorm struck the city. How cold it would be for those who lost their homes when the

soldiers came and attacked. Who could possibly survive all of this?

But how was it within the widow's cottage? Karl barricaded the doors and windows to try to keep the soldiers out. But they knew it was really hopeless. A few boards with nails in them were no match for the soldiers coming through. They would have no problem busting in or setting the whole cottage on fire. So at last, Karl sat down next to his frightened wife and waited. There was nothing else he could do. He felt so helpless.

But Bertha Schmidt disagreed. She knew where hope and help was to be found--with the Lord! He could take care of them, even when everything looked hopeless! She sat in her chair, looking down at the words in her little hymnal and soaking in the truths she read. After a while she looked up with a big smile on her face, as she repeated aloud what she had read: "Round us a wall our God shall rear, And our proud foes shall quail with fear."

"What do you say, mother?" replied Karl, "Is your faith as strong as that? Do you really expect God will build a wall round our poor hut, strong and high enough to keep out an army? I wish I could believe it right now. It is terrible to wait for the soldiers as worried and fearful as I am," he confessed.

"Hasn't my son read that not a sparrow falls to the ground without the will of our Father; that faith has stopped the mouths of lions, and turned aside the edge of the sword?" Bertha replied.

Karl knew those truths, but his heart had a hard time finding comfort in them now that soldiers were coming. Would the Lord really rescue them like He did in those Bible stories from long ago?

Just before midnight, there was a lull in the storm. "Dong, dong," the town clock struck midnight. At the same moment, from the opposite direction, the faint sound of the drums and pipes of the enemy soldiers could be heard. The terrible hour had come at last!

The little family drew closer together, holding hands. Karl and his wife became even more fearful, but not Bertha Schmidt. She squeezed her son's hand and again repeated: "Round us a wall our God shall rear, And our proud foes shall quail with fear." Bertha kept trusting in the Lord, even then.

The music drew nearer, and now they could hear the sound of marching feet and the fire of guns. There was the

sound of people crying and the crackling of flames and the crash of falling houses. It was so sad! All around them the soldiers were destroying Stralsund! Karl and the two women waited for the soldiers to start in on their little cottage; but no one ever came, as if angels were encamping around it.

At long last, the music grew faint, the shooting stopped, and the sound of marching feet could be heard no more. Everything became completely silent. Bertha, Karl and his wife sat there and kept listening. Finally after a few hours, Karl dared to open one of the boarded up window shutters and look outside. As he opened the shutter, to his amazement all he could see was snow! The storm in the night had dropped so much snow that it had heaped up to the very top of the window!

Cautiously Karl next opened the door, but here again a wall of snow met his view, and he had to dig his way through it to get to open air. Pulling himself through his tunnel of snow and up onto the ground he stood in astonishment at what he saw. Huge drifts of snow had completely surrounded the cottage, and made it in appearance a mere mound of snow. There was no sign of the cottage. Not even the steep roof or the chimney stuck out the top to give a clue of the little house that lay beneath the snow, like hidden treasure. It was exactly as his mother had believed: they had, indeed, been hidden by a "wall," kept safe from all their enemies.

Karl led Bertha out to see her "wall of faith." The widow looked out upon the mounds of snow and rejoiced in her heart.

Bertha Schmidt was a woman who knew and loved God. Each day of her life she had seen God's goodness and care for her. She had trusted Him, even with these enemies all around. But never had Bertha seen anything like this! God had even created a snowstorm and used His complete control over it to save her little family and to reveal to them His mighty power and faithfulness to them. Bertha praised God and wept for joy. "Faithful is He who has promised. He also has done it," she exclaimed. Karl and his wife completely agreed!

**Our Bible Truth is: God's Creations Tell Us about Him**

**Our Bible Verse is: Psalm 19:1-4**

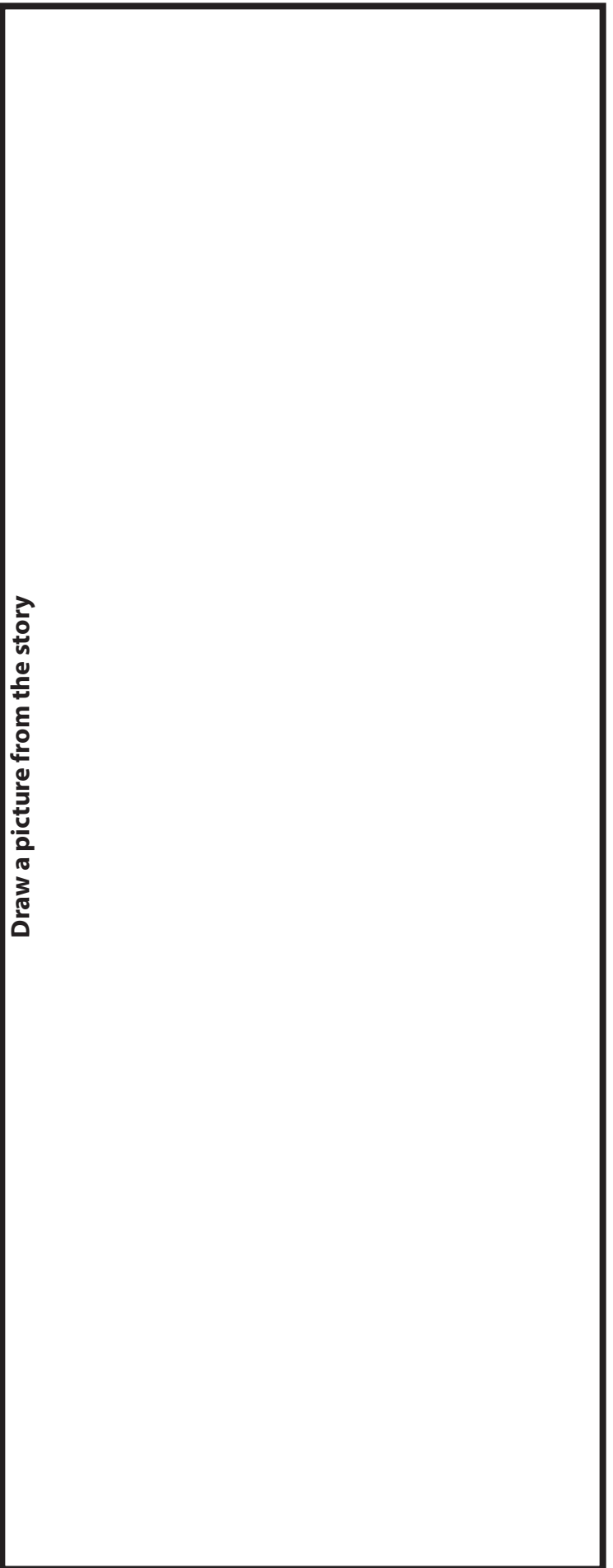
"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the works of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world."

Bertha Schmidt and her little family got to see the heavens declare God's glory and the skies proclaim the work of His hands in a most amazing way! But did Bertha's faith in God begin with that snowstorm? No, it didn't. It began much earlier when Bertha heard the wonderful good news of salvation through Jesus, turned from her sins and trusted in Him as her Savior. And since that day, God's Holy Spirit had been at work in her heart, helping her to know and trust Him more and more. So when the day of trouble came, Bertha didn't fear. She trusted and rejoiced in God.

Each day you and I have the same choice as Bertha. We can choose to trust in Jesus as our Savior. We can ask Him to forgive our sins and send His Holy Spirit to work in our heart—just like He did in Bertha.

Let's praise our wonderful God who is Creator over all things and uses even things like snowstorms to take care of them! Let's ask Him to work in our hearts that we might trust Jesus as our Savior, just like Bertha Schmidt did!

**Draw a picture from the story**



**SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU**

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

God’s creations tell us about Him, but He didn’t make many things for us to see and learn about Him from.  
 Answer: False. God created everything in heaven and earth. Everywhere we look we see things that God made and that tell us what He’s like.

**2. Crack the Case Questions:**

**a. What was chilly? What was camouflaged?**

Answer: The snow was chilly. The widow’s house was camouflaged.

**b. What did the Lord show about Himself through the camouflage?**

Answer: That He is in control of all things, including all creation. He is always able to rescue His people and can even use His creation to do it in remarkable ways.

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

**Psalm 19:1-4**

“The heavens declare the \_\_\_ of God; the skies proclaim the \_\_\_ of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not \_\_\_. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.”

Answers: glory; works; heard.

**BIBLE TRUTH HYMN**

**O, Worship the King**

*PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 9*

**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

All of God’s creation tells us about Him. We can look at everything from the air to the light, to the hills and plains, to the dew and rain, and see that God cares for us.

**AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY**

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

**A** God, we praise You for being so faithful to take care of Your people. We praise You for being the Powerful Creator who controls all of nature and uses it to do all of His good will.

**C** God, we confess that many times we don’t have faith like Bertha. We worry and are afraid. We need Jesus to be our Savior!

**T** God, we thank you for always being faithful to take care of Your people. We thank You that there is never anything that we need to be afraid of when we are trusting in You.

**S** God, we ask that You would work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to trust in you, like Bertha did.

**BIBLE VERSE SONG**

**The Heavens Declare**

*PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 10*

The heavens declare the glory of God,  
 The sky proclaims the works of His hands  
 Day after day, they pour out speech,  
 Night after night, they display knowledge,  
 There is no language, where their voice is not heard.  
 Their voice goes out into all the earth.  
 The heavens declare the glory of God,  
 The sky proclaims the works of His hands  
 Psalm Nineteen: one through four.

Words: Psalm 19:1-4, NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012

God loved His people long before they loved Him. He loved them and chose to adopt them as His people, even before He created (founded) the world. Why did He do this? Because it pleased Him to do it! It would show how wonderful He is and how great the good gifts He gives His people because of Jesus. We think of what He’s done and we praise Him for being so good to people like us. People who are sinners, but through Jesus, are made to be holy--without sin and without blame in His sight.

## BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

*We're in... Unit 1: The God Who Reveals Himself*

**Unit 1 Big Question and Answer:**  
**How Can I Know What God Is Like?**  
*He Shows Me What He's Like!*

PFI NIV Songs 1, Tracks 3,4

**Unit 1 Bible Verse: Amos 4:13, NIV 1984**

"The LORD reveals His thoughts to man."

PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 5

## BIBLE TRUTH

*We're learning... Bible Truth 2:*  
**God's Creations Tell Us about Him**

Creations tell you something about the person who created them. God is the creator of our world and His creations tell us about Him. God's creations show us many things about Him. They show us that He is mighty, glorious, beautiful, good, wise, infinite, perfect and so much more. God loves for us to learn about Him from His creations and praise Him for what He's like.

## BIBLE VERSE

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

**Bible Truth 2 Bible Verse: Psalm 19:1-4**

"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the works of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world."

## CASE STORY

Acts 14:8-23

**Our story is:**

**The Case of the Mysterious Messengers.**

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

1. Who were the Mysterious Messengers? Who did the people of Lystra think they were?
2. What was the message they brought? How did they tell the people of Lystra that they could know it was true?

This story takes place in New Testament times, not many years after Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead. It takes place in the city of Lystra, Turkey.

The people of Lystra looked at the beauties of the countryside around them and were believers. They looked up at the glorious skies, over to the mountains and off to roaring, foamy sea, and they believed. They were enjoyed the rain that gave them good water to drink and grew the crops in their fields, and they believed. They enjoyed their children and each other and so many other good things that filled their hearts with joy...and they believed that only a god could have made all these things.

Well, they didn't really believe **A** god made all these things, but many gods. They didn't know the Lord. They gave their worship to other gods: the fake gods—or idols-- of the Greek people. So they praised Aphrodite for the love they knew in their hearts. They praised Poseidon for the seas; for the earth. And most of all, they praised Zeus for giving them the skies, the rain and the crops of food they enjoyed.

And oh, how they worshiped Zeus! What would they do without his blessing of rain and crops? They built a huge temple to him right outside the city and hired priests to make sacrifices of bulls to him. Many even believed an old tale that Zeus and his messenger, Hermes, had once come to earth as poor strangers seeking a place to stay. All but one, elderly couple refused them help. It was said that Zeus greatly blessed the couple for their kindness.

The people of Lystra knew this story and wondered: "What if Zeus and Hermes came to Lystra? Would they treat the gods with honor? Would the gods bless them, if they did?"

But Zeus and Hermes would never come to Lystra disguised as strangers, no matter how long the people might wait. Why? Because Zeus and Hermes were only



idols. No, these gods would never visit, but the Lord, the one, true Creator God had something wonderful planned for the people of Lystra. He wanted them to know Him. He wanted them to save them. He was sending His messengers Paul and Barnabas to them with His message of salvation.

Paul and Barnabas came to Lystra, dusty and tired from their 20-mile walk on the mountainous roads. At God's command, they had been traveling from town to town throughout Turkey, telling all who would listen about the true Creator God and His Son, Jesus Christ. Everywhere they went people came to hear their message. Many listened. Some believed. Others—especially the Jews—were very angry. Paul and Barnabas knew that all too well that anger usually turned into danger for them. They had just run from the cities of Iconium and Antioch where the Jews had tried to kill them! Now they had come to Lystra. What would the Lord have in store for them there?

Paul and Barnabas entered Lystra and began sharing the good news about Jesus. Soon a crowd gathered around them, eager to hear what these two strangers had to say about the true Creator God and His Son, Jesus Christ, whom they had never heard about before.

Among the listeners in the crowd was an old man who had been crippled from birth. Paul watched the man soak in the truth about Jesus. He could see that God had given him faith to believe and even be healed. Paul looked straight at the man and shouted to him: "Stand up on your feet!" The shocked crowd watched as the crippled man jumped to his feet and began to walk around!

"Who has ever heard of such a thing! This is an act of the gods!" one person gasped.

"These strangers must be Zeus and Hermes, come to visit us as humans, just like in the old story!" they exclaimed.

"The gods have come!" the word spread among the crowd.

"Quickly, go get the priest at Zeus' temple!" they exclaimed. "We must offer sacrifices to them! We want to be sure to treat them well!"

The priest was sent for. The crowd parted to let the priest of Zeus through, with wreaths to place upon Paul's and Barnabas' necks. They led fat bulls to them to be sacrificed in their honor.

Paul and Barnabas were horrified! The people didn't understand! They thought they were the gods, Zeus and

Hermes, from that old tale! Had the people not understood the message? It was in the name of Jesus, not Zeus or Hermes, that this man had been healed! They must make them understand.

Paul and Barnabas tore their clothes—as a sign that something was very wrong. They rushed into the crowd, shouting: "Stop! Don't do this! We are only humans, like you. We aren't gods! We've come to bring you good news of salvation through Jesus. Turn from the gods you worship. They are just worthless idols! Turn to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them."

"In the past, God let the peoples of the nations like you go their own way, worshiping their fake gods. Yet He hasn't left you without ways to know that He's the one, true God and show you what He's like. He has shown you kindness by giving you rain that waters your crops. He has provided you with lots of food and He fills your hearts with joy," Paul explained.

Even with this explanation, some of people of Lystra still wanted to treat them like gods and make sacrifices to them. But others wondered at these strange, new ideas. Could it be that Zeus and Hermes were only worthless idols? Could it be that the LORD was the true Creator God who had been revealing Himself to them in His creations around them and in their hearts? They wanted to hear more.

But before Paul could tell them more, some Jews who had tried to kill him in Iconium and Antioch joined the crowd. "These men speak lies!" they told the others. "Don't listen to them. They deserve death!"

Only a little while before this crowd had tried to worship Paul and Barnabas as gods. Now the crowd turned on them. The Jews pelted Paul with rocks until he fell unconscious to the ground. They dragged him out of the city and left him for dead.

Barnabas and the new believers in Christ anxiously gathered around Paul when the Jews had left. Was he dead? No! He was only terribly hurt.

Paul and Barnabas spent the night in Lystra with the new believers, then left the next morning. Paul was bruised, sore, beat up—but happy as they headed to the city of Derbe. Why happy? Because they had been able to tell the people of Lystra about the Lord, the true Creator God and His Son, Jesus Christ and some had believed! Now there would be people in Lystra to tell others about the true

Creator God, who revealed Himself in the heavens and earth and sea and everything in it. Who gave rain to make their crops grow and put joy in their hearts-- and that made all the suffering worthwhile to Paul.

