

BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

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

Unit 10 Big Question and Answer:

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

He Changes Their Hearts to Be Like Jesus!

PFI ESV Songs 10, Tracks 3,4

Unit 10 Bible Verse: Ezekiel 36:26, ESV

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

BIBLE TRUTH

We're learning... Bible Truth 1:

The Holy Spirit Lives in God's People

God is one God, but three persons: God the Father, Jesus, the Son of God, and God, the Holy Spirit. Together they have always existed, delighting in wonderful fellowship together and working out the perfect plans of God. This is a wonderful truth, even though it is very hard to understand.

After Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead, He spent time with His disciples and taught them many things. He told them He would be going back to reign in heaven, but He promised His disciples that He would not leave God's people all alone. He would send the Holy Spirit to live in their hearts and make them new. The Holy Spirit would help them know God and His Word. He would comfort them. He would change their hearts so that they would love and serve God more and more.

God sent His Holy Spirit to live inside of those first believers, as Jesus said He would. He comforted and helped them to live as God wanted them to live.

And God continues to give His Holy Spirit to His people--all those who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior. He gives them each a new heart, filled with His Holy Spirit. He comforts them and helps them live for God, too. God can do this in our hearts, too!

BIBLE VERSE

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

Bible Truth 1 Bible Verse: 1 Corinthians 6:19, ESV

"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God?"

CASE STORY

Exodus 19:1-7; Ezekiel 36:24-37:14; Acts 2

Our story is: The Case of the Big Thaw .

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

1. What was hard and cold? How did this show?
2. Who could bring about the big thaw? Why could He do it?

This story takes place in Old Testament times, about 1500 years before Jesus lived on earth.

Three month earlier, the people of Israel had been slaves, living under the hard laws the Pharaoh, the powerful king of Egypt. Now, at the bottom of Mount Sinai, the LORD had gathered the Israelites to give them His good laws. Moses told them how the LORD would bless them if they kept His laws: "This is what the LORD your God says to you: You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now if you obey me fully and keep the laws of my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession."

"We will do everything the LORD has said," the people all responded in one voice. After all they had seen this God do for them, what could be better than following Him?!! In their hearts they knew this. No one had ever seen a god do what the LORD had done for them.

But it did not take long before the Israelites were breaking God's laws and their promise to Him. "Do not make any idols. Do not worship any god, but Me" were God's laws they promised to keep. And at first they did bring their offerings and sacrifices of wheat grain and sheep to Him....but then they turned to make a golden calf idol. They started worshipping the terrible, pretend gods of the people who lived around them: Baal, Ashtoreth, Molech and many others. They worshiped the sun, the moon and the stars, too. What hard hearts the Israelites had! How quickly they forgot the LORD and His good ways! Could anything change their hard hearts? We will see.

The LORD loved His hard-hearted people and so He disciplined them that they might turn their hard hearts away from those evil, pretend gods and return to Him. He sent enemy soldiers to come and attack Israel. Each time, the Israelites were conquered, their hearts would change towards the LORD. They would cry out to Him and He would rescue them and drive the enemy soldiers out of

Israel. Then the Israelites would turn back and praise the Lord and worship Him...for awhile.

But did this really fix their hard hearts? Sadly, no, it did not. All too soon, they would forget the LORD and His laws again and turn back to worshiping the idols. Over and over, this happened again and again.

Could anything thaw Israel's hard hearts? It didn't seem so. Finally, after about 1000 years, the LORD told His people, "You honor Me with your lips, but your hearts are far from me. Turn from your sinful ways and turn back to me and I will forgive you. If you do not, then I will send some really, really big armies to wipe out most of you and your cities. The rest of you, will be carried far away from your home and you will be their slaves for 70 years."

This was serious! To be in a terrible war, to have your home destroyed and be dragged off to be slaves in a faraway land! Could this warning be enough to change Israel's hard hearts? Would they turn back to the LORD and love and obey Him now? Sadly, no. It was not enough. The people did not change.

So, the LORD did just what He said He would. He sent two really, really big and fierce armies: the Assyrians and the Babylonians. And they did just what the LORD said they would do: they wiped out most of the Israelites and destroyed their homes and cities. The Babylonians snatched all the beautiful things of gold and silver from the glorious Temple of the LORD in Jerusalem and then smashed the Temple to pieces. They put rings in the lips and noses of the people and led them away as slaves across the hot, dry desert back to Babylon.

