

Unit 13: The God Who Sustains

Unit Big Question (and Answer): Why Do God's People Keep Believing in Him? It Is God's Sustaining Grace!

Unit Bible Verse: "Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall."

--Psalm 55:22-101

Bible Truth 4 Concept: It Is God's Sustaining Grace... The Holy Spirit Works Inside of God's People!

God created all people with a special heart, deep inside of them. It's different from the heart in your body that pumps blood and you feel beating. This special heart is invisible, but it's the part of you that lives forever and can know God. In the Bible, this special heart is also called our spirit.

The sad news is that the beautiful, special heart that God gave us is broken with sin. Yes, we have all chosen to turn away from God and disobey Him. We deserve His punishment, not His friendship. But there's good news, too! God's Holy Spirit can work in our heart and change it. He does this when we listen to God's Word and when we pray. He can help us see our sins, turn away from them, and trust in Jesus as our Savior. This is how we become God's people. And when we do, He makes our heart clean and new, able to know God and want to love and serve Him.

And that's just the beginning of what the Holy Spirit does inside us when we become God's people. He goes on working in our hearts, making the most amazing changes. He helps us know God and want to live for Him more and more. He gives us wisdom to understand God's Word and boldness to tell others about Him. He helps us turn away from anger, jealousy, hatred, and pride. He grows love, peace, patience, kindness, joy, goodness, and self-control in their place. What a wonderful gift the Holy Spirit is! God's people would never be able to keep on loving God and living for Him, if the Holy Spirit didn't live inside them. The Holy Spirit can come and live in our hearts, too, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

Bible Truth 4 Bible Verse: 2 Corinthians 1:21-22

"Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come."

Learn a Little "God makes us stand firm in Christ. He put his Spirit in our hearts."

Meaning

God's people keep on believing in God because God, Himself, establishes them. That means He makes sure they keep on standing firm in their trust in Him. Jesus is the Christ. He's the special one sent by God to save sinners and make them God's people forever. It's because of Jesus that God's people stand firm in their faith. Jesus bought them with His blood. He paid for them and owns them. They will always stand firm in the faith because no one can ever take them away from Him. They will be God's dearly-loved people forever. And as His people, forgiven through Jesus, God gives them another, most wonderful gift: He puts His Holy Spirit in their hearts.

The Holy Spirit reminds them that they are God's dearly loved people. He helps them remember the truths of God's Word and believe them. He helps them be strong and brave in Jesus. He reminds them that they belong to God and one day will go to live with Him forever.

God's people never have to go through anything alone. God's Holy Spirit is always with them, living inside of them. And He will go on living inside them their whole lives. We can become God's people, too, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

Bible Truth 4 ACTS Prayer

- A** Holy Spirit, we praise You for the way You can powerfully work in our hearts, changing us from the inside out.
- C** God, we confess that many times we are proud, jealous, envious, and hateful. We need Jesus to save us. We need Your Holy Spirit to replace with humility and love. We need a Savior!
- T** Thank You, Holy Spirit, for being stronger than any of our sins. Thank You for being able to work powerfully in our hearts and truly change us.
- S** Holy Spirit, work in our hearts, help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Fill our heart with Your good ways. Make us joyful, peaceful, kind, patient, self-controlled, joyful, loving, and good. Give us wisdom and make us bold and strong to do God's will. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Bible Truth 4 Story**The Case of the Foolish Forgetters**

Galatians

Songs Used in Bible Truth 4

Big Q & A 13 Song

Big Question 13 Song: Why Do God's People Keep Believing in Him?

Big Question 13 Bible Verse Song: Cast Your Cares on the LORD Psalm 55:22, NIV 1984

Big Question 13 Extra Bible Verse Song: The LORD Your God Is with You Zephaniah 3:17, NIV 1984

Big Question 13 Hymn: Jesus Paid It All, v.1

Big Question 13 Praise Song: I Will Sing of the Mercies

Bible Truth 4 Bible Verse: Now It Is God 2 Corinthians 1:21-22, NIV 1984

Bible Truth 4 Extra Bible Verse: The Fruit of the Spirit Galatians 5:22,25, NIV 1984

Bible Truth 4 Extra Bible Verse: I Will Give You a New Heart Ezekiel 36:26, NIV 1984

listen to or download songs for free at <https://praisefactory.org>: Deep Down Detectives Music page

The Case of the Foolish Forgetters*Galatians***Story-telling Tips**

Ahead of time:

1. Read the Bible verses and story. Pray!
2. Choose story action cues and prepare storyboard figures/Story Scenes, if using. (In Visual Aids book)
3. Practice telling story with the storyboard figures/Story Scenes, timing your presentation. Shorten, if necessary.