**Our Bible Truth is: God's Creations Tell Us about Him**

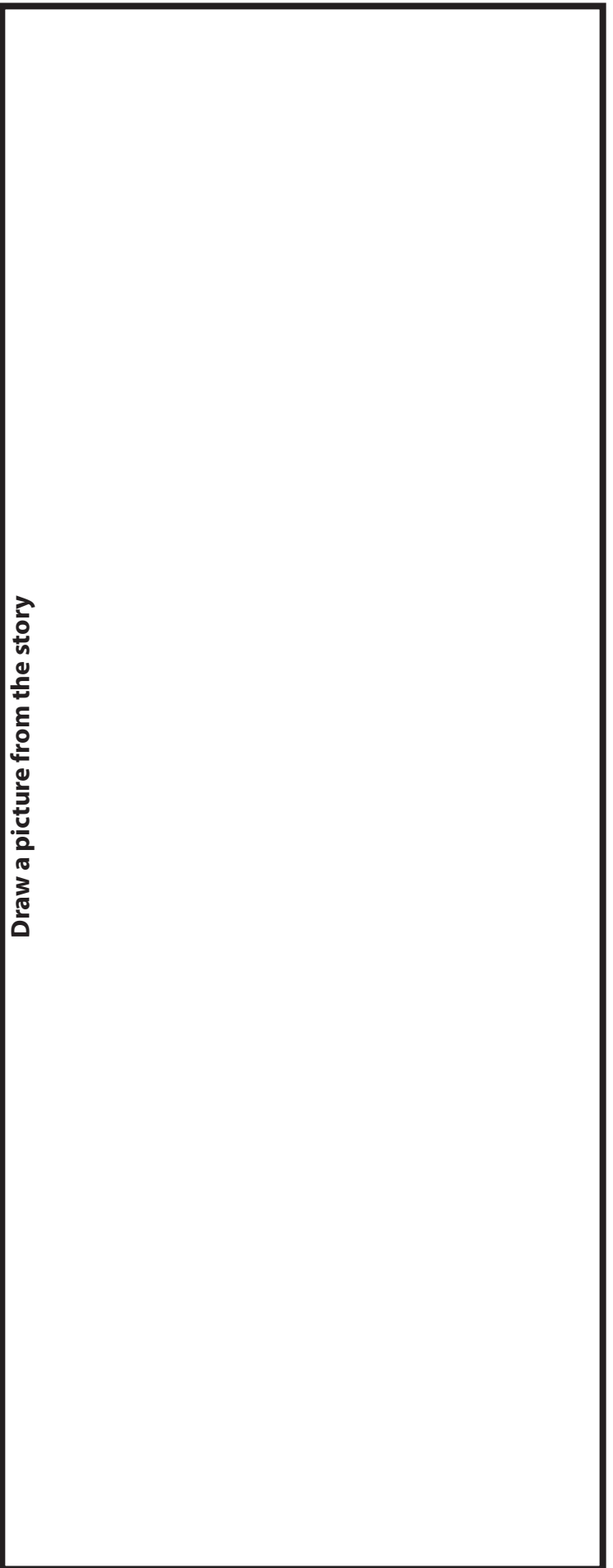
**Our Bible Verse is: Psalm 19:1-4**

"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the works of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world."

The heavens do declare the glory of God. They, like all of God's creations, remind us that there is a one, true God who made them all, and who made us to know Him. But it wasn't enough for the people of Lystra to know God by looking at His creations. And it will never be enough for us today. We need to learn about Him in the Bible. We need to turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Then, we can truly know Him.

Let's praise God for revealing Himself in His creation, but let's also pray that He would work in our hearts and the hearts of people everywhere, to turn from their sins and trust in Him as their Savior. Let's ask Him to even send out some of us one day, tell all these people who He really is and how they can be saved from their sins.

Draw a picture from the story



**SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU**

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

God's creations show us that He is mighty, good and wise.

Answer: True.

**2. Crack the Case Questions:**

**a. Who were the Mysterious Messengers? Who did the people of Lystra think they were?**

Answer: Paul and Barnabas. The Greek gods, Zeus and Hermes.

**b. What was the message they brought? How did they tell the people of Lystra that they could know it was true?**

Answer: They brought the good news of the one, true, living God who offers them salvation through Jesus. They told the people of Lystra that they could see what this one, true God was like in how He had provided for them in creation.

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

**Psalm 19:1-4:**

"The \_\_\_ declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the works of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they \_\_\_ knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world."

Answers: heavens; displays; world.

**BIBLE TRUTH HYMN**

**O, Worship the King**

*PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 9*

**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

All of God's creation tells us about Him. We can look at everything from the air to the light, to the hills and plains, to the dew and rain, and see that God cares for us.

**AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY**

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

**A** God, we praise You for being the one, true God and Creator of all things.

**C** God, we confess that many times we don't choose to love You or obey You, even though we know about You. We need Jesus to save us!

**T** God, we thank You sending Your people all over the world to tell others about Jesus. Thank You for sending people to tell us about Him!

**S** God, work in our hearts! Help us to turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Send out Your people to tell others about Jesus, too! Help us all to know You better as we look at Your wonderful creations.

**BIBLE VERSE SONG**

**The Heavens Declare**

*PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 10*

The heavens declare the glory of God,  
The sky proclaims the works of His hands  
Day after day, they pour out speech,  
Night after night, they display knowledge,  
There is no language, where their voice is not heard.  
Their voice goes out into all the earth.  
The heavens declare the glory of God,  
The sky proclaims the works of His hands  
Psalm Nineteen: one through four.

Words: Psalm 19:1-4, NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012

God loved His people long before they loved Him. He loved them and chose to adopt them as His people, even before He created (founded) the world. Why did He do this? Because it pleased Him to do it! It would show how wonderful He is and how great the good gifts He gives His people because of Jesus. We think of what He's done and we praise Him for being so good to people like us. People who are sinners, but through Jesus, are made to be holy--without sin and without blame in His sight.



## BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

*We're in... Unit 1: The God Who Reveals Himself*

**Unit 1 Big Question and Answer:**  
**How Can I Know What God Is Like?**  
***He Shows Me What He's Like!***

PFI NIV Songs 1, Tracks 3,4

**Unit 1 Bible Verse: Amos 4:13, NIV 1984**

"The LORD reveals His thoughts to man."

PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 5

## BIBLE TRUTH

*We're learning... Bible Truth 3:*  
**God Spoke to His People through Prophets Long Ago**

Before Jesus came, God often spoke to His people through prophets. Prophets were godly people who spoke God's words to people, especially God's people. God would speak to the prophets, then the prophets would tell the people exactly what God said. Sometimes false prophets came who pretended to speak God's words. The difference between the false prophets and God's true prophets was that the words of God's prophets always came true.

Sometimes God used His prophets to warn the people to stop sinning against Him. He urged them to turn away from their sins and receive His forgiveness. If they did not turn back, God used the prophets to tell His people how He would discipline them. After God disciplined His people, He used the prophets to give the people His words of comfort and hope.

The Bible is God's Word. Much of it, God first spoke to His people through the prophets. They wrote it down for God's people to know and obey. The Bible calls Jesus the Word of God, the greatest prophet of all. That's because Jesus is God. He always spoke God's Word.

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

## BIBLE VERSE

**Bible Truth 3 Bible Verse: Deuteronomy 18:18-19**

"I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account."

## CASE STORY

1 Kings 21

**Our story is called:**  
**The Case of the Warned Wicked**

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

1. Who were the Wicked? What did they do that was wicked?
2. What were they warned about? What happened after they were warned?

This story is a Old Testament story. It takes place about 900 years before Jesus lived on earth, in the city of Jezreel, Samaria, home of Ahab, king of Israel.

"Warning, discipline, comfort!" Those were the LORD's words to His people through His prophets. And if there was ever a king of Israel who needed the LORD's warning, it was King Ahab. Israel's kings did many evil things but Ahab did just about all of them! And who was it that tempted King Ahab to be so evil? A woman by the name of Jezebel!

Jezebel was a princess from the country of Sidon. Ahab made her his queen, even though he knew she worshiped two, terrible, fake gods: Baal and Asherah. Before long, Jezebel had Ahab worshiping these terrible gods, too!

When Jezebel became queen, she brought 950 priests of Baal and Asherah with her. She wanted them to set up altars to these fake gods all over Israel... and Ahab let her! Jezebel didn't want Ahab rule over the people in the good way the Bible told him to... and Ahab listened to her! Soon Ahab and the people of Israel had turned away from worshiping the LORD and were worshiping Baal and Asherah, too.

As you can imagine, the LORD had a message of warning for Ahab and the people of Israel. He brought it through the prophet Elijah. "Ahab, you have made me angry by marrying that wicked woman Jezebel and worshiping Baal," the LORD told them. "You worship Baal and made a temple to him. You've led my people to follow him, too. You have broken my laws. Turn away from your sins and turn back to me or else I will discipline you!" He warned.

But Ahab didn't turn away from his sins and neither did Jezebel. They kept on sinning against the LORD and kept encouraging the people to sin, too. But, the LORD's warning would not last forever. It would one day change to discipline, if they did not repent. And so it did, right

after Ahab and Jezebel did something terrible to a godly man named Naboth.

Naboth family owned a beautiful vineyard was right next to King Ahab's palace. King Ahab wanted the land to make a vegetable garden.

"Naboth, let me have your vineyard since it's right next to my palace. I'll give you a better vineyard or I'll pay you for whatever it's worth," the king offered.

"I can't do that, King Ahab!" Naboth replied. "This is the land the LORD has given my family. It's against God's law for me to sell it."

Ahab went back to his palace and pouted. He lay on his bed and refused to eat.

"Why are you upset? Why don't you eat?" Jezebel asked Ahab.

Ahab told her the story and Jezebel came up with a wicked plan to get Ahab what he wanted.. She wrote letters in the king's name, and sent them to the important leaders of the city. "Proclaim a day of fasting and seat Naboth where everyone can see him. Put two bad men across from Naboth and have them accuse him of cursing God and the king. Then punish him as the law requires--by stoning him to death," Jezebel ordered in the letters.

The city leaders dared not disobey Jezebel and the king. They called the feast and followed her plan completely. Naboth was falsely accused, then put to death. Then the king scooped up Naboth's vegetable garden. It was a simple as that.

Or was it? For now the LORD's word of warning changed to words of discipline. Elijah, once more, went to Ahab and Jezebel. "The LORD has a message for you. He says: "I have warned you, but you have chosen to keep on sinning against Me in terrible ways. You keep leading the people of Israel to sin against Me, too. Now I'm going to discipline both of you. Ahab, the kingdom will be taken away from your family. Jezebel, you will die at the hands of enemies and not even have a proper burial.," the LORD promised.

When Ahab heard this he repented of his sins. He knew he has sinned terribly against the LORD and against the people of Israel, especially Naboth. The LORD had warned him, but he hadn't listened. He deserved to be disciplined. He confessed his sins and humbled himself before the LORD by tearing his clothes, putting on scratchy sackcloth clothes and fasting, as they did in those days.

The LORD was pleased with this change in Ahab's heart.

Ahab hadn't listened to the His warnings at first, but now he repented of his sins as the LORD disciplined him. The LORD accepted Ahab's confession and comforted him with mercy. "Ahab, I will still take the kingdom away from your family because of the terrible things you have done. But I will hold off taking away it kingdom until after you have died," the LORD told him. In His mercy, the LORD had chosen to withhold the full punishment Ahab deserved.

But Jezebel was a completely different matter! She refused to repent of her sins. She received God's full punishment. She died and was never even buried. Jezebel's days ended with the LORD's discipline since she refused to repent of her sins and turn to worship the LORD. There would be no comfort for her.

**Our Bible Truth is: God Spoke to His People through Prophets Long Ago**

**Our Bible Verse is: Deuteronomy 18:18-19 NIV 1984**

"I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account."

Warning, Discipline, Comfort! That was how the LORD lovingly treated His sinful people. Those were the words He spoke to them long ago through His prophets, time after time after time. How merciful the LORD had been to them! But did you know that the greatest way the LORD comforted His people through the prophets was with the promise to one day send a Savior. This Savior would save them from their sins and change their hearts to hearts of love for God. Who is that Savior? Jesus, that's who! God's own Son. Many looked forward in faith to the day He would come. Oh, how they longed to know God's Savior!

Warning, Discipline, Comfort! Those are the words the LORD still speaks to sinful people today. Through His Word--the Bible-- and His Spirit working in our hearts, the LORD still warns us to turn away from our sins and trust in Him. If we are like Jezebel and do not turn from our sins, there will be no comfort for us. There will come a day at the end of time when we will receive the full and final punishment that our sins deserve.

But, oh, what comfort we can know if we, like Ahab, we humbly turn from our sins and ask God for forgiveness. Jesus is the Savior God promised would come. If we trust

Him as our Savior, He will not treat us as our sins deserve. He will comfort us with His mercy and forgive us our sins once and for all. He will make us His special people...a people for Himself! We can know Him in our hearts now; and one day, He will take us to live with Him forever. That will be most wonderful of all!

Let's praise this loving, merciful God who spoke words of warning, discipline and comfort through His prophets long ago. Let's ask Him to help us to heed His warnings and discipline when we sin so that we might also receive His comfort through Jesus.

**Draw a picture from the story**



**SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU**

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

Before Jesus came, God often spoke to His people through announcements on the television.

Answer: False. He often spoke to them through prophets.

**2. Crack the Case Questions:**

**a. Who were the Wicked? What did they do that was wicked?**

Answer: King Ahab and Queen Jezebel were wicked. They worshipped Baal and Asherah and led the people in worshipping them, too. They broke God's laws in terrible ways.

**b. What were they warned about? What happened after they were warned?**

Answer: That if they didn't turn away from their sins, they would be punished. Ahab repented of his sins and turned back to the LORD. The LORD didn't give him the full punishment he deserved. Jezebel refused to repent and she died, as the LORD said she would.

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

**Deuteronomy 18:18-19**

"I will raise up for them a \_\_\_ like you from among their brothers; I will put my \_\_\_ in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet \_\_\_ in my name, I myself will call him to account."

Answers: prophet; words; speaks.

**AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY**

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

**A** God, we praise You for being a holy God that justly punishes sin, yet also a merciful God who forgives those who turn away from their sins.

**C** God, we confess that we are sinners who many times hear Your words of warning, but deep on disobeying You. We need Jesus to save us!

**T** God, we thank you for being so merciful that You don't just punish sinful people as they deserve, but help them repent of their sins and turn back to You. Thank You for sending Jesus to take the punishment we deserve for our sins when we trust in Him as our Savior.

**S** God, we ask that You would work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to hear Your words of warning against our sins and turn away from them.

**BIBLE TRUTH HYMN**

**The God of Abraham Praise**

*PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 11*

**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 works powerfully, doing everything God wants Him to do. Long ago, in the days of the prophets, God's Spirit spoke His words to them, and then they spoke God's Words to the people. The prophets didn't just speak God's words. They also wrote them down in the Bible. God spoke different kinds of things to His people through the prophets. Sometimes God's words were laws He wanted His people to keep. Sometimes they were words of comfort or warning. Other times, they were words about the future. God's Holy Spirit helped the prophets say God's words just right...and He helped them write them down just right. Even now, we can read God's words that the prophets wrote down when we read the Bible. God can use them to "write" His truth deep upon our hearts. That is, He can use them to teach us His ways and how He wants us to live. He can use them to help us to know Him and obey Him.

**BIBLE VERSE SONG**

**I Will Raise Up**

*PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 12*

I will raise up, I will raise up,  
I will raise up for them a prophet like you.  
I will raise up, I will raise up,  
I will raise up for them a prophet like you.  
He will come from among their brothers,  
I will put my words in his mouth,  
And he will tell them everything I command him.  
And whoever does not listen,  
I will hold him accountable.  
I will raise up, I will raise up,  
I will raise up for them a prophet like you.  
I will raise up, I will raise up,  
I will raise up for them a prophet like you.  
Deuteronomy Eighteen, eighteen and nineteen.

Words: Deuteronomy 18:18-19, NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012

God tells us in His Word that He would raise up prophets to instruct the people. He used them to instruct the people in how they could be saved by trusting in Him. He used them to warn the people to turn back to Him when they kept on sinning against Him and to offer them forgiveness for their sins. The people were to obey the prophet's words because they were His words. God's people still read the words of the prophet's written in the Bible today. There are things that God wants them to still obey that He commanded through them, long ago.



## CASE STORY

Adapted from *Religious Stories for Young and Old, vol. IV*,  
compiled by Joel Beeke

### BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

*We're in... Unit 1: The God Who Reveals Himself*

**Unit 1 Big Question and Answer:**  
**How Can I Know What God Is Like?**  
*He Shows Me What He's Like!*

PFI NIV Songs 1, Tracks 3,4

**Unit 1 Bible Verse: Amos 4:13, NIV 1984**

"The LORD reveals His thoughts to man."

PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 5

### BIBLE TRUTH

*We're learning... Bible Truth 3:*  
**God Spoke to His People through Prophets Long Ago**

Before Jesus came, God often spoke to His people through prophets. Prophets were godly people who spoke God's words to people, especially God's people. God would speak to the prophets, then the prophets would tell the people exactly what God said. Sometimes false prophets came who pretended to speak God's words. The difference between the false prophets and God's true prophets was that the words of God's prophets always came true.

Sometimes God used His prophets to warn the people to stop sinning against Him. He urged them to turn away from their sins and receive His forgiveness. If they did not turn back, God used the prophets to tell His people how He would discipline them. After God disciplined His people, He used the prophets to give the people His words of comfort and hope.

The Bible is God's Word. Much of it, God first spoke to His people through the prophets. They wrote it down for God's people to know and obey. The Bible calls Jesus the Word of God, the greatest prophet of all. That's because Jesus is God. He always spoke God's Word.

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

### BIBLE VERSE

**Bible Truth 3 Bible Verse: Deuteronomy 18:18-19**

"I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account."

**Our story is called:**

**The Case of the Doctor and the Drummer Boy.**

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

1. How did the Doctor and the Drummer Boy meet?
  2. Who did the Drummer Boy want the Doctor to know?
- How did the prophets help the Doctor meet Him?

This story doesn't take place in Bible times. It takes place in the 1860's during the American Civil War.

Max Rosvally, dressed in white shirt, black pants, vest and yarmulke, sat excitedly in the Jewish congregation. At the rabbi's nod, Max rose from his seat and stood before the silent but eager congregation. The white tassels dangling from his prayer shawl seemed to quiver with excitement. This was a most important day in this thirteen-year-old boy's life!

The rabbi in his long ceremonial robes turned to Max, handing him a large scroll written in Hebrew. Carefully Max opened it up and read the passage of the Bible in Hebrew, then handed it back to the rabbi. After a few moments the ceremony was over, Max was surrounded with the handshakes and hugs of the synagogue congregation. Max Rosvally had just completed his bar-mitzvah: the special Jewish ceremony which recognized him as no longer a boy. Now Max was a man.

Max Rosvally, like his fathers before him, was an orthodox Jew. For as long as he could remember, he had been taught to love the Law of Moses and the prophets. Each day he strapped one phylactery to his arm and another to his forehead, then prayed the Shema--words that Moses spoke to Israel thousands of years before: "Hear, O Israel, the LORD is God, the LORD is One. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength." (Deuteronomy 6:4-5, NIV). Every Sabbath, (Saturday), his family would rest from their work and go to the synagogue to hear the rabbi speak from the Law of Moses or from the Writings of the Prophets (what we call our Old Testament). "Love the LORD, love the Law, love the Prophets, do good to others," Max was told.

"But there is someone you should not love," Max's teachers cautioned him. "His name is Jesus. Christians say he was the Jewish Messiah, come to save sinners who break the Law of Moses. They say that he was the greatest

prophet of all, who didn't just speak God's Word like the other prophets, but was God, Himself. They are wrong. Don't believe in Jesus," they said.

Max never forgot those words. He tried to love the LORD, love the Law, love the Prophets, do good to others...and he would NOT believe in Jesus.

When Max grew up, he became a doctor in the army during the American Civil War. What a terrible war it was! Many men were hurt. Many others died. After each battle, the wounded would be carefully carried to the nurses and doctors in the medical tents. Many times, very little could be done. Doctors hadn't learned how to heal bodies like they do now, but they did what they could.

One day while Max--Dr. Rosvally--was on duty, a wounded young man named Charley Coulson was brought in to him. He was a drummer boy, whose beat kept the soldiers marching together as they went into battle. Dr. Rosvally looked down at Charley's hurt body. How bad his wounds were! He would have to operate quickly if there was even a chance to save his life.

"Prepare this young man for surgery immediately!" ordered Dr. Rosvally. As the nurses prepared Charley for the operation, the doctor noticed something different about him. Charley was about to have a very painful operation. He might very well die. Most men would be panicking with fear. Yet, he had such a complete calm. Max was amazed!

Charley laid his hand on the doctor's, looked him in the face, and explained why: "Doctor, one Sunday afternoon, when I was just nine and a half years old, I gave my heart to Christ. I learned to trust Him then, and I've been trusting Him ever since. I know I can trust Him now. He is my strength. He will support me even while you operate on me."

Dr. Rosvally was amazed at the peace Charley had, but he bristled at what he said about Jesus. No! Jesus was not the Messiah! This young man was wrong!

Charley made it through the operation and through the night, but his body wasn't healing. He was in a lot of pain and was very weak; yet to the doctor's amazement, Charley found the strength to sing a hymn, "Jesus, Lover of My Soul."

Five days later a nurse came rushing to Dr. Rosvally with news, "Doctor, come quickly! Charley is calling for you. He is about to die."

Max rushed to the room where Charley lay dying. "What

is it, Charley?," he asked.

"Doctor, my time has come; I do not expect to see another sunrise, but thank God I am ready to go. Before I die, I want to thank you with all my heart for your kindness to me. Doctor, I love you because you are a Jew. The best friend I have found in this world was a Jew--Jesus Christ. Five days ago, while you operated on me, I prayed to the Lord Jesus Christ and asked Him to make His love known to you. Promise me that you will never forget this," Charley said.

"I promise," Dr. Rosvally replied.

Only a few minutes later, Charley died.

Ten, long years past and the memory of Charley Coulson the drummer boy faded to the back of Dr. Rosvally's memory. But God had not forgotten Charley's prayer for the Jewish doctor. He would answer that prayer with a "yes!"

One day when the doctor went to get his haircut, the Lord, in His kindness, gave him a barber who loved Jesus and loved to tell others about Him. As the barber set to work on Dr. Rosvally's hair with his scissors, the Holy Spirit used his words to work in Dr. Rosvally's heart. As the barber spoke about Jesus, the doctor began to remember Charley Coulson and his love for Jesus, too. "The rabbis told me to never believe that Jesus is the Messiah, but I'm beginning to wonder. Here is yet another man who loves Him and knows Him, just like Charley did. Maybe I need to look in God's Word and see for myself what it says about Jesus," he decided.

Doctor Rosvally went home and shut himself in his room, all the time thinking about Jesus. He tied his phylacteries to his arm and forehead and put his prayer shawl over his head, just like the old days; and he began to pray and pray.

"Please God show me if Jesus is the Messiah, Your Son."

Immediately the Holy Spirit brought to mind words about Jesus that God spoke through the prophets long ago that were written down in the Bible. "I see! I see!" the doctor exclaimed. "The prophets did speak about Jesus! It is not a lie. Jesus really is the Messiah! I believe in Jesus! I love Jesus!"

At last the doctor's heart was filled with faith and joy; and Charley Coulson's prayers were answered. God had used the words spoken a dying young man, a barber and His very own Words spoken by the prophets long ago to bring this doctor to believe in Him.

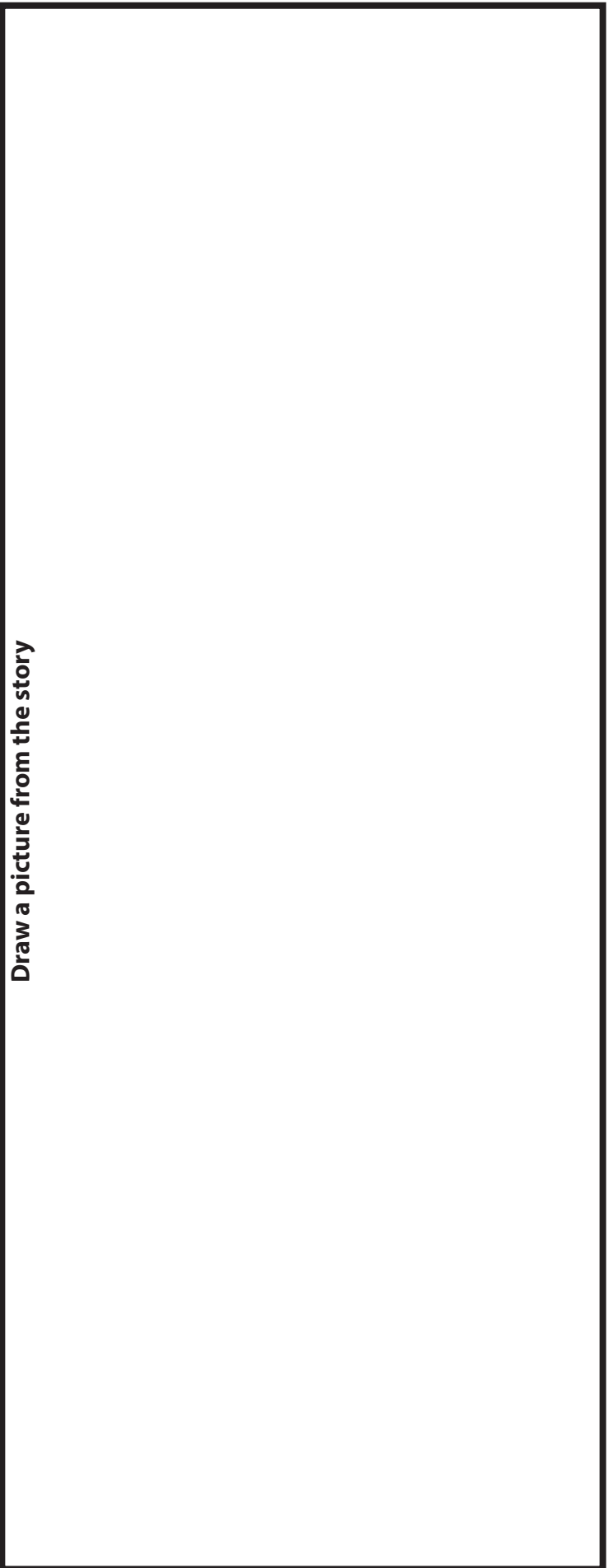
**Our Bible Truth is: God Spoke to His People through Prophets Long Ago Long Ago****Our Bible Verse is: Deuteronomy 18:18-19**

"I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account."

Does God still use the words He spoke through the prophets today? Yes, He does—in the Bible, the Word of God. And what do the prophets tell us? That God loved sinners so much that He sent His Son, Jesus, to save from their sins all who will repent and believe in Him.

This is the message that we all need to hear and believe! Let's praise this God who spoke through the prophets long ago and still uses the words He gave them--written down in the Bible—to bring people to know Him today. Let's ask God to work in our hearts, helping us turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. And let's ask Him to make us people He can use to tell others about salvation through His Son, Jesus.

Draw a picture from the story



SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU	BIBLE TRUTH HYMN
<p><b>1. A Question about the Bible Truth, True or False:</b> The prophets only spoke whatever he thought God might want him to say to the people. Answer: False. The prophets only spoke the words that God gave them to tell the people.</p> <p><b>2. Crack the Case Questions:</b> <b>a. Who was the Doctor and the Drummer Boy? How did they meet?</b> Answer: Max Rosvally was the doctor. Charley was the drummer boy. In a hospital during the American Civil War, when Charley was injured in battle.</p> <p><b>b. Who did the Drummer Boy want the Doctor to know? How did the prophets help the Doctor meet Him?</b> Answer: Jesus. Max Rosvally read the prophets and realized that they all pointed to Jesus as the Messiah.</p> <p><b>3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse: Deuteronomy 18:18-19</b> "I will ___ for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them ___ I command him. If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to ___." Answers: raise up; everything; account.</p>	<p><b>The God of Abraham Praise</b> <i>PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 11</i></p> <p><b>Verse 2</b> 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</p> <p>God's Holy Spirit works powerfully, doing everything God wants Him to do. Long ago, in the days of the prophets, God's Spirit spoke His words to them, and then they spoke God's Words to the people. The prophets didn't just speak God's words. They also wrote them down in the Bible. God spoke different kinds of things to His people through the prophets. Sometimes God's words were laws He wanted His people to keep. Sometimes they were words of comfort or warning. Other times, they were words about the future. God's Holy Spirit helped the prophets say God's words just right...and He helped them write them down just right. Even now, we can read God's words that the prophets wrote down when we read the Bible. God can use them to "write" His truth deep upon our hearts. That is, He can use them to teach us His ways and how He wants us to live. He can use them to help us to know Him and obey Him.</p>
AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY	BIBLE VERSE SONG
<p><i>A=Adoration, C=Confession, T=Thanksgiving, S=Supplication</i></p> <p><b>A</b> God, we praise You for being a God who speaks to us. We can know what You are like because You have spoken through the prophets' words, written down in the Bible.</p> <p><b>C</b> God, we confess that we are sinners, like Max Rosvally. Too often we choose to not believe in You. And, many times when we are in scary situations, like Charley Coulson, we do not trust You to take care of us. We need the Savior Jesus!</p> <p><b>T</b> God, we thank You for loving sinners so much that You pursue them even when they are not interested in You, just as You did with Max Rosvally.</p> <p><b>S</b> God, we ask that You would work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. And, like Charley, help us to boldly tell others about Jesus.</p>	<p><b>I Will Raise Up</b> <i>PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 12</i></p> <p>I will raise up, I will raise up, I will raise up for them a prophet like you. I will raise up, I will raise up, I will raise up for them a prophet like you. He will come from among their brothers, I will put my words in his mouth, And he will tell them everything I command him. And whoever does not listen, I will hold him accountable. I will raise up, I will raise up, I will raise up for them a prophet like you. I will raise up, I will raise up, I will raise up for them a prophet like you. Deuteronomy Eighteen, eighteen and nineteen. Words: Deuteronomy 18:18-19, NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012 God tells us in His Word that He would raise up prophets to instruct the people. He used them to instruct the people in how they could be saved by trusting in Him. He used them to warn the people to turn back to Him when they kept on sinning against Him and to offer them forgiveness for their sins. The people were to obey the prophet's words because they were His words. God's people still read the words of the prophet's written in the Bible today. There are things that God wants them to still obey that He commanded through them, long ago.</p>



## BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

*We're in... Unit 1: The God Who Reveals Himself*

**Unit 1 Big Question and Answer:**  
**How Can I Know What God Is Like?**  
*He Shows Me What He's Like!*

PFI NIV Songs 1, Tracks 3,4

**Unit 1 Bible Verse: Amos 4:13, NIV 1984**

"The LORD reveals His thoughts to man."

PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 5

## BIBLE TRUTH

*We're learning... Bible Truth 3:*  
**God Spoke to His People through Prophets Long Ago**

Before Jesus came, God often spoke to His people through prophets. Prophets were godly people who spoke God's words to people, especially God's people. God would speak to the prophets, then the prophets would tell the people exactly what God said. Sometimes false prophets came who pretended to speak God's words. The difference between the false prophets and God's true prophets was that the words of God's prophets always came true.

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

## BIBLE VERSE

**Bible Truth 3 Bible Verse: Deuteronomy 18:18-19**

"I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account."

## CASE STORY

Matthew 3,14; Mark 1,6; Luke 3,9; John 1

**Our story is:**

**The Case of the Wilderness Wild Man.**

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

1. Who was the Wilderness Man? How was he like a wild man?
2. Why was he out in the wilderness? What was his message?

This story takes place in New Testament times, but was the answer to something that started way back near the very beginning of time.

When Adam and Eve rebelled against God, sin and death entered the world and spread to all people. It was so terrible! Every person deserved God's just punishment for their sins. They all faced being separated from Him forever and there was nothing they could do to save themselves from this sadness.

No, they couldn't save themselves, but there was someone who could: God. And He planned to do just that. So from even that first awful day, God treated sinners better than they could ever deserve. "Your sins deserve My punishment, but I will send you a Savior," He told them. And through the years, gave them many more promises about the Savior.

Many times these promises were spoken through His prophets. Moses, David, Jeremiah, Hosea, Malachi, Daniel, and many more all passed on glimpses of what this Savior do and be. But perhaps no prophet passed on more about the coming Savior than the prophet Isaiah. "The Savior will be God Himself. He will take the sins of God's people upon Himself. He will rise from the dead," Isaiah reported God's word to the people. And what sign could the people look for to know when the Savior was about to come? "A very special prophet will come to led the way for the Savior," he told them.

"This special prophet will be: "A voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the LORD, make straight paths for him. Every valley will be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways, smooth. And all mankind will see God's salvation," he foretold.

Straight paths for the LORD, what did that mean? Just like kings in ancient times used to send servants ahead of their royal caravans to fill in pot holes and level out

bumps, God would send a great prophet to go ahead of his Messiah, to prepare the hearts of the people to be ready for Him.

But there aren't pot holes and bumps in our hearts, are there? Of course, not! But there is sin in our hearts. And there is selfishness and hatred for others, and even for God. These were the kinds of things God would use this great prophet to show the people, that they might turn away from their sin and humbly be ready to believe in the Messiah. Through faith in Him, God would bring forgiveness of their sins. He would change their hearts and fill them love for Him.

Who was this great prophet God sent to prepare the people's hearts for the Messiah? An angel appeared to a man named Zecharias and told him: "Zecharias, your wife is going to have a baby, but don't name him after yourself, like everyone expects you, too. You must name him 'John'-which means 'gift of God.' As your son, he is My gift to you. But even more so, he is My gift to My people. He will prepare the way in their hearts for the Messiah," the LORD said through the angel. "John will be greater than any of the Old Testament prophets. I'm not just going to fill him with my Spirit when it's time for him to start speaking to the people for Me, like I did with the other prophets. No! I'm going to fill him with my Spirit even before he is born!" the LORD promised.

"Now I have special rules that you must teach him to obey," the angel said as he continued with the LORD's message for Zecharias. "He is never to have a haircut, drink wine or touch a dead body his whole life. I want you to do these things so that he will be ready to be my special prophet who will speak my words to prepare the people for the Lord, the Messiah Jesus, when the time comes," the angel commanded.

Everything happened just as the angel had said. Elizabeth became pregnant and she gave birth to a baby boy. Zecharias and Elizabeth, John's parents, did just what the angel told them to do. They gave him the name 'John.' They never cut his hair or let him drink wine. They kept him away from dead bodies. They kept all the other special rules God gave them for raising John. They took him to the desert of Judea to raise him there. John grew up living a rough, outdoor life out in the hot sun, among rocks, snakes, scorpions. His parents gave him locusts (like grasshoppers) and honey for food. God blessed John and

he grew up to be a godly man. The LORD was getting him ready to be the prophet who would prepare the way for the LORD, the Messiah Jesus.

Thirty, long years passed while John lived out in the desert. He had grown into a strong man, with long, long hair that had never been cut. He wore rough clothes made out of scratching camel's hair and a thick leather belt around his waist, just like the great prophet Elijah had hundreds of years earlier.

But far more important than how John looked on the outside, was God's word in his heart, that he longed to preach. "It is time to prepare the way for the LORD, the Messiah Jesus," the Holy Spirit prompted John inside his heart. "Preach the words to the people that I will give to you."

So John went over to the River Jordan, near Bethany and began to speak the words the LORD gave him: "Repent and turn away from your sins for the kingdom of God is near. Be baptized to show that you are turning away from your sins and turning to God. Prepare the way for the LORD, the Messiah Jesus. Make your hearts ready for Him. Live right for God," he urged his listeners.