During your presentation:

1. Maintain as much eye contact as possible as you tell the story.
2. Put up storyboard figures/add story action cues/hold up Story Scenes as you tell the story. Allow the children to help you put them on the board, if desired.
3. Include the children in your story with a few questions about what they think will happen or words/concepts that might be new to them.
4. Watch the kids for signs that their attention span has been reached. Shorten, if necessary.

INTRODUCTION/ LISTENING ASSIGNMENTS

“Our story is called: The Case of the Foolish Forgetters. Here is your listening assignment.” Read from Detective Dan’s Listening Assignment signs, but questions are summarized below:

Detective Dan’s Lesson #1 Listening Assignment:

I need to know:

Foolish means doing something without thinking it through well... and something bad happens.

1. Who was foolish? What were they doing without thinking it through well?
2. What did they forget?

Detective Dan’s Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:

Our Bible Verse is 2 Corinthians 1:21-22:

“Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.”

I need to know:

1. Who did the Galatians forget to depend on to help them live for God?
2. Who did they need to have live in their hearts and help them live for God?

Detective Dan’s Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:I found six clues, but two of them are **NOT** in the story.

They are: God’s laws, a beach ball, a Jew, a Gentile, a hot dog, and the Holy Spirit in a heart.

Hold each of them up for the children to see as you identify them.

I need to know:

1. Which four belong in the story and which two don’t?
2. What did the Galatian believers need to confess to God? Who did they need to turn back to depending upon?

Read the assignment questions, THEN SAY,

“Ok, Deep Down Detectives! Put on your best listening ears and see if you can hear the answers to Detective Dan’s questions. When I finish telling the story, we will see if we can answer all the questions.”

Read the Bible Truth story, answer questions, present the gospel and lead in prayer.

Answers to questions; the gospel; and, ACTS prayer are included with the story text.

The Case of the Foolish Forgetters*Galatians*

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics)

“Good news! Come hear my good news!” Paul announced, as Silas and he travelled through the land of Galatia. They went up tall mountains and down low valleys; through thick forests and alongside winding rivers. And everywhere they went, Paul told the people the good news of salvation through faith in God’s Son. Can you remember the name of God’s Son?

Can you tell me?

It’s Jesus! Yes, everywhere Paul went, he told people how they could become God’s people through Him.

Some of the people Paul talked to were Jews. They had grown up knowing about the LORD. They knew God’s Word and had been taught His laws. Each week, they gathered together to praise God and learn more about Him. The Jews tried to keep all of God’s laws, but couldn’t. Why? Because they had sin in their hearts, just like we do. They were law-breakers, not perfect law-keepers. Oh, how could they ever please God if they couldn’t keep His laws?

Do you know how?

Paul opened the Bible, God’s Word, and told them how.

“I’ve got good news for you! You can’t keep God’s laws perfectly, but Jesus could!” Paul said. “Jesus is God’s Son, the Messiah, sent to save us from our sins, just as God promised. Jesus obeyed God’s laws perfectly. He offered up His life as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of God’s people when He suffered and died on the cross. On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead, proving He had really fulfilled all of God’s laws and beaten sin and death for God’s people,” Paul told them. “Turn away from trying to please God on your own. Repent of your sins and trust in Jesus as your Savior. This is how you can be God’s people. Stop trying to deserve to be God’s people with your own law-keeping! No one is good enough to do that,” Paul urged them.

Hmmm.... This was very, VERY different from anything these Jews had heard before. Could Jesus really be the Messiah? Could He really be the one God promised to save them from their sins? Had He really fulfilled all of God’s laws in their place? This was a lot to think about. Would they believe this good news Paul preached this day?

What do you think?

The Holy Spirit worked in the hearts of many Jews that day. He helped them turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior. He filled their hearts with joy and gave them power to live a new life for God. How happy they were that Jesus had saved them! How much better it was to have the Holy Spirit working inside them, helping them know God and live for Him! How glad they were to be free from trying to please God just by keeping His laws and never being able to do it! Yay!