Before long crowds of people came from Jerusalem and all over the country to hear John. They heard his message and believed. John brought them down into the water and baptized them.

"What should we do now?" the people asked John.

"Don't just change the way you think, change the way you act, too. Be generous and share with others in need. "The man with two [shirts] should share with him who has none, and the one who has food should do the same," John told them.

The tax collectors asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?"

"Stop acting like all the other tax collectors who get greedy and take too much money. Only ask for the fair amount," he told them.

"What should we do?" asked the soldiers.

"Don't be like the other soldiers who threaten people with their swords just to make them give them money. Don't lie about people to get them in trouble with the law. Be satisfied with how much money you get paid," John replied.

Some of the Pharisees and Sadducees came to listen to John, too. But they didn't come to prepare for the coming

Messiah. They came to see what John was doing and get him in trouble, To them John said, "You are like a brood of vipers—poisonous snakes. You hide in nooks and crannies waiting for a chance to strike and kill the good works of God. You need to turn away from your sins, too, just like everyone else. If you do not, you will face God's punishment!" John warned.

But did they listen? Sadly they did not! The Pharisees and the Sadducees refused to join the tax collectors, soldiers and others. They would NOT repent and be baptized. They didn't think they needed to. And so, their hearts were not ready to receive the Messiah who was coming.

And soon the Messiah did come. He came and stood among the crowd listening to John as he preached and baptized by the Jordan River. At last it was His time! Yes, Jesus, the Messiah, Himself, had come!

As Jesus walked through the crowd towards John, God gave John a new message to tell the people: "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! He is the one who comes after me. He is more powerful than I, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie... I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel," John told them.

John's time was through. The prophet had done his job. He had prepared the way and now, praise God, Jesus the Messiah had come! Jesus would preach His words to the prepared hearts of those who heard God's call through John and many would turn and believe in Him.

**Our Bible Truth is: God Spoke to His People through Prophets Long Ago**

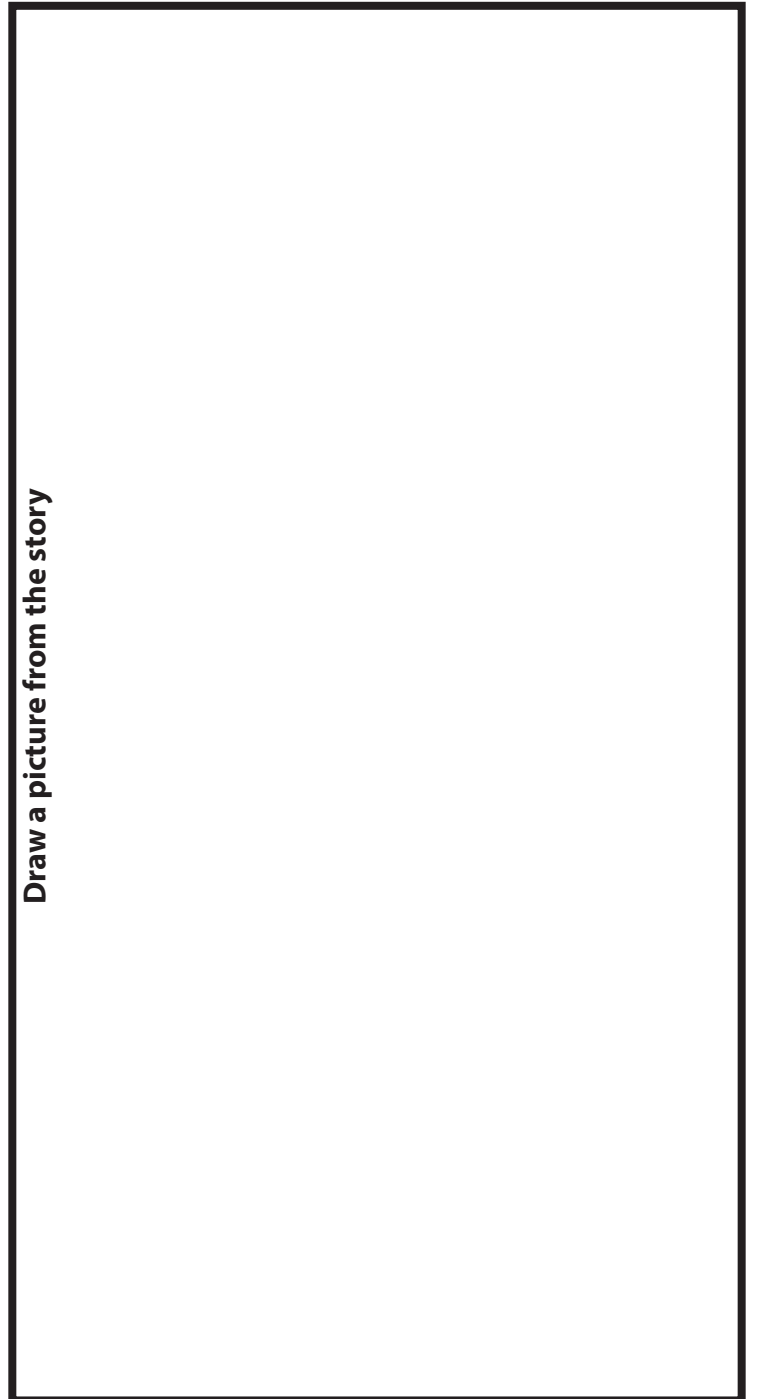
**Our Bible Verse is: Deuteronomy 18:18-19 NIV 1984**

"I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account."

John had finished his job, preparing the people of Israel for the Messiah, when Jesus began to preach. But do you know, he is still preaching his message today, as we listen to this story. Are our hearts prepared for the LORD? Have we confessed and repented of our sins like many people did when they heard John's message from God? Or are we

still like those Pharisees and Sadducees who might know the right answers but still do not think they need to repent of their sins? The LORD wants US to prepare our hearts for Him, too. He wants us to confess and repent of our sins. He wants us to turn and trust in Jesus as our Savior. If we do, He will fill our hearts with His Spirit, just as He did to those who turned and trusted in Him two thousand years ago.

Let's praise this God who spoke long ago to His people through His prophets. Let's ask Him to prepare the way in our hearts, too, that we might confess and repent of our sins, and turn and trust in Jesus.



Draw a picture from the story

**SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU**

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

The prophets spoke God’s words to the people long ago, but we will never know what they are. They are lost.

Answer: False. The LORD had the prophets right down His words and write them down just right. We have them in the Bible.

**2. Crack the Case Questions:**

**a. Who was the Wilderness Wild Man? How was he like a wild man?**

Answer: John the Baptist. He didn’t cut his hair; he wore for camel’s hair clothes; he ate locusts and honey.

**b. Why was he out in the wilderness? What was his message?**

Answer: The LORD told him to go live in the wilderness, in fulfillment of the words of the prophets spoken many years earlier. He told people to repent of their sins and be baptized to be prepared for the coming Messiah.

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

**Deuteronomy 18:18-19**

“I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their \_\_\_; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I \_\_\_ him. If anyone does not \_\_\_ to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account.”

Answers: brothers; command; listen.

**AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY**

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

**A** God, we praise You for being so merciful that You would plan to send Jesus to save us from our sins.

**C** God, we confess that we are sinners, like the people who listened to John the Baptist. We can be greedy. We can look good on the outside when we are really sinful in our hearts. We need to repent of our sins! We need a Savior!

**T** God, we thank You for loving sinners so much that You would promise to send them a Savior; and, that You would prepare their hearts so they could be ready to trust in that Savior.

**S** God, work in our hearts! By Your Holy Spirit, help us to turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

**BIBLE TRUTH HYMN**

**The God of Abraham Praise**

*PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 11*

**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 works powerfully, doing everything God wants Him to do. Long ago, in the days of the prophets, God’s Spirit spoke His words to them, and then they spoke God’s Words to the people. The prophets didn’t just speak God’s words. They also wrote them down in the Bible. God spoke different kinds of things to His people through the prophets. Sometimes God’s words were laws He wanted His people to keep. Sometimes they were words of comfort or warning. Other times, they were words about the future. God’s Holy Spirit helped the prophets say God’s words just right...and He helped them write them down just right. Even now, we can read God’s words that the prophets wrote down when we read the Bible. God can use them to “write” His truth deep upon our hearts. That is, He can use them to teach us His ways and how He wants us to live. He can use them to help us to know Him and obey Him.

**BIBLE VERSE SONG**

**I Will Raise Up**

*PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 12*

I will raise up, I will raise up,  
I will raise up for them a prophet like you.  
I will raise up, I will raise up,  
I will raise up for them a prophet like you.  
He will come from among their brothers,  
I will put my words in his mouth,  
And he will tell them everything I command him.  
And whoever does not listen,  
I will hold him accountable.  
I will raise up, I will raise up,  
I will raise up for them a prophet like you.  
I will raise up, I will raise up,  
I will raise up for them a prophet like you.  
Deuteronomy Eighteen, eighteen and nineteen.

Words: Deuteronomy 18:18-19, NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012

God tells us in His Word that He would raise up prophets to instruct the people. He used them to instruct the people in how they could be saved by trusting in Him. He used them to warn the people to turn back to Him when they kept on sinning against Him and to offer them forgiveness for their sins. The people were to obey the prophet’s words because they were His words. God’s people still read the words of the prophet’s written in the Bible today. There are things that God wants them to still obey that He commanded through them, long ago.



## BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

*We're in... Unit 1: The God Who Reveals Himself*

**Unit 1 Big Question and Answer:**  
**How Can I Know What God Is Like?**  
***He Shows Me What He's Like!***

PFI NIV Songs 1, Tracks 3,4

**Unit 1 Bible Verse: Amos 4:13, NIV 1984**

"The LORD reveals His thoughts to man."

PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 5

## BIBLE TRUTH

*We're learning... Bible Truth 4:*  
**God Speaks through His Word, the Bible**

God used many people to write down His words in the Bible. The Holy Spirit worked in their hearts and minds to help them write down exactly what God wanted written. That's why the Bible is called God's Word. It's the only book where God's words are written down perfectly.

When we read the Bible, God tells us about who He is, who we are, and why He made us. He tells us how we can be saved and how He wants us to live. He tells us of His great plans for this world and for the world to come.

There are many things that God has chosen not to tell us in the Bible. But in it, He has told us everything we need to become His people; to know Him, to live for Him and to look forward to life with Him forever. And by His Holy Spirit working in our hearts, He can use His Word, not to just know these things, but to do them in us.

## BIBLE VERSE

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

**Bible Truth 4 Bible Verse: Psalm 119:18, 72-73**

"Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law...The law from your mouth is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold. Your hands made me and formed me; give me understanding to learn your commands."

## CASE STORY

Luke 24:13-35

**Our story is called:**

**The Case of the Burning Hearts**

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

1. Who had burning hearts? What does that mean?
2. What made their hearts burn?

This story is a New Testament story. It took place right around the time Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead.

"What a Passover week this has been!" exclaimed Cleopas and his companion as they walked the seven miles from Jerusalem to their home in Emmaus. It had begun with great hope, but ended with hopelessness!

Now, as Cleopas and his friend walked home this Sunday afternoon, they tried to make sense of it all. Like thousands of other Jews, they had gone to Jerusalem for the yearly Passover celebration. While they were there, they had been with Jesus. What wonderful things He had taught about God and His kingdom! What astonishing things He had said about Himself! What miracles He had done!

The Holy Spirit worked in their hearts as they listened to Jesus and watched what He did. "Jesus is more than a prophet," they had decided. "He must be the Messiah who God spoke about in the Bible! How exciting to see God's promises to save His people being fulfilled right before their eyes!

But by the end of the week, everything had changed. Thursday night, the chief priests and other Jewish leaders had Jesus arrested and brought Him to trial. "You deserve to die, Jesus! You say that you are the Messiah who God spoke about in the Bible, but you aren't! You must die for saying such things and making others believe them," they said to Jesus. Then they handed Him over to the Romans to be crucified! Jesus, the Messiah was dead on Passover Friday. They could hardly believe it! From Messiah to dead man in one week!

But then, today, this very Sunday morning, they had heard something even more confusing...or was it amazing? Some women had gone to Jesus' tomb and it was empty. Jesus' body was gone! Two angels in dazzling robes appeared to them and said: "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be

delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified on the third day rise?" they told the women.

The women ran to tell Jesus' disciples what they had seen and heard. Peter and John hurried to see for themselves, but they found nothing but an empty tomb. Were these just the tales of silly women? It seemed so. They all lost hope.

"This is all so confusing! What does it mean?" Cleopas and his friend thought. They tried to make sense of it as they slowly walked home.

As they were discussing it all, a man came up and began walking with them. Cleopas and his friend didn't know it yet, but it was Jesus, Himself! (Perhaps He wore a hood over His head, or simply kept them from understanding who He was in a way that only God can do, we don't know.) Jesus knew what Cleopas and the other disciple were talking about. He knew they were confused. He had come to reveal Himself to them and explain what had happened. He WAS the Messiah. He was the one who God spoke about in His Word, the Bible. Jesus would remove their confusion by first showing them what had been written about Him there, in the Bible. So by God's power, Jesus kept them from recognizing Him as He came up to them and started talking.

"What are you talking about?" Jesus asked the two.

"Haven't you heard what happened in Jerusalem lately?" they replied in shock.

"Tell me what has happened," Jesus replied.

"Jesus of Nazareth was a powerful prophet, preaching God's Word and doing miracles in God's name," they told him. "But the chief priests and our rulers gave him over to the Romans to be crucified. We had thought he was the Messiah promised by God in His Word. We thought He had come to save God's people."

"This is the third day since He was crucified and buried, yet some of the women came with an amazing story. Early this morning, when they went to His tomb to put fresh spices on His body, His body was gone! They said angels spoke to them, saying that Jesus was alive. Some of the men went to the tomb and found the body missing, just as the women had said, but they didn't see Jesus," they told Him.

"How slow you are to believe what the prophets' wrote in God's Word!" Jesus replied to them. "Didn't they say that the Messiah would have to suffer like this then be

glorified?"

Then beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, Jesus went through the Old Testament showing how His life fulfilled all God's promises about the Messiah.

God gave Moses these words to write down in the Bible about the Messiah:

Deuteronomy 18:15: "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like you...I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command."

***The Messiah was to be the greatest of prophet who spoke God's words!***

God gave David these words to write down in the Bible about the Messiah:

"My God, My God, why have you forsaken me...All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads: 'He trusts in the LORD; let the LORD rescue him...They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.'" (Psalm 22)

"Did you hear that?" the disciples thought with amazement, ***"That prophecy about the Messiah is exactly what happened to Jesus before He died!"***

God gave the prophet Isaiah these words to write down about the Messiah in the Bible: "He was pierced for our transgressions...the LORD has laid on him the sins of us all." "Did you hear that?" the disciples couldn't believe their ears. ***"Jesus fulfilled that prophecy, too, when He died on the cross!"***

On and on through the Bible Jesus took them, to verse after verse that God had spoken about the Messiah.

As Cleopas and his companion listened to Jesus, their hearts felt like they were burning, they were filled with such faith and with joy. "This man is right! We have been foolish and slow to believe," they exclaimed. "We knew these things which God had spoken in His Word, the Bible, about the Messiah, yet we did not remember them or believe them. But now we do! The Messiah really was supposed to suffer first! Perhaps Jesus really was the Messiah after all!" they hoped.

The sun was beginning to set as the three of them reached Emmaus. It was time for travelers to seek the hospitality of a host for the night. Soon darkness would set in and the road would be pitch black. Anyone left out on the road was in danger of harm from wild animals or robbers. Cleopas and the other disciple headed to their home, while Jesus acted as if he were going farther. It



would be rude for Jesus to invite Himself to their home. He waited for their invitation.

“Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over,” Cleopas and his friend urged. Jesus accepted their invitation and headed to the house with them.

As good hosts, Cleopas and the other disciple immediately set about preparing food for their guest. When everything was ready, they sat down at the table. Usually Cleopas would host the meal, but shockingly, their guest picked up the bread and served the others as if HE was the host!

“How strange!” Cleopas and his companion must have thought, but they allowed their honored guest to continue.

What happened next was even stranger! When Jesus took the bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them, something happened. Maybe they saw the nail prints in his hands, maybe it was the way He broke the bread and prayed, or maybe it was the Holy Spirit at work inside of them, but the Bible tells us that they recognized Jesus, then He vanished—He completely disappeared from their sight.”

“It’s Jesus! It’s Jesus! He is alive! Of course! Who else would be show us God’s plans for the Messiah through the Bible like that! No wonder our hearts felt like they were burning within us as He taught us! We must go and tell the others! Jesus is alive!”

So right then they got up and hurried the seven miles back to Jerusalem down that dark road. They didn’t care if there might be wild animals or robbers along the way. They would take their chances! This good news could not wait!

When at last they arrived in Jerusalem, they found the Eleven (Jesus’ closest disciples) and those with them, gathered together. These believers were bursting with excitement, too. “It’s true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon Peter,” they exclaimed.

Cleopas and his friend told what had happened to them. How Jesus had gone through the Bible and explained everything, then how they recognized Him when He broke the bread at dinner. Everyone was so excited! Jesus was alive and was appearing to His followers to prove it! Surely He was the Messiah!

Even as they were talking about all these things, Jesus Himself suddenly stood among them and said, “Peace be

with you.” Jesus was really alive! He had worked forgiveness of sins for God’s people, just as God had promised in His Word that He would!

**Our Bible Truth is:**

**God Speaks through His Word, the Bible**

**Our Bible Verse is: Psalm 119:18,72-73 ESV**

“Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law...The law from your mouth is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold. Your hands made me and formed me; give me understanding to learn your commands.”

What about us? We have heard from God’s Word the wonderful promises God made about Jesus that Cleopas and the other disciple heard that Sunday, two thousand years ago. They are still just as true now as they were then. What will we do with them?

Let’s ask God to work in our hearts and help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Let’s ask Him to help us to hear His Word, the Bible, and believe the good news of Jesus.

**SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU**

**1. A Question about the Bible Truth, True or False:**  
 People wrote down God’s words all on their own without any help.  
 Answer: False. The Holy Spirit worked inside the people who wrote down the Bible so that everything they wrote down was exactly what God wanted written.

**2. Crack the Case Questions:**  
**a. Who had burning hearts? What did that mean?**  
 Answer: Cleopas and his friend as they listened to Jesus. It means that they were so full of faith and joy with the truths that Jesus was explaining to them.

**b. What made their hearts burn?**  
 Answer: The truths of the Bible that Jesus explained, showing that He really was the Messiah, come to save God’s people.

**3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse:**  
**Psalm 119:18,72-73**  
 “Open my eyes that I may see \_\_\_things in your law...The law from your \_\_\_ is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold. Your hands made me and formed me; give me understanding to learn your \_\_\_”  
 Answers: wonderful; mouth; commands.

**BIBLE TRUTH HYMN**

**Amazing Grace**  
*PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 13*

**Verse 4**  
 The Lord has promised good to me,  
 His word, my hope secures;  
 He will my shield and portion be,  
 As long as life endures.

Words: John Newton Music: Virginia Harmony: arr. Edwin OI Excell

This hymn reminds us that God’s people read in His Word His promises to do good to them. They know that they can have unfailing hope in Him for their salvation, their protection and provision for all their needs. They know they can depend on Him for these things their whole live because God always does what He promises to do.

**AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY**

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

**A** God, we praise You for being the Giver of Your Word and the Savior who came to pay for the sins of Your people.

**C** God, we confess that like Cleopas and his friend, many times we don’t remember or believe what You have promised in Your Word.

**T** God, we thank You for helping us to understand the truths in Your Word.

**S** God, we ask that You would work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Send Your Holy Spirit to work in our hearts and help us understand and believe Your Word, the Bible.

**BIBLE VERSE SONG**

**Open My Eyes**  
*PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 14*

Open my eyes that I may see,  
 Wonderful things in your law.  
 Open my eyes that I may see,  
 Wonderful things in your law.  
 The law from your mouth is more precious to me  
 Than thousands of pieces of silver and gold.  
 Your hands, they mademe and formed me;  
 Give me understanding to learn your commands.  
 Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.  
 Open your eyes that I may see  
 Wonderful things in your law.  
 Psalm One-nineteen, eighteen, seventy two and three.

Words: Psalm 119:18,72,73, NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012

There is no book like the Bible! It alone is God’s Word, written down perfectly. When we read the Bible, God speaks to us about who He is, who we are, and why He made us. He tells us how we can be saved and live to please Him. That is why it is more precious to God’s people than even a lot of money—because they want to know those things and live out those things most of all.

## BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

*We're in... Unit 1: The God Who Reveals Himself*

**Unit 1 Big Question and Answer:**  
**How Can I Know What God Is Like?**  
***He Shows Me What He's Like!***

PFI NIV Songs 1, Tracks 3,4

**Unit 1 Bible Verse: Amos 4:13, NIV 1984**

"The LORD reveals His thoughts to man."

PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 5

## BIBLE TRUTH

*We're learning... Bible Truth 4:*  
**God Speaks through His Word, the Bible**

God used many people to write down His words in the Bible. The Holy Spirit worked in their hearts and minds to help them write down exactly what God wanted written. That's why the Bible is called God's Word. It's the only book where God's words are written down perfectly.

When we read the Bible, God tells us about who He is, who we are, and why He made us. He tells us how we can be saved and how He wants us to live. He tells us of His great plans for this world and for the world to come.

There are many things that God has chosen not to tell us in the Bible. But in it, He has told us everything we need to become His people; to know Him, to live for Him and to look forward to life with Him forever. And by His Holy Spirit working in our hearts, He can use His Word, not to just know these things, but to do them in us.

## BIBLE VERSE

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

**Bible Truth 4 Bible Verse: Psalm 119:18, 72-73**

"Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law...The law from your mouth is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold. Your hands made me and formed me; give me understanding to learn your commands."

## CASE STORY

Adapted from *Religious Stories for Young and Old, vol. IV,*

compiled by Joel Beeke

**Our story is called:**

**The Case of the Ragged Bible:**

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

1. Who did the Ragged Bible belong to? Why was it ragged?
2. What did Sam do to replace it?

This story doesn't take place in Bible times. It takes place in the late 1700's on the island of Jamaica.

Far south of the coast of Florida, in the middle of the Caribbean Sea, lies the tropical, mountainous island of Jamaica. Long ago, when the Spanish and the English discovered the island, they found its mountain slopes to be a perfect place to grow sugar cane.

Sugar from sugar cane was the new favorite food of Europe, but there was a problem: it was too cold to grow sugar cane there. But then the Europeans found Jamaica. Its warm climate was perfect for growing sugar cane. So they came and set up huge sugar cane plantations on the island. Then they did something absolutely terrible: they kidnapped thousands of Africans and forced them to work the plantations for free, as slaves!

Life for many of the slaves was horrible. They were cruelly punished if they didn't work the long, tiring hours their owners demanded of them. And even if they did work hard, most were treated terribly. Very few certainly had the chance to learn to read, to have any sort of education, to enjoy freedom or have a chance to return home to Africa.

But the Lord in His mercy, brought good even out of the terrible evil of slavery. There were some people who cared about the slaves. They were kind to them. They taught them how to read; and most of all, they told them about Jesus and the Bible, God's Word.

Two slaves who received these kindnesses were a woman and her son, Sam. Sam's mother had been taught how to read. She heard about Jesus and had become a Christian. She loved God and His Word. Among the few things Sam's mother owned were some pages from the New Testament. These few words were worth to her than anything else she could have.

Sam had learned to read, too. When his mother grew

old and ready to die, she called him to her side, and said, "Don't stop reading the Bible, Sam!" Sam's mother knew that there was nothing else in the world like the Bible. It was the only book God has given us to tell us who He is, who we are and why He made us. When we read it, He tells us how we can be saved and how He wants us to live. She wanted Sam to know it and to know God like she did.

"I won't stop reading it, mother," Sam promised her.

Sam kept his promise to his mother. In the evening, when the day's hard work was done, Sam often sat at the door of his hut and read. He turned over the fragile, worn pages of his mother's New Testament. He read very slowly. Sometimes there were big words that he didn't know how to pronounce. Sometimes there were sections that didn't make sense. But still, Sam didn't give up. He tried to figure it out and asked God to help him understand.

Sam didn't just keep God's Word to himself. He knew that everyone needed to know God and His Word, yet many of the other slaves did not know how to read, nor did they have a Bible to read, anyway. Sam would read aloud to the other slaves as they worked in the sugarcane fields or in the sugar house where the cane was made into white, powdery sugar. More than anything else, Sam wanted to love God and know Him better. He wanted others to, as well. So he read over and over the few pages of the New Testament that he had.

Unfortunately, Bibles wear out from so much use. Before long, the pages of Sam's little book were falling apart. First the cover came off; then, page after page was lost, until it was nearly all gone. But even this didn't stop Sam from learning God's Word! He had read it so much that he knew most of the pages by heart. He would recite to himself and the others the chapters he had memorized. Sam knew that he mustn't stop reading the Bible. He needed it and so did the others. It alone was God's Word!

After a number of years, Sam's master freed him and gave him a cottage of his own to live in. Now Sam could spend more time than ever teaching the others about the Bible and Jesus. But now when Sam told them what the Bible said, the others replied, "Well, it may be true but show us in the book. We want to see it ourselves."

But sadly, Sam no longer had a book to show them.

One day Sam heard that a missionary had brought a new shipment of Bibles to Kingston, the capitol of Jamaica, and was selling them very cheaply.

"Imagine that!" thought Sam, "Whole Bibles, not just a piece like I had! If I had enough money I could read ALL of God's Word. I could share ALL of it with the others! I must get one of those Bibles!" he decided. So Sam gathered up his money—a dollar (which was worth a lot more than it is now)—and set off for Kingston.

The journey to Kingston was a long, fifty-mile walk from Sam's hut. It was too hot to walk in the middle of the day, so early in the morning Sam would set off, rest in the middle of the day, then set off again late in the evening. After a few days of travelling like this, Sam at last came to the missionary's house where the Bibles were.

Sam saw them all in a row. New Bibles, all complete! "Oh, Sir," he cried, "how wonderful are these Bible. I want to buy one," Sam said. "How much are they?"

"A dollar and a half," was the answer. Sam's face looked sad. "What is the matter?" said the missionary asked.

"I only have a dollar," Sam replied.

"These Bibles cost a lot to make. I can't sell it to you for less than \$1.50," the man told Sam. "But what is your name and where do you come from?" asked the missionary. How amazed he was to learn how far Sam had traveled on foot just to get a Bible.

"Surely, a man who's willing to walk fifty miles both here and back just to get God's Word, is a man I can trust," the missionary thought. "Isn't this one of the very people I have come to help? Do I really want to stop a man like this from getting a Bible?"

"Well," he said to Sam, "you have come a long way and I don't like to send you home without the book. Will you promise, if I let you have it, to pay me the half dollar as soon as you get it?"

"Oh yes, Sir," cried Sam, "I will do that."

So Sam set off home with a glad heart and his Bible in his hand. After a few days, he made it home.

"Joy, joy!" shouted Sam to the others as he held up the Bible above his head for all to see.

They gathered around him and said, "Now, Sam, read it! Read it!"

Sam read, "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn it, but that the world might be saved through him."

"Go on! Read more! We want to hear all of God's book! We want to know all that God says," they cried when he finished.

"No, I will not go on. Not until the book is not paid for. We have to find the money," Sam told them. They all gathered what money they had and came up with the fifty cents.

After a few days' rest, Sam set out again to Kingston and paid the money, and from that time he had the joy of having a complete copy of the Bible. It was his comfort the rest of his life and his joy to share with the others, too.

**Our Bible Truth is:**

**God Speaks through His Word, the Bible**

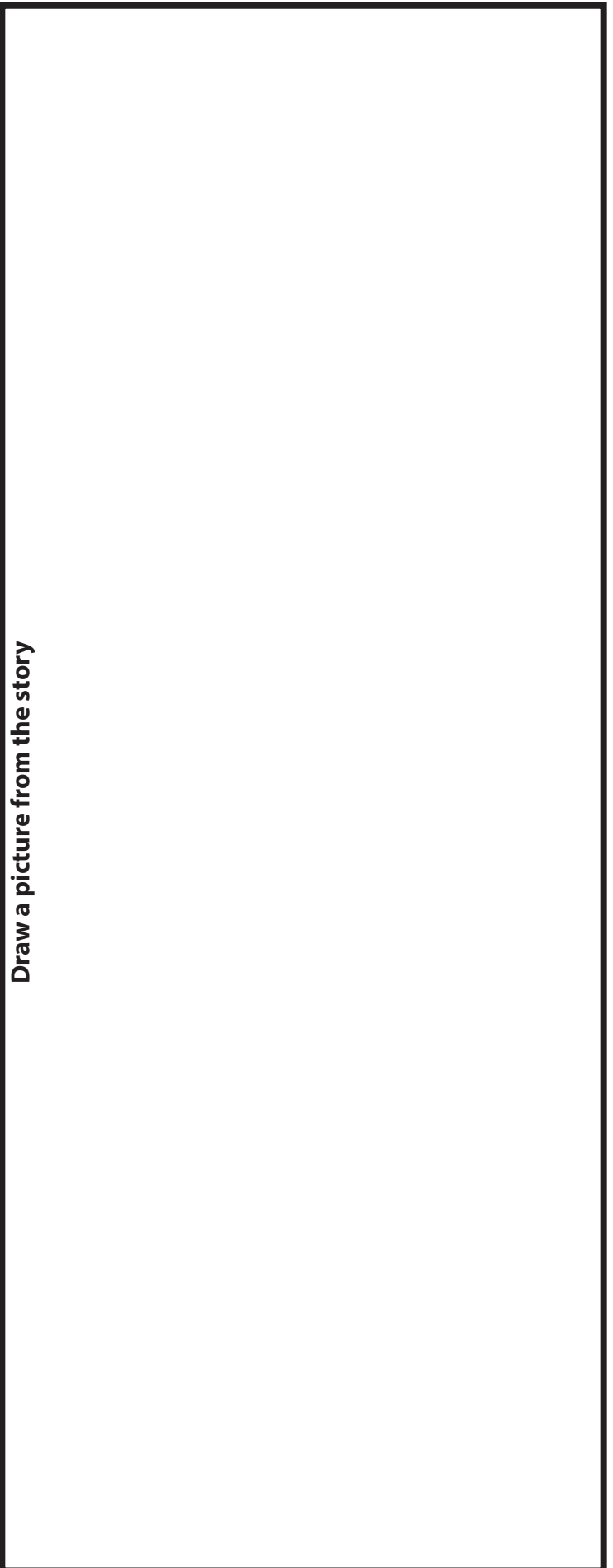
**Our Bible Verse is: Psalm 119:18,72-73 ESV**

"Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law...The law from your mouth is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold. Your hands made me and formed me; give me understanding to learn your commands."

Sam walked two hundred miles just so he might have a copy of the Bible. What about you and me? How much do we care whether or not we have God's Word so that He can speak to us? Do we neglect the Word as Sam's mother warned him not to? Do we try to learn about God, who we are and why He made us?

Let's praise this God who has revealed Himself through His Word, the Bible. Let's ask Him to give us hearts that hungry to know Him and do not neglect His Word. Let's ask Him to help us to turn away from disobeying Him and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.

**Draw a picture from the story**





**SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU**

**1. A Question about the Bible Truth, True or False:**  
 When we read the Bible, God speaks to us about who He is, of who we are and how we can be saved.  
 Answer: True. He tells us these things and many more.

**2. Crack the Case Questions:**  
**a. Who did the Ragged Bible belong to? What was it ragged?**  
 Answer: Sam's mother, then Sam. It was ragged from being used so much.

**b. What did Sam do to replace it?**  
 Answer: He walked all the way around the island twice to get a new one and pay for it.

**3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse: Psalm 119:18,72-73**  
 "Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your \_\_\_\_...The law from your mouth is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and \_\_\_\_\_. Your hands made me and \_\_\_\_\_ me; give me understanding to learn your commands."  
 Answers: law; gold; formed.

**BIBLE TRUTH HYMN**

**Amazing Grace**  
*PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 13*

**Verse 4**  
 The Lord has promised good to me,  
 His word, my hope secures;  
 He will my shield and portion be,  
 As long as life endures.

Words: John Newton Music: Virginia Harmony: arr. Edwin Ol Excell

This hymn reminds us that God's people read in His Word His promises to do good to them. They know that they can have unfailing hope in Him for their salvation, their protection and provision for all their needs. They know they can depend on Him for these things their whole live because God always does what He promises to do.

**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 Bible, Your perfect Word.

**C** God, we confess that many times we don't love Your Word and don't want to read it, listen to it or obey it. We need Jesus to be our Savior!

**T** God, we thank You for wonderful Your Word is. Thank You that in it, You have given us everything we need to know about You, how we can be saved and how You want us to live.

**S** God, we ask that You would work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. We ask that You would help us understand, love and live by Your Word, the Bible.

**BIBLE VERSE SONG**

**Open My Eyes**  
*PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 14*

Open my eyes that I may see,  
 Wonderful things in your law.  
 Open my eyes that I may see,  
 Wonderful things in your law.  
 The law from your mouth is more precious to me  
 Than thousands of pieces of silver and gold.  
 Your hands, they mademe and formed me;  
 Give me understanding to learn your commands.  
 Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.  
 Open your eyes that I may see  
 Wonderful things in your law.  
 Psalm One-nineteen, eighteen, seventy two and three.

Words: Psalm 119:18,72,73, NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012

There is no book like the Bible! It alone is God's Word, written down perfectly. When we read the Bible, God speaks to us about who He is, who we are, and why He made us. He tells us how we can be saved and live to please Him. That is why it is more precious to God's people than even a lot of money—because they want to know those things and live out those things most of all.



## BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

*We're in... Unit 1: The God Who Reveals Himself*

**Unit 1 Big Question and Answer:**  
**How Can I Know What God Is Like?**

*He Shows Me What He's Like!*

PFI NIV Songs 1, Tracks 3,4

**Unit 1 Bible Verse: Amos 4:13, NIV 1984**

"The LORD reveals His thoughts to man."

PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 5

## BIBLE TRUTH

*We're learning... Bible Truth 4:*

**God Speaks through His Word, the Bible**

God used many people to write down His words in the Bible. The Holy Spirit worked in their hearts and minds to help them write down exactly what God wanted written. That's why the Bible is called God's Word. It's the only book where God's words are written down perfectly.

When we read the Bible, God tells us about who He is, who we are, and why He made us. He tells us how we can be saved and how He wants us to live. He tells us of His great plans for this world and for the world to come.

There are many things that God has chosen not to tell us in the Bible. But in it, He has told us everything we need to become His people; to know Him, to live for Him and to look forward to life with Him forever. And by His Holy Spirit working in our hearts, He can use His Word, not to just know these things, but to do them in us.