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics)

But Paul's good news wasn't just for the Jews in Galatia. It was for the Gentiles who lived there, too. The Gentiles who didn't know God's Word or His laws. they had grown up worshipping fake gods, like Hermes and Zeus. They gave their worship gifts to these fake gods and honored them with wild, worship parties and other bad things. How far from the LORD were these Gentiles! Oh, how would they ever please Him, the one, true God, if they kept worshipping these fake gods and doing these bad things?

Do you know how?

It was through Jesus!

So, Paul told the good news of Jesus to all the Gentiles who would listen, "Your gods are fake gods. I've come to tell you about the LORD, one, true God!" Paul told them. "HE is the One who created this whole world. He created you. He's the One who gives you food to eat and all the other things that you enjoy," Paul explained. "And now, He's sent His Son, Jesus, to save you from your sins and give you eternal life. Come, know the living God! Turn away from your fake gods and your sins! Put your trust in Jesus and be saved!" Paul exclaimed.

Hmmm.... This was very, VERY different from anything these Gentiles had heard before. Could the LORD be the one, true God? Could Jesus really be His Son, sent to save them? Could they really be forgiven their sins and have eternal life with God? This was a lot to think about. Would they believe this good news Paul preached this day?

What do you think?

Yes, they would! The Holy Spirit worked in the hearts of many Gentiles that day. He helped them turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior. He filled their hearts with joy and gave them power to live a new life for God, just He had in the Jewish believers. How happy these Gentiles were that Jesus had saved them! How much better it was to have the Holy Spirit working inside them, helping them know God and live for Him! How glad they were to be free from worshipping fake gods and trying to find happiness in their old, hopeless way of living. Yay!

These new believers began to gather together to hear God's Word and encourage each other in the wonderful, good news they had come to believe. Once they had been Jews and Gentiles. Now, they were believers in Jesus, brothers and sisters together in God's family. Soon there were little churches: in Lystra, Derbe, Iconium and other cities-- all over Galatia. How Paul happy was!

Up mountain, down valley. Through forests, along winding rivers, went Paul with Silas again. They were leaving Galatia to tell other people, in other places, the good news of Jesus. But even though Paul left the land of Galatia far behind, he never forgot the little churches of believers gathering together there. He prayed for them and longed to hear news about them. Oh, how he hoped they were doing well and growing in the Lord!

One day, the news Paul was waiting for came. Would it be good news or bad news?

What do you think?

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics)

I'm sorry to say that it was BAD news! Things had started out well in the little churches of Galatia, but they had not stayed that way. Bad teachers had come in. "Paul has it wrong," they told the believers. "Gentiles have to trust in Jesus AND live by the Jews' old laws, if they are to be God's people," they taught. The believers in the little churches were so confused. Some started believing these bad teachers and began to leave Paul and the good news of Jesus behind! Oh, no!

Paul was worried and angry when he heard what was going on. Would everyone in Galatia forget the good news of Jesus? He wanted to protect the little churches from these bad teachers! But what could he do?

Can you guess?

Something must be done, and Paul wasted no time in doing it. He sat down and wrote a letter to remind them of the truths he had taught them. Paul gave the letter to a messenger, and said, "Quick, take this letter to the churches in Galatia!"

Then, up mountains, down valleys. Through forests, along winding rivers, the messenger went with Paul's letter to the Galatians.

"You foolish Galatians! Don't listen to those bad teachers!" Paul told them. "Don't go back to your old way of living! It didn't make you happy. It didn't make you right with God, or help you live for Him. No, the fruit of your old life was unhappiness and all kinds of sin!" Paul exclaimed.

"Only faith in Jesus can make you right with God. And, only the Holy Spirit living in your heart can help you know God and live for Him," Paul reminded them.

"Go back to the real gospel! Keep trusting in Jesus," Paul urged the believers. "And keep in step with the Holy Spirit whom God has put in your hearts! He's the One who changes you from the inside," Paul explained. "The fruit of the Holy Spirit is so different from the fruit of your old way of living. His fruit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, and self-control. There will never be a law against the good things that the Holy Spirit gives us! He helps us to keep on living for God."

Paul

Would the little churches forget the gospel and fall apart, or would God sustain them? Would the Holy Spirit use Paul's words to help these believers?