## BIBLE VERSE

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

**Bible Truth 4 Bible Verse: Psalm 119:18, 72-73**

"Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law...The law from your mouth is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold. Your hands made me and formed me; give me understanding to learn your commands."

## CASE STORY

Deuteronomy 4,5,27-30,34; Jeremiah 1-2,4,11,25,36

**Our story is:**

**The Case of the Forgotten Book.**

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

1. What was the Forgotten Book?
2. Who should have remembered it? What happened because they forgot it?

This story takes place not far from the eastern border of Israel, in Old Testament times, beginning about 1400 years before Jesus lived on earth.

An old man (about one hundred and twenty years old!) sat in his tent, crouched over a papyrus scroll with ink reed in hand. It was Moses, hard at work writing down all the words the LORD had spoken to him. How his hand must have ached from day after day of writing, for it was Moses who wrote down the first, five books of the Bible! Now that's a lot of words!

Why would Moses go to all that effort? Because these words were God's words. God commanded him to write them all down. Through them, God would keep speaking to the people, long after Moses had died.

But what would the people do with the Word of God? Would they listen and obey it...or not? The answer was a matter of life or death for the Israelites. They had made a solemn covenant with God. God promised to always bless them and protect them. The people promised to obey God's good laws. But along with the promises of blessings and protection, came a promise of punishment, too, if the people didn't obey God's laws as they had promised.

"Worship the LORD only. Do not make any idols. Keep the Sabbath day holy," God had told them. "Honor your father and your mother. Do not murder. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal. Do not lie. Do not crave to have anything that someone else has." Moses wrote down these good laws and many more that the Israelites were to follow.

But Moses didn't just write down God's good laws for the people. He taught them what they should do with them. "You, parents: each and every day, teach God's words to your children, as you rise and sit, as you work, as you walk...no matter what you're so that they will remember to obey the LORD and keep His covenant. You priests! Gather the people and read the Bible to them every seven years. They will help them obey the LORD and keep His covenant," Moses instructed.

“Obey the LORD and His Word and He will protect you and bless you. You will be His special people. But if you choose to go your own way and not live according to God’s good Word, then He will discipline you severely. There will be curses upon your food and your families. Your enemies will overtake you and finally the LORD will remove you from the Promised Land He is giving you, scatter you to other lands and destroy you,” Moses warned them.

What a big decision the Israelites were making! It would be God’s special people, but how scary was the punishments He warned them about!

The Israelites chose to make the covenant with the LORD. “We want to be Your people. We promise to obey Your Word,” they said. So together, the LORD and the people of Israel made their promises to each other.

How wonderful life would have been, if the Israelites had kept their promises. But unfortunately, they were sinners, just like us. All too soon they chose not to live God’s good way. They began to worship idols and to break God’s good laws. How long would it be before the LORD sent down the curses He promised them?

The LORD certainly had every right to send all those terrible curses on them, just as soon as they started breaking His laws, but He did not. You see, God is holy: He hates it when His good laws are broken! But, He is also very merciful and compassionate. His heart is filled with love for His people. He did not want to destroy them! So the LORD patiently wanted the Israelites to repent. He sent prophets to tell them to turn back to Him. He gave them smaller punishments than they deserved. But they kept worshipping idols and breaking the LORD’s laws. So at last, after 800 years, it was time to punish them fully. He would remove from the Promised Land and scattered to other lands.

Another man sat crouched in his room over a scroll. This wasn’t Moses. This was Baruch, the secretary of the prophet Jeremiah. Baruch furiously wrote down the words his master gave him to write: “The LORD says: ‘The time for judgment has come. For eight hundred years I have waited for my stiff-necked people to turn from their idol worship and back to Me. As I promised through the covenant I made with them through Moses, I will now punish My people. I will send in the mighty Babylonian army to destroy all the cities and scatter and destroy all the people. Many will die and the rest will serve as slaves in Babylon. But I will show mercy, too. I won’t punish forever, as the

covenant allows me to. After seventy, hard years in Babylon, I bring them back to the Promised Land.”

Jeremiah wept at the words the LORD gave him. What terrible things were about to happen!

“Yet before I do this,” the LORD continued through Jeremiah, “I want to give them one more chance to turn from their sins. Jeremiah, take this scroll with My words written upon it and have it read before all the people next time they gather at the Temple for a fast. If they hear My words and turn back to Me, then I will forgive them and I will not send the Babylonians to destroy them.” How merciful and patient is the LORD!

Yet there was a problem. Jeremiah had to figure out how to get the LORD’s message to the people.

“How will we do this, Baruch?” Jeremiah asked his scribe. “You know that the king hates me and my ‘messages of doom,’ as the people call them. I have been forbidden to enter the Temple at all. You will have to be the one to read the scroll. But from where can you read them the message so that they can all hear? We must make a plan,” he said.

Jeremiah and Baruch shared with their friend, Gemariah, what the Lord commanded them to do. Gemariah was a high official of King Jehoiakim. It would be risky for him to help Jeremiah, but Gemariah had a third story room that faced out into the Temple courts. It would be the perfect place to read God’s Word to all the people. What would Gemariah do with the Word of God? He would risk his job and life and let Baruch read it from his room? Yes, he would!

The day of fasting finally came and all of the people of Jerusalem and the rest of the country gathered in the temple courts. Baruch snuck up to Gemariah’s third floor room, faced the people and began reading in a loud voice all of God’s words:

“Turn back to the LORD!” Baruch told them. “This is your last chance. If you refuse, I will send the Babylonians to destroy your land and you will serve them as their slaves. But even so, He will show you mercy. After seventy years of punishment, He will send you back home.”

What would the people do with the God’s Word? Would they accept it? No, they would not.

News of Baruch’s stunt made it to the ears of King Jehoiakim’s officials. When they heard what was on the scroll, they were afraid.

“The King needs to know about this. Give us the scroll!”

the officials demanded. "And as for you, I'd advise you and Jeremiah to go and hide before the King finds out about it. You know what he will do to you!"

Jeremiah and Baruch went to hide and Jehudi, the King's servant, was sent to take Jeremiah's scroll to the King and report what had happened.

"Read me that scroll!" ordered King Jehoiakim.

So Jehudi began to read: 'The time for judgment has come. For eight hundred years I have waited for My stiff-necked people to turn from their idol worship and back to Me. I am giving you one more chance before I send the Babylonian army to destroy your cities and scatter the people. Turn back to Me!'

King Jehoiakim listened as Jehudi read. What would he do with the Word of God? King Jehoiakim did not believe it! He took the scroll of the Word of God and he cut it up piece by piece and threw it into his fire until it was all burned up!

There would be no turning back from God's judgment now. Word reached Baruch and Jeremiah of what the king had done. Six years later, the Babylonian army swept into Jerusalem, burning it down, killing many and taking the rest to be slaves in Babylon for seventy years, just as the LORD had promised.

But the LORD said to Jeremiah, "Write my words down again." So that's exactly what Jeremiah did. Why did God want Jeremiah to write down all those words again? Because God's Word was not just for King Jehoiakim and the people who heard it and rejected it that day in the Temple. It was also for many others who would come. These others would hear those words and believe. They would turn from their sinful ways and trust in the LORD.

**Our Bible Truth is:**  
**God Speaks through His Word, the Bible**

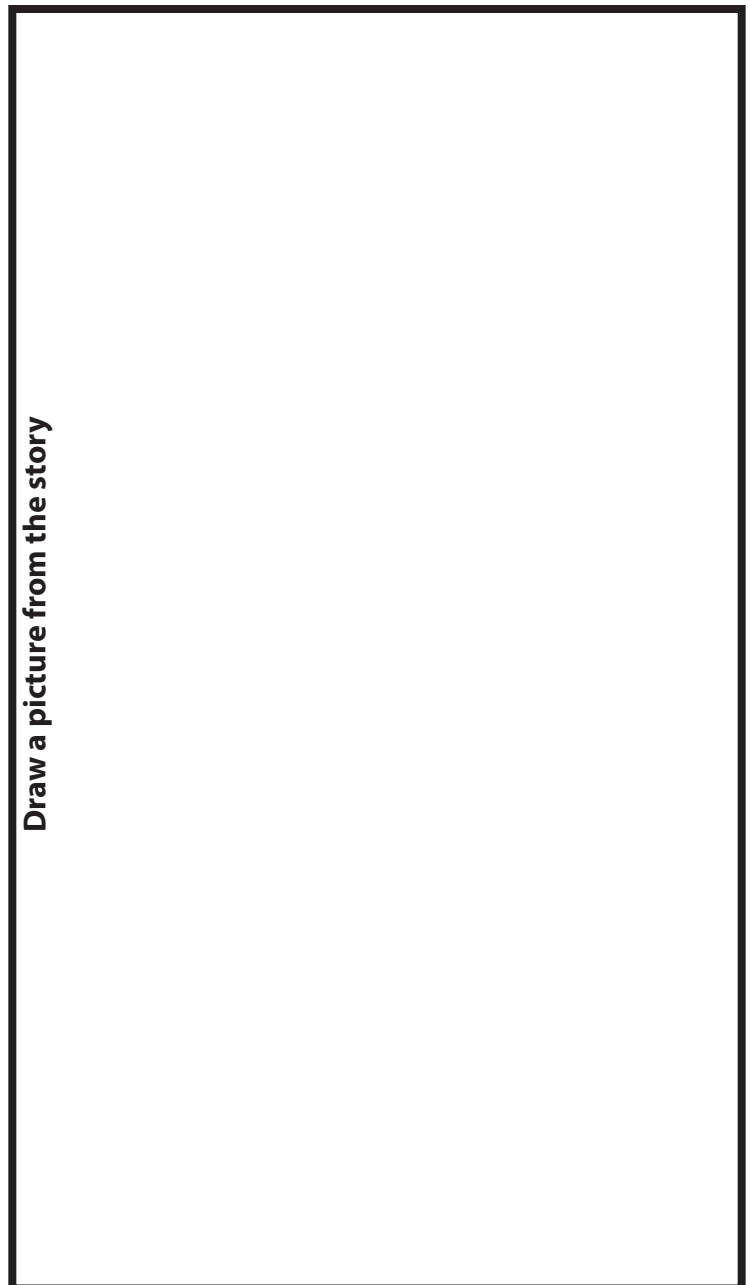
**Our Bible Verse is: Psalm 119:18,72-73**

"Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law...The law from your mouth is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold. Your hands made me and formed me; give me understanding to learn your commands."

Who are some of those who would hear and believe? Some were the people who the Babylonians captured to work as slaves. These people would remember God's promises to rescue them after seventy years and take

comfort. But, you know, those people in Babylon weren't the only people those words were written for. Many people, in the hundreds of years since Jeremiah wrote them down have read them and been warned to turn from their sins and seek God's forgiveness.

And would you believe that God even had Jeremiah write those words down for us to hear today? Yes, He wants to know what will WE do with the Word of God? Will we reject it, like King Jehoiakim and the people did long ago? Or, will we turn away from our sins and ask Him for forgiveness? God is just holy and just as merciful now as He was then! We face His punishment for our sins, but He promises to forgive us and make us His very, own special people forever, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.



Draw a picture from the story

**SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU**

**1. A Question about the Bible Truth, True or False:**  
 God used just one person to write down all His words in the Bible.  
 Answer: False. God used many people.

**2. Crack the Case Questions:**  
**a. What was the Forgotten Book?**  
 Answer: God’s Word, the Bible.

**b. Who should have remembered it? What happened because they forgot it?**  
 Answer: The people of Israel and their kings forgot it. They turned away from God and worshiped other fake gods. When they would not turn back, the LORD disciplined them by sending them to Babylon. In the end, they turned back to the LORD.

**3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse:**  
**Psalm 119:18,72-73**  
 “Open my \_\_\_ that I may see wonderful things in your law...The law from your mouth is more \_\_\_ to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold. Your hands made me and formed me; give me \_\_\_ to learn your commands.”  
 Answers: eyes; precious; understanding.

**BIBLE TRUTH HYMN**

**Amazing Grace**  
*PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 13*

**Verse 4**  
 The Lord has promised good to me,  
 His word, my hope secures;  
 He will my shield and portion be,  
 As long as life endures.

Words: John Newton Music: Virginia Harmony: arr. Edwin Ol Excell

This hymn reminds us that God’s people read in His Word His promises to do good to them. They know that they can have unfailing hope in Him for their salvation, their protection and provision for all their needs. They know they can depend on Him for these things their whole live because God always does what He promises to do..

**AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY**

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

**A** God, we praise You for being so patient with sinners, wanting them to repent of their sins and turn to You.

**C** God, we confess that many times we don’t love God’s Word and don’t want to read it or obey it. We deserve Your punishment, too! We need Jesus to save us!

**T** God, we thank You for how wonderful Your Word is! Thank You for all that it tells us about You. Thank You for how You warn us about our sins and tell us how we can be saved through it.

**S** God, work in our hearts! By Your Holy Spirit, help us to turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to understand, love and obey Your Word, the Bible.

**BIBLE VERSE SONG**

**Open My Eyes**  
*PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 14*

Open my eyes that I may see,  
 Wonderful things in your law.  
 Open my eyes that I may see,  
 Wonderful things in your law.  
 The law from your mouth is more precious to me  
 Than thousands of pieces of silver and gold.  
 Your hands, they mademe and formed me;  
 Give me understanding to learn your commands.  
 Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.  
 Open your eyes that I may see  
 Wonderful things in your law.  
 Psalm One-nineteen, eighteen, seventy two and three.

Words: Psalm 119:18,72,73, NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012

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## BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

*We're in... Unit 1: The God Who Reveals Himself*

**Unit 1 Big Question and Answer:**  
**How Can I Know What God Is Like?**

***He Shows Me What He's Like!***

PFI NIV Songs 1, Tracks 3,4

**Unit 1 Bible Verse: Amos 4:13, NIV 1984**

"The LORD reveals His thoughts to man."

PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 5

## BIBLE TRUTH

***We're learning... Bible Truth 5:***  
**God Has Revealed Himself Most Completely through His Son, Jesus**

God sent His Son, Jesus, to leave His home in heaven to be our Savior. He was born as a baby here on earth. Jesus grew up and became a man. He was fully human, like us, but He was also, still fully God.

Jesus lived the perfect life that pleases God. He never did anything wrong. He taught about God and He did many amazing miracles. Most amazing of all, He offered up His perfect life as the full payment for the sins of God's people when He suffered and died on the cross. On the third day, He rose from the dead, showing that He had really beaten sin and death, then He rose back up to heaven where He lives now.

Jesus didn't live on earth long--only about thirty years. He taught about God and did miracles only about three of those years. But in that short, little bit of time, He showed us more about God than anything else in the whole world.

The Bible calls Jesus the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of Him. That means when we learn about Jesus and see what He is like, we are seeing what God is like: completely holy, powerful, loving and good. He hates sin, but He loves sinners who turn to Him for forgiveness and mercy! Thank You, God, for sending Jesus to show us what You're like!

## BIBLE VERSE

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

**Bible Truth 5 Bible Verse: Hebrews 1:1-3**

"In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets...but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son....The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being..."

## CASE STORY

John 10:22-42

**Our story is called:**

**The Case of the Lips of Life or Death.**

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

1. Who thought he had life or death on his lips?
2. Why was he wrong?

This story is a New Testament story. It takes place in Hierapolis, Turkey, about 70 years after Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead.

In the middle of a magnificent room with towering arches and gleaming tile floors, stood an elderly, eighty-seven-year-old man. Soldiers had brought him to this great hall to appear before none other than the Roman proconsul of Turkey. Now the proconsul was an extremely powerful man. No one except Caesar, the Roman king, had more power than him. He could do whatever he wanted. He didn't even have to keep his own laws! You could say that he held the life or death of others on his lips, because if he said they were to live, they lived. But if he said they were to die, then they died. And today, it was the life or death of this old man that the proconsul held on his lips.

Who was the old man? It was Philip, one of Jesus' first, twelve disciples. And what had he done to deserve death? Philip, his sister Miriamme, and another Christian named Bartholomew had come to Hierapolis to tell the people there about Jesus. Few in the city knew the good news of Jesus and many were curious to hear. Among them was the proconsul's sick wife, Nicanora. Nicanora had suffered one illness after another. Too sick even to leave her bed, she invited the three Christians to come to her and tell her about Jesus. They did and not only did Nicanora become a Christian, but God healed her sickness as well!

You might think the proconsul would be grateful for his wife to be healed at last, but far from it! He was furious! And that's why he had ordered Philip be arrested and brought before him, on trial for his life!

"Look what you've done, old man!" the proconsul said to Philip. "By some magic you have healed my wife, Nicanora and put her under a spell that she would reject our great god Apollo for this dead man Jesus you worship as God. I command you to stop your lies about Jesus. Turn away from worshiping Him as God now, and you will go free and live. If you do not, you will die today!" the proconsul threatened.

Jesus. Turn away from worshiping Him as God now, and you will go free and live. If you do not, you will die today!" the proconsul threatened.

The words of life or death rang in Philip's ears. Which would he choose? Was he really so certain that Jesus was God? So certain that he even would die for Him?

Once, fifty years earlier, Philip had asked Jesus, "Show us the Father, that will be enough." Philip had been Jesus' disciple for three years, yet he still didn't completely understand that Jesus was God.

"Philip," Jesus had answered him, "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. (John 14:9-11, NIV 1984)

Yes, of course, the miracles! He been with Jesus when the terrible storm came upon them all on the Sea of Galilee. He seen Jesus stand up and say, "Peace be still!" and the wind and the waves stopped immediately. "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father," Jesus had said. Jesus revealed God's complete control over all of nature. Yes, Jesus was God!

He been with Jesus when four men lowered their paralyzed friend through a roof on a mat to be healed by Jesus? He seen watched Jesus as He turned to the man and said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven. Take up your mat and walk." And the man did.

"Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father," Jesus had said. Jesus revealed God's complete control over sin and sickness. Yes, Jesus was God!

He had been with Jesus as He stood outside of the tomb of a man dead three days and shouted, "Lazarus, come forth!" He had seen the dead man came out with his burial clothes still wrapped around his body?

"Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father," Jesus had said. Jesus revealed God's complete control over death. Yes, Jesus was God!

He been there to watch Jesus die on that awful cross and buried in a cold, dark tomb to be the only perfect sacrifice for the sins of God's people.

"Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father," Jesus had said. Jesus revealed God's amazing love that would offer up His perfect holiness in payment for His people's sins. Yes, Jesus was God!

And most amazing of all, he had been there when on the third day Jesus rose from the dead and appeared to them the first time, then many more times in the next month. Then he had seen Jesus rise up into the sky to rule in heaven.

"Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father," Jesus had said. Jesus revealed God's complete victory over death and His splendid glory as ruler over all things. Yes, Jesus was God!

Whatever doubt or confusion Philip might have had fifty years early was certainly gone now! Jesus was truly God! And Philip would not deny Jesus, even if it meant he were to die!

"I see you are an old man. Perhaps you are slow of hearing, the proconsul jeered. "I'll say it again. You have a choice: give up Jesus as God and live! Or, keep confessing Him as God and die!"

The old man simply looked at the proconsul straight in the eyes and said, "You ask me to give up my God and live. I cannot. Jesus is God! And I say to you, proconsul, as I say to all: 'Accept Jesus and save your soul.'"

"Have this man beaten...and crucified like His "God"... only crucify him upside down!" ordered the proconsul in fury. And so it was done.

Philip endured terrible punishment that day and died. But Philip suffered with joy. He knew Jesus was God; his death that day was but a beginning. The proconsul had said, "Confess Jesus as your God and die!" but he was wrong. Philip confessed his God and lived! For that very day, Philip entered heaven, the land of eternal life. There, he would see His God, face to face, and worship Him and enjoy Him forever!

**Our Bible Truth is:**  
**God Reveals Himself Most Completely through His Son, Jesus**

**Our Bible Verse is: Hebrews 1:1-3**

"Long ago...God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son...He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature..."

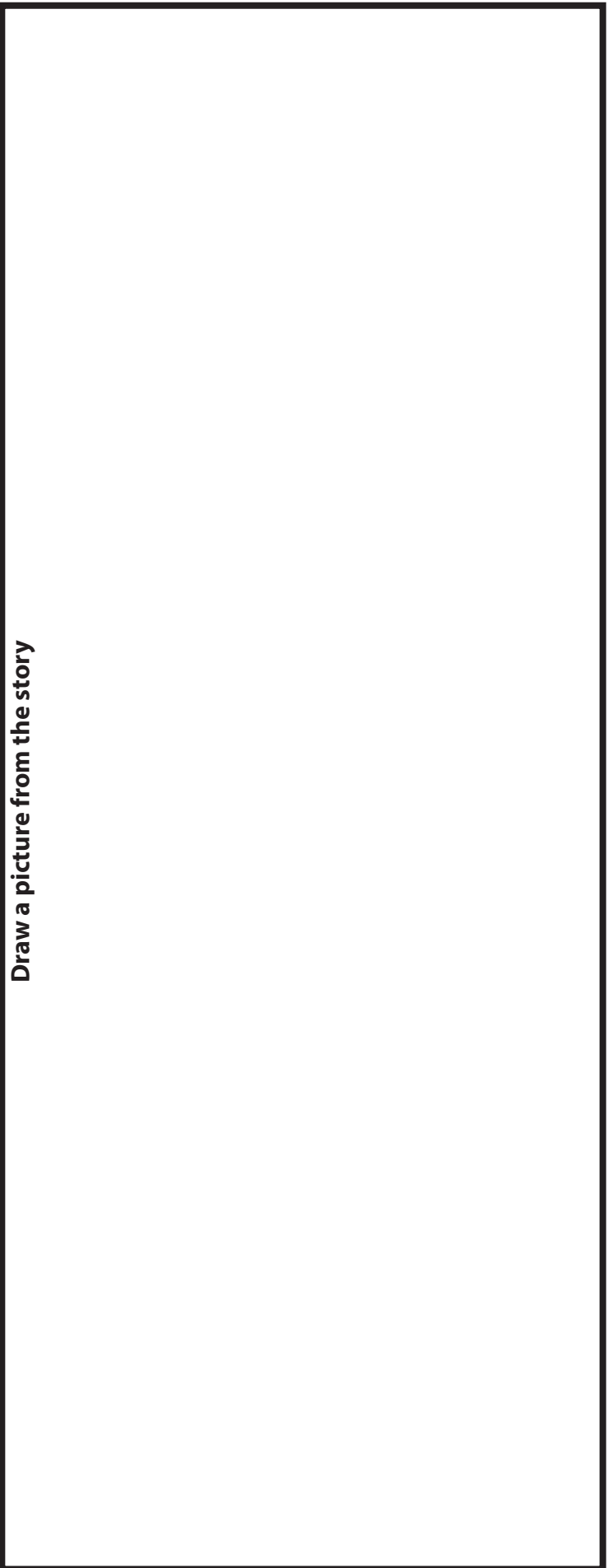


Jesus shows us what God is like more than anything or anyone else. Why? Because Jesus is God! Philip knew this better than most. In just three short years as Jesus' disciple, Philip had seen so much of God in Jesus! So much, that not even the threat of a terrible death could change his mind--Jesus is God! Philip was certain of that!

What about you and me? How will we respond to this great God who has revealed Himself so completely through Jesus? When we are sick, will we remember that He has power over sickness—to sustain us and, if it is His will, to heal us? As sinners who have rebelled against God and His good ways, will we remember that He will forgive those who humbly turn away from their sins and trust Him as their Savior? When we are faced with death, will we remember that He conquered death and reigns in heaven?

Let's praise God for revealing Himself in Jesus so that we might know Him. Let's ask God to work in our hearts, helping us to turn away from our sins and trust Jesus as our own Savior. Let's ask Him to help us remember who He is and to trust Him with everything we are faced with-- in life, and in death.

Draw a picture from the story



<b>SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU</b>	<b>BIBLE TRUTH HYMN</b>
<p><b>1. A Question about the Bible Truth, True or False:</b> When Jesus came to earth, he was born a baby, but wasn't God anymore. Answer: False. Jesus was fully man, but He was also fully God.</p> <p><b>2. Crack the Case Questions:</b> <b>a. Who thought they had life or death on his lips? Why was he wrong?</b> Answer: The proconsul thought he had the power to preserve life or bring death to someone. He was wrong because God was more powerful than him. He could do whatever He wanted to do. Philip would not die that day unless it was within His good will. And, because the proconsul didn't understand that while Philip's body might die that day, Jesus had given Philip eternal life...and that is real life!</p> <p><b>b. Who really had life or death on his lips?</b> Answer: Philip spoke the words of life to the proconsul, so he had the words of true life or death on his lips. But ultimately, Jesus was the one who had life or death on his lips. It is through Him only that we can be saved from the death we deserve and receive God's eternal life.</p> <p><b>3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse:</b> <b>Hebrews 1:1-3</b> "In the ___ God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets...but in these last days he has spoken to us by his ___....The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the ___ representation of his being..." Answers: past; Son; exact.</p>	<p><b>O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing</b> <i>PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 16</i></p> <p><b>Verse 1</b> O, for a thousand tongues to sing, My great Redeemer's praise, The glories of my God and King, The triumphs of His grace!</p> <p>Words: Charles Wesley Music: Carl G. Glaser</p> <p>"These verses remind us that Jesus is the great Redeemer who came to earth to show us what God is like and to save His people from their sins. When we see what God has done through Jesus, we want to sing of His glorious love and mercy and grace shown to undeserving sinners."</p>
<b>AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY</b>	<b>BIBLE VERSE SONG</b>
<p><i>A=Adoration, C=Confession, T=Thanksgiving, S=Supplication</i></p> <p><b>A</b> God, we praise You for revealing Yourself so completely through Your Son, Jesus.</p> <p><b>C</b> God, we confess that many times we forget what we don't live by what we know about You because we forget what You've taught us about Yourself through Jesus.</p> <p><b>T</b> God, we thank You for wanting to show us what You are like! Thank You for all we can better understand about You because of Jesus. Thank You for helping Your people bravely endure suffering for the honor of Your name, like You helped Philip.</p> <p><b>S</b> God, we ask that You would work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior, like Nicanora. God, make us brave and help us to keep on trusting in You, even when it is very hard, like Philip did.</p>	<p><b>The Son Is the Radiance</b> <i>PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 17</i></p> <p>The Son is the radiance, the radiance of God's glory, The Son is the radiance, the radiance of God's glory, And the exact representation of His being, And the exact representation of His being. The Son is the radiance, the radiance of God's glory, The Son is the radiance, the radiance of God's glory, Hebrews Chapter One, verse three.</p> <p>Words: Hebrews 1:1-3, NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012</p> <p>The Bible tells us that when we see what Jesus is like, we are seeing what God is like. There is nothing or no one else who can show us more about God than Jesus. That's because Jesus is God!</p>

## BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

*We're in... Unit 1: The God Who Reveals Himself*

**Unit 1 Big Question and Answer:**  
**How Can I Know What God Is Like?**  
***He Shows Me What He's Like!***

PFI NIV Songs 1, Tracks 3,4

**Unit 1 Bible Verse: Amos 4:13, NIV 1984**

"The LORD reveals His thoughts to man."

PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 5

## BIBLE TRUTH

***We're learning... Bible Truth 5:***  
**God Has Revealed Himself Most**  
**Completely through His Son, Jesus**

God sent His Son, Jesus, to leave His home in heaven to be our Savior. He was born as a baby here on earth. Jesus grew up and became a man. He was fully human, like us, but He was also, still fully God.

Jesus lived the perfect life that pleases God. He never did anything wrong. He taught about God and He did many amazing miracles. Most amazing of all, He offered up His perfect life as the full payment for the sins of God's people when He suffered and died on the cross. On the third day, He rose from the dead, showing that He had really beaten sin and death, then He rose back up to heaven where He lives now.

Jesus didn't live on earth long--only about thirty years. He taught about God and did miracles only about three of those years. But in that short, little bit of time, He showed us more about God than anything else in the whole world.

The Bible calls Jesus the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of Him. That means when we learn about Jesus and see what He is like, we are seeing what God is like: completely holy, powerful, loving and good. He hates sin, but He loves sinners who turn to Him for forgiveness and mercy! Thank You, God, for sending Jesus to show us what You're like!

## BIBLE VERSE

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

**Bible Truth 5 Bible Verse: Hebrews 1:1-3**

"In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets...but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son....The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being..."

## CASE STORY

**Our story is called:**

**The Case of the Not-Good-Enough Man.**

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

1. Who was the Not-Good-Enough Man? What was he trying to be good enough for? How did he try to make himself good enough?
2. Who did he come to know that was good enough? Why was this person good enough?

This story doesn't take place in Bible times. It takes place in the early 1500's in the country of Germany.

One summer day, a young man named Martin was riding from home back to school at the University of Erfurt. What a nice visit it had been! His proud parents loved to hear how well their smart son was doing in law school. Martin's dad especially enjoyed thinking of how rich and respected Martin would make the family one day.

Suddenly, a deadly thunderstorm crashed down around Martin. Crack! Boom! Bang! A bolt of lightning hit the ground right next to Martin, jolting him from his horse.

Martin realized how close he had been to dying. "If I had died, I would have had to appear before God's righteous throne? He is perfectly righteous and I am a sinner. Surely I would face His judgement! I must find away to please God and be saved. But how?" Martin wondered.

As the storm raged on, Martin cried out to God, "God, if You save me from this storm, I will become a monk and spend the rest of my life serving you in church!" Martin promised.

God had kept Martin safe through the storm; and Martin kept his promise to become a monk. (A man who belongs to the Catholic Church and makes a solemn promise to live a special way for God and the Catholic Church).

Martin knew a monk's life was hard. He wouldn't be allowed own anything. He must leave his family and must never marry. Martin's dad would be furious when he found out, but Martin kept his promise to God. He sold all of his things, said good bye to his friends, and went to one of the big monasteries (places where monks live together) in Erfurt.

"Bang, Bang, Bang!" Martin knocked on the door to the monastery. A monk with a long black robe came to the door and let Martin in. Martin spent the next three weeks to convince the monks that he should become a monk,

"Bang, Bang, Bang!" Martin knocked on the door to the monastery. A monk with a long black robe came to the door and let Martin in. Martin spent the next three weeks to convince the monks that he should become a monk, but at last he did. They gave him a small room with no heat and only boards for a bed, just like the other monks. Martin had to get up long before sunrise every morning and say prayers for hours. He went and confessed to older monks as many sins as he could, in hopes that God might forgive all of them. He was given very little food and had to beg on the streets for one of his meals each day. Yes, life as a monk was very hard!

Martin worked very hard at being a good monk, but still he had no peace with God. No matter how many sacrifices he made, or sins he confessed, or good works he did, Martin knew it never was enough to please God. "I know that God is the perfectly righteous and I am an unrighteous sinner. There will never be enough good works that I can do to please Him on my own," he despaired. Martin began to think God was unfair for punishing sinners who could never please Him with their good works. He even began to hate God!

But there was something about God that Martin didn't understand. God, Himself, had made the way for sinners to come to Him, as Martin was soon to learn.

"Martin Luther, you are a troubled man and a fine student, his teacher told him one day. "So I am taking you off of kitchen and sweeping duty that the other monks must take part in and I want you to use that time to memorize the whole Bible instead. It will help you solve your troubles and make you an even better student."

As Martin read his Bible, he was surprised at what he read. There were many things the monks were teaching that were wrong, such as saying that people could buy God's forgiveness with money.

"That's not true!" Martin told them. "The Bible doesn't say that!" he insisted.

But the other priests said, "The Pope and church leaders says it's true, so it must be," they told him. But Martin knew they were wrong and was very upset at how they were leading people astray.

After five years, Martin was sent to the monastery at Wittenberg to be a teacher. One day as he was preparing his lessons, he read the Bible passage that was to change his life. It was Romans 1:16-17: "I am not ashamed of the

gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes... For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith!"

Martin noticed a word in this passage he hadn't noticed before: "It says by faith—the free gift of God—the righteous shall live!" Martin exclaimed. "It's by the faith we are saved. God freely saves sinners who trust in Jesus' righteousness. Christ gave His righteousness as the perfect payment for our sins when He died on the cross. This is how sinful people please God! Through Christ alone! This is how I can be saved!"

God flooded Martin's heart with peace. "Yes, God is perfectly righteous. But oh, how loving and merciful He is, too! In Christ, He has provided us with the righteousness we cannot earn ourselves," he realized.

"Oh God, I love you! Jesus, I love you!" Martin exclaimed. "Thank You for forgiving my unrighteousness, my sins! I see now that it is through believing in Jesus' death for me that I can please You! His life given up on the cross paid for all of my sins, once and for all!"

Martin was so excited. He wanted to tell everyone. this good news. "Stop giving those priests money to pay for your sins!" Martin told the people. "Your money will never take away your sins. Turn from your sins! Put your faith in Jesus Christ. He's the one who can make you pleasing to God."

Many people were overjoyed to hear Martin's good news, but others were not—including the Pope and the king! They had his books burned and him arrested. They hoped to kill Martin, but an important man rescued him and hid him away in his castle for two years. God protected Luther from his enemies and gave him twenty-four more years to write and preach. Many thousands of people were saved. And, like Martin Luther, they had peace with God. He had forgiven their sins because of their faith in Jesus and His righteousness.

Finally at the age of sixty-two, Martin Luther died. As he died, he prayed one last prayer to God. "O my heavenly Father, God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God of all comfort, I thank You, that You have revealed to me Your dear Son, Jesus Christ, in whom I believe, whom I have preached and confessed, and whom I have loved and praised. I pray You, dear Lord Jesus Christ that my soul may

be [put in your care]. O heavenly Father, though I must leave this body and this life, I know for certain that I will be with You for eternity and that no one can tear me out of Your hands," he prayed.

Gone was the fear of God as the Righteous Judge who would not accept an unrighteous sinner like him. God had revealed Himself as not just the Righteous Judge, but as the loving, merciful God through Jesus Christ. By faith in Jesus that God gave him, Martin knew that He was pleased with him...and he left this world for the next in complete peace.