What do you think?

Paul learned the answer a few years later he travelled with Timothy and Silas back up the mountains, down the valleys, through the forests, and along the winding rivers to Galatia once more. He rejoiced to find believers gathering together still. He preached God's Word to them, and the Holy Spirit strengthened their hearts! God had been faithful to sustain His people and He always will be!

Cracking the Case: (story wrap-up for Listening Assignments)

It's time to see how we did with our Listening Assignment.

Detective Dan's Lesson 1 Listening Assignment:**I need to know:**

Foolish means doing something without thinking it through well... and something bad happens.

1. Who was foolish? What were they doing without thinking it through well? The new believers in the church in Galatia. They were obeying new, bad teachers who weren't teaching them the good news of Jesus.

2. What did they forget? They forgot that only by trusting in Jesus could they please God. They forgot that only by the Holy Spirit living in their hearts did they love God and live for Him.

For You and Me:

Like the people of Galatia, we need God's help if we are to live for Him. We can never do this on our own. But the good news is that we don't have to! God promises to forgive all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior. He promises to give the Holy Spirit to them. He will live in their hearts and help them live for God. Ask God to help you do this! He loves to answer this prayer!

Detective Dan's Lesson 2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is 2 Corinthians 1:21-22:**

"Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come."

I need to find out:

1. Who did the Galatians forget to depend on to help them live for God? They forgot to depend on God and the good gifts of salvation and life that He gives them through Jesus.

2. Who did they need to have live in their hearts and help them live for God? The Holy Spirit.

For You and Me:

Like the people of Galatia, we need God's help if we are to live for Him. We can never do this on our own. But the good news is that we don't have to! God promises to forgive all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior. He promises to give the Holy Spirit to them. He will live in their hearts and help them live for God. Ask God to help you do this! He loves to answer this prayer!

Detective Dan's Lesson 3 Listening Assignment:

Our six clues were: God's laws, a beach ball, a Jew, a Gentile, a hot dog, and the Holy Spirit in a heart.

1. Which four belong in our story?

God's laws, the Jew, the Gentile, and the Holy Spirit in a heart belong. The beach ball and the hot dog do not.

2. What did the Galatian believers need to confess to God? Who did they need to turn back to depending upon?

That they had turned away from trusting in Jesus to make them right with God, and in the Holy Spirit to help them love God and live for Him. Instead, they were depending on themselves and trying to obey God's laws. They needed to turn back to depending upon Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit in their hearts.

For You and Me:

Like the believers in Galatia, we, too, need to put our trust in Jesus. He alone can save us. And His Holy Spirit living in our hearts is the only One who can help us truly live for God. We can ask God to help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. We can ask Him to put His Holy Spirit in our hearts and help us live for God.

The Gospel (story wrap-up if NOT using Listening Assignments)**Our Bible Truth is:**

Why Do God's People Keep Believing in Him?

It Is God's Sustaining Grace!

The Holy Spirit Works Inside of God's People!

Both Jews and Gentiles needed Jesus to be their Savior. They were all sinners who deserved God's punishment we can never please Him by their own goodness. Both Jews and Gentiles needed the Holy Spirit to live in their hearts. They needed Jesus to die on the cross for their sins. They needed Him to rise from the dead on the third day in victory over sin and death for them. And, they both needed Jesus to send the Holy Spirit to work in their hearts and help them love God and live for Him. This was the only way that they could be God's people and live as God's people. And, it's the only way we can be God's people too: by turning away from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our Savior. Ask God to help you do this. He loves to answer this prayer!

Close in prayer.

Closing ACTS Prayer

- A** Holy Spirit, we praise You for the way You can powerfully work in our hearts, changing us from the inside out.
- C** God, we confess that many times we are proud, jealous, envious, and hateful. We need Jesus to save us. We need Your Holy Spirit to replace with humility and love. We need a Savior!
- T** Thank You, Holy Spirit, for being stronger than any of our sins. Thank You for being able to work powerfully in our hearts and truly change us.
- S** Holy Spirit, work in our hearts, help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Fill our heart with Your good ways. Make us joyful, peaceful, kind, patience, self-controlled, joyful, loving, and good. Give us wisdom and make us bold and strong to do God's will.
In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Go to Lesson Plan, p.9 for the script to the rest of the lesson.