**Our Bible Truth is:**  
**God Reveals Himself Most Completely through His Son, Jesus**

**Our Bible Verse is: Hebrews 1:1-3**

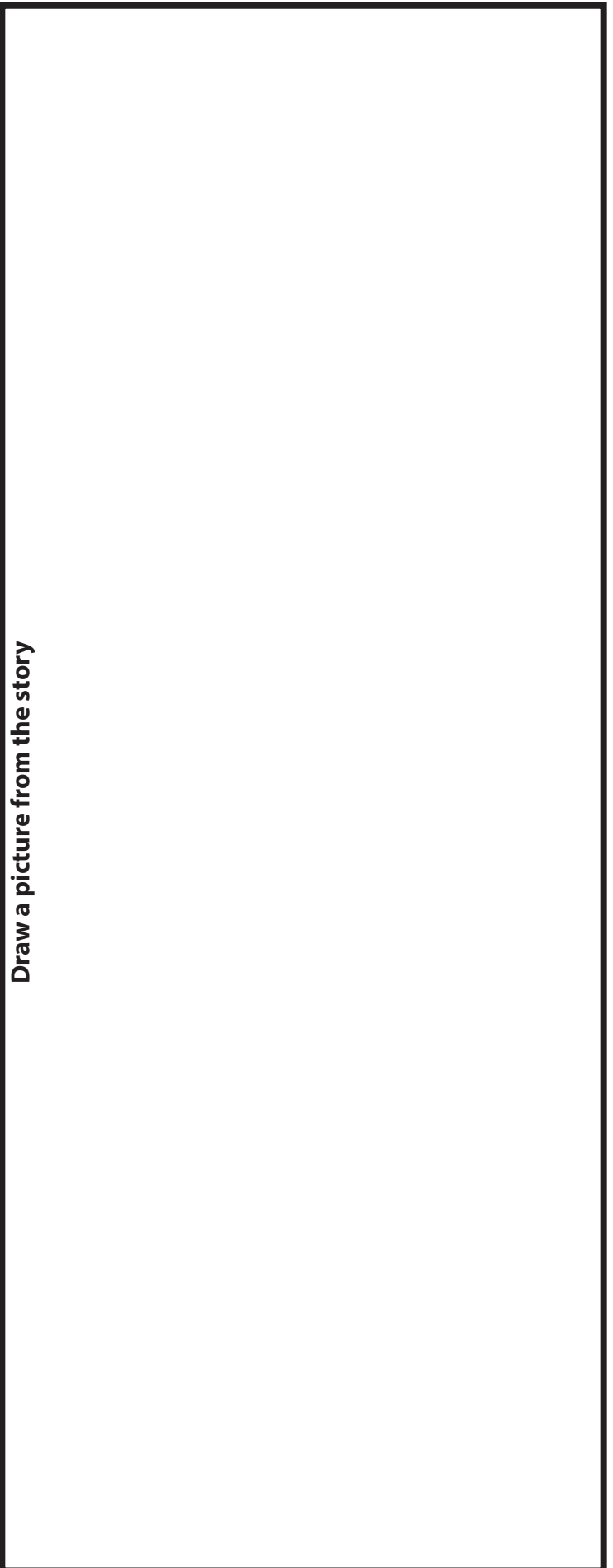
"In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets...but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son....The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being..."

God sent His Son, Jesus, to show us what He is like and to save His people. The Bible calls Jesus the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of Him. That means when we learn about Jesus and see what He is like, we are seeing what God is like: completely holy, powerful, loving and good.

It took Martin Luther ten years of studying and crying out to the Lord before he could see this truth, but it is different for us! We know about the love and mercy God shows to all who turn from their sins and turn to trust in Jesus as their own Savior. We know that all who do this are completely forgiven of their sins, now and forever. If we repent of our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior, He will do this for us, too.

Let's praise this God who though perfectly righteous, has shown us such love and mercy. And let's ask Him to give each of us the gift of faith to believe in Jesus so that we can be saved and know Him and the pleasure of His love and forgiveness, just like Martin Luther.

Draw a picture from the story





<p align="center"><b>SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>BIBLE TRUTH HYMN</b></p>
<p><b>1. A Question about the Bible Truth, True or False:</b>                      In Jesus' short life on earth, He showed us more about God than anything else in the whole world.                      Answer: True.</p> <p><b>2. Crack the Case Questions:</b>  <b>a. Who was the Not-Good-Enough Man? What was he trying to be good enough for? How did he try to make himself good enough?</b>                      Answer: Martin Luther. He tried to do lots of good works and keep all of God's laws so God would accept him and save him from his sins.</p> <p><b>b. Who did he come to know that was good enough? Why was this person good enough?</b>                      Answer: Jesus. Jesus was the perfect Son of God. He was perfectly pleasing to His Father. He gives His righteousness to us when we repent of our sins and believe in Him. Martin Luther learned that it was by faith in Jesus rather than his own good works that he could be accepted by God.</p> <p><b>3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse:</b>  <b>Hebrews 1:1-3</b>                      "In the past God ___ to our forefathers through the prophets...but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son....The ___ is the radiance of God's glory and the exact ___ of his being..."                      Answers: spoke; Son; representation.</p>	<p><b>O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing</b>  <i>PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 16</i></p> <p><b>Verse 1</b>                      O, for a thousand tongues to sing,                      My great Redeemer's praise,                      The glories of my God and King,                      The triumphs of His grace!</p> <p>Words: Charles Wesley Music: Carl G. Glaser</p> <p>"These verses remind us that Jesus is the great Redeemer who came to earth to show us what God is like and to save His people from their sins. When we see what God has done through Jesus, we want to sing of His glorious love and mercy and grace shown to undeserving sinners."</p>
<p align="center"><b>AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>BIBLE VERSE SONG</b></p>
<p><i>A=Adoration, C=Confession, T=Thanksgiving, S=Supplication</i></p> <p><b>A</b> God, we praise You for being the Provider of Your people's righteousness through Jesus.</p> <p><b>C</b> God, we confess that we are all sinners who can never do enough good works to please You. We need Jesus to be our Savior!</p> <p><b>T</b> God, we thank You for sending Jesus to pay for the sins of Your people! Thank You that no one is too sinful to find forgiveness in Jesus.</p> <p><b>S</b> God, we ask that You would work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Please help us to be more grateful for all You do for us through Jesus!</p>	<p><b>The Son Is the Radiance</b>  <i>PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 17</i></p> <p>The Son is the radiance, the radiance of God's glory,                      The Son is the radiance, the radiance of God's glory,                      And the exact representation of His being,                      And the exact representation of His being.                      The Son is the radiance, the radiance of God's glory,                      The Son is the radiance, the radiance of God's glory,                      Hebrews Chapter One, verse three.</p> <p>Words: Hebrews 1:1-3, NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012</p> <p>The Bible tells us that when we see what Jesus is like, we are seeing what God is like. There is nothing or no one else who can show us more about God than Jesus. That's because Jesus is God!</p>

## BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

*We're in... Unit 1: The God Who Reveals Himself*

**Unit 1 Big Question and Answer:**  
**How Can I Know What God Is Like?**

*He Shows Me What He's Like!*

PFI NIV Songs 1, Tracks 3,4

**Unit 1 Bible Verse: Amos 4:13, NIV 1984**

"The LORD reveals His thoughts to man."

PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 5

## BIBLE TRUTH

*We're learning... Bible Truth 5:*  
**God Has Revealed Himself Most Completely through His Son, Jesus**

God sent His Son, Jesus, to leave His home in heaven to be our Savior. He was born as a baby here on earth. Jesus grew up and became a man. He was fully human, like us, but He was also, still fully God.

Jesus lived the perfect life that pleases God. He never did anything wrong. He taught about God and He did many amazing miracles. Most amazing of all, He offered up His perfect life as the full payment for the sins of God's people when He suffered and died on the cross. On the third day, He rose from the dead, showing that He had really beaten sin and death, then He rose back up to heaven where He lives now.

Jesus didn't live on earth long--only about thirty years. He taught about God and did miracles only about three of those years. But in that short, little bit of time, He showed us more about God than anything else in the whole world.

The Bible calls Jesus the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of Him. That means when we learn about Jesus and see what He is like, we are seeing what God is like: completely holy, powerful, loving and good. He hates sin, but He loves sinners who turn to Him for forgiveness and mercy! Thank You, God, for sending Jesus to show us what You're like!

## BIBLE VERSE

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

**Bible Truth 5 Bible Verse: Hebrews 1:1-3**

"In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets...but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son....The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being..."

## CASE STORY

Daniel 9; Matthew 2:1-12

**Our story is:**

**The Case of the Great Revealing.**

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

1. What was revealed? Who revealed it?
2. What was so great about it?

This story begins in Babylon, in Old Testament times, about 600 years before Jesus lived on earth.

Babylon was an amazing city. It was surrounded by ten miles of walls over one hundred feet thick! Inside the walls were huge buildings and temples with tall, golden statues. That's because this city was the home of the king of the huge Babylonian empire. And, home to the finest temples to the Babylonian gods.

Inside those huge city walls, inside one of those beautiful buildings, the great Raj Maj--the chief adviser to the king--was doing something peculiar. He took off his fine, linen robes. He rubbed his body in ashes and put on a simple sackcloth tunic made of coarse, scratchy black goat's hair. Deeply troubled, he cried out to God. And not to any of the gods of the Babylonians, like you might think. But to the LORD. For this most important of all the king's advisers was not from Babylon at all. His name was Daniel and he was from Israel. He had been brought to Babylon to serve the king as a slave, but he loved Israel and was a believer in the one, true God.

"O LORD, Your people, the Israelites, have sinned against You and Your commands. You warned us, but we refused to obey You again and again. O LORD, You were right to punish us by letting the Babylonians destroy Jerusalem and Your Temple where we worshiped You. You were right to let them capture us and serve them as slaves here in Babylon for seventy years, as You warned would be our punishment. But LORD, You are merciful and forgiving. Hear my prayer and forgive us. Please don't wait seventy years! Restore us to our land and rebuild Your city and Your Temple!" Daniel pleaded.

As Daniel prayed, the angel Gabriel appeared before him and said: "Daniel, I have a message from the LORD for you. The LORD says: 'I have heard your prayers and I have sent Gabriel to answer them. The Israelites will have to stay in Babylon all seventy years, but after that they will be freed to go back to their country and re-build Jerusalem

and the Temple. Then, 483 years after they rebuild the Temple, I will send the Messiah, the Anointed One, to save them," He promised.

What an incredible message! It was sad that the Israelites would have to finish out their years as captives in Babylon before God would take them home. But, how wonderful it was to hear when the Messiah would come! Oh, how they looked forward to that day when God would reveal Himself more completely than He ever had before!

The Israelites were right to be excited. For while God had revealed Himself through His creations, and through the words of the prophets, and through the Bible, this Messiah would be the greatest revealing of all! Why? Because the Messiah was Jesus! He would be like no other man the world had ever known!

Gabriel's message to Daniel certainly wasn't the first time the LORD had told the Israelites about the coming Messiah. God had spoken to them many times about Him through the prophets. He had told them where this Messiah was to be from and what He would be like. Almost 150 years earlier the LORD had told them, through the prophet Micah: "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah... out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old". (Micah 5:2)

The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem; yet, He would not be like other men whose lives begin when they are born. No. His origins were from of old, long before He was born. This didn't sound like any regular man, this Messiah. Could it be that He was more than just a man?

Through the prophet Isaiah, the LORD gave them the answer: "Therefore the LORD Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel, [God with us]... For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 7:13; 9:6)

Did you hear that?! Yes, it was true. The Messiah would be God, Himself! Yet He would also be a child that would be born. Both man and God? How could this be? Only time would tell.

And time did tell! The years passed just as the LORD said they would. At the end of seventy years, the Babylonians freed the Israelites to go home. The Jews went back and built Jerusalem and the Temple. The 483 years went by;

and then at last, it was time for the revealing of the Messiah--Jesus!

Once again there was a stirring scene among the Magi living in the lands east of Israel. A spectacular new star had appeared in the sky. To them, that meant only one thing: the rise of a great, new king.

By ways and means that no one but God knows, the Magi decided that this star that rose in the east was the sign of the birth of a great king in the land of Jews, which lay to their west. Perhaps they had known the promise of the coming Messiah that Gabriel had told Daniel, the great Raj Maj, hundreds of years earlier. Or perhaps in His infinite wisdom and power, the LORD had given this star to the magi as part of His plan to make great His name throughout all the world. Only the LORD knows the real answer.

Either way, the Magi decided they would go find this new king and honor him. They packed rich, kingly presents--gold, frankincense and myrrh-- and followed the star to find him.

The Magi traveled many long miles over dry, desert lands; then into Israel, and straight to the king's palace in Jerusalem. Surely that would be where the great, new king would be found.

"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," the Magi asked throughout Jerusalem. Yet no one seemed to know of him. When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.

"What does this mean? Is there a king I don't know about? I am not even a Jew!" thought King Herod. The Romans gave me this land to rule when they conquered it. Is there someone else who has come to take the throne away from me? The Jews murmur about promises of God sending a great Messiah—or Christ—one day to smash the Romans. Could this be about him? I had better find out! This could be serious!"

Herod called together the chief priests and teachers of the law, asking them where the Messiah was to be born.

"In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: " '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.'" (Matthew 2:2-6)

So it was in Bethlehem--only five miles away from Jerusalem--that the Messiah would be found! The Magi

were thrilled. The great king they were looking for was only a short journey away.

How much more excited they would have been if they knew this King was God, Himself, come to reveal Himself more completely than He ever had before.

Before the Magi set off for Bethlehem, Herod called them back to his palace for a secret meeting. "This is wonderful news!" King Herod lied to the Magi. "To think! The Messiah has come! Please, 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," he urged them.

The Magi agreed went on their way. The star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On 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, incense and of myrrh.

It was true. God's Messiah had come, as He had promised long ago through Daniel, and the prophets, Isaiah and Micah. And these men who were not even Jews had been some of the first to come worship Him.

King Herod never heard again from the Magi. The LORD protected His Son, telling the Magi in a dream to not go back to him. They left Jesus and returned to their home country another way.

What did the Magi think as they went home? Did they understand that the Messiah was more than just a mighty king sent by God? Did they realize that He was God, Himself, come to reveal Himself to us more completely than He ever had through creation or the prophets' words or the Bible? What could they know by just looking at the little child, Jesus?

We don't know the answers to these questions. But we do know that when that little child grew up, He revealed what God was like to many people in everything He said and did. They saw God's wisdom in the way Jesus taught. They saw God's power, in the way Jesus controlled nature and healed sicknesses. They saw God's justice and mercy, in the way Jesus exposed the hidden sins of proud people, but welcomed humble sinners. And most of all, they saw how God's amazing love in Jesus' death on the cross for all those who would ever turn from their sins and trust in Him for forgiveness. Yes. Here was Immanuel, God with Us, come to reveal Himself as never before.

**Our Bible Truth is:**

**God Reveals Himself Most Completely through His Son, Jesus**

**Our Bible Verse is: Hebrews 1:1-3**

"In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets...but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son....The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being..."

And what about you and me? What will we do with this wonderful God who has revealed Himself most completely in His Son, Jesus? Will we act like we don't see and live for ourselves? Will we continue to live with our sins unforgiven and separated from wonderful fellowship with God, the most wonderful Person there is to know?

Or, will we see the way He is and turn to live our lives for Him? Will we turn from disobeying God and trust in Jesus as our own Savior for the forgiveness of our sins?

Let's praise God for showing us what He is like so completely in Jesus. Let's ask Him to help us turn from our sins and live our lives for Him. Let's ask Him to work in our hearts right now, giving us faith to trust in Jesus as our Savior!

**SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU**

**1. A Question about the Bible Truth, True or False:**  
 Jesus is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of Him because when we learn about Jesus we are seeing what God is like.  
 Answer: True. This is because Jesus is God!

**2. Crack the Case Questions:**  
**a. What was revealed? Who revealed it?**  
 Answer: God was sending His Son, Jesus into the world to save God’s people and show us more of what He’s like. The LORD revealed it to God’s people through Daniel, as well as many other prophets.

**b. What was so great about it?**  
 Answer: Before the time of Jesus, people could know God in their heart, could see His creations, could hear His words through the prophets and through the Bible; but now, with Jesus, God revealed what He is like more completely than ever before.

**3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse:**  
**Hebrews 1:1-3**  
 “In the past \_\_\_ spoke to our forefathers through the \_\_\_...but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son....The Son is the radiance of God’s \_\_\_ and the exact representation of his being...”  
 Answers: God; prophets; glory.

**BIBLE TRUTH HYMN**

**O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing**  
*PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 16*

**Verse 1**  
 O, for a thousand tongues to sing,  
 My great Redeemer’s praise,  
 The glories of my God and King,  
 The triumphs of His grace!

Words: Charles Wesley Music: Carl G. Glaser

This hymn reminds us that Jesus is the great Redeemer who came to earth to show us what God is like and to save His people from their sins. When we see what God has done through Jesus, we want to sing of His glorious love and mercy and grace shown to undeserving sinners.

**AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY**

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

**A** God, we praise You for being the Provider of Your people’s righteousness through Jesus.

**C** God, we confess that we are all sinners who can never do enough good works to please You. We need Jesus to be our Savior!

**T** God, we thank You for sending Jesus to pay for the sins of Your people! Thank You that no one is too sinful to find forgiveness in Jesus.

**S** God, we ask that You would work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Please help us to be more grateful for all You do for us through Jesus!

**BIBLE VERSE SONG**

**The Son Is the Radiance**  
*PFI NIV Songs 1, Track 17*

The Son is the radiance, the radiance of God’s glory,  
 The Son is the radiance, the radiance of God’s glory,  
 And the exact representation of His being,  
 And the exact representation of His being.  
 The Son is the radiance, the radiance of God’s glory,  
 The Son is the radiance, the radiance of God’s glory,  
 Hebrews Chapter One, verse three.

Words: Hebrews 1:1-3, NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012

The Bible tells us that when we see what Jesus is like, we are seeing what God is like. There is nothing or no one else who can show us more about God than Jesus. That’s because Jesus is God!