At last the people's hearts were broken. How sad the people were in Babylon! They wept and mourned. They could see how hard-hearted they had been. They knew the LORD was right to have punished them. They wanted their hearts to know and love God. But how? Could anything change their hard hearts? They cried out to Him.

But would the LORD be merciful to them after all they had done? Yes, He would! How great is the mercy of the LORD for His people! He sent His special messenger, the prophet Ezekiel, to give them a message of comfort and hope.

Ezekiel told them, "The LORD gave me a special dream to tell you. In this dream, He set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of the dry bones of dead men who had been in

a great battle."

The LORD said to me, "Ezekiel, can these bones become alive again?"

"O Sovereign LORD, who rules over all, you alone know."

"Speak to the bones and say to them: "Dry bones, hear the word of the LORD!" This is what the Sovereign LORD says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life. I will attach tendons to you and make skin come upon you and make muscles come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the LORD."

So Ezekiel spoke to the bones as the LORD told him and as he was speaking, these was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone. Ezekiel looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them, but there was no breath in the body.

"Speak to the breath, Ezekiel, and say to it, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe into these dead, that they will live.' So Ezekiel spoke as the LORD commanded him, and breath entered the bones; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army.

Then the LORD said: "Ezekiel, these bones are like my people. They feel lifeless and hopeless like these bones. They think nothing will ever free them from the Babylonians, but that is not true. I see their sadness and I care. I see they are sorry for how they rebelled against me. I will rescue them from Babylon and take them back to their homeland."

"Their hearts are hard as stone, like these dry, dead bones. You may think nothing can change your hearts of stone that keep disobeying God, but that is not true. I will put my spirit inside their hearts. Then they will no longer have hearts that are hard and dead and rebellious. One day, I will send my Spirit to live inside them. He will change their hearts and make them love me and want to obey me more and more each day."

Did the LORD keep His promises to the Israelites? Yes, He did! After seventy years of slavery, the Israelites were freed to return to their homeland, just as the LORD had promised they would.

And what about the promise to put His Spirit in their hard hearts and change them, did He keep that promise, too? Yes, He did. About 630 years later, God sent His Son Jesus to come to earth. as their Savior. He lived a perfect

life and offered it up as the perfect payment for the sins of His people. Jesus died on the cross and on the third day, He rose from the dead in victory. He paid for their sins so that by faith in Him, they could receive the gift of salvation! And with this gift of salvation, their hearts could be made clean. God's Holy Spirit would work in their cold hearts and thaw them. He would fill them with faith and a growing love for God and His good ways.

And so it began, on that wonderful day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came down with the sound like a roaring wind, and what looked flames of fire and came to dwell in the hearts of Jesus' disciples as they waited and prayed. By the end of just that first day, 3000 more people had come to believe in Jesus and have the Holy Spirit come to live inside their hearts. What could change the hard hearts of the Israelites? The Holy Spirit living inside of them could, just as God had promised.

Our Bible Truth is:

The Holy Spirit Lives in God's People

Our Bible Verse is: 1 Corinthians 6:19

"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God?"

What about us? We have hard hearts that choose to disobey God. Could anything change our hard hearts? Yes, the Holy Spirit can change our hearts, too. To all who turn from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior, the Holy Spirit will be given to them to live in their hearts and help them to love and live for God more each day. That can be you and me, too!

Let's praise God for keeping His promise and sending the Holy Spirit to live inside His people. Let's ask Him to change our sinful hearts and ask Him to send the Holy Spirit to work deep inside us so that we will love and obey Him more and more each day.

Draw a picture from the story

SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU

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

The Holy Spirit lives inside God's people, comforting them and helping them to live for God. God can do this in our hearts, too.

Answer: True. When we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior!

2. Crack the Case Questions

a. What was hard and cold? How did this show?

Answer: The hearts of God's people to God and His good laws. It showed in how they broke His laws and turned away from His to worship other gods.

b. Who could bring about the big thaw? Why could He do it?

Answer: Only God Himself could bring the big thaw to their hearts. He did it by sending Jesus to pay for their sins so that by faith they could be saved and the Holy Spirit could live in their hearts.

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

1 Corinthians 6:19

"Do you not know that your ___ is a temple of the Holy Spirit ___ you, whom ___ have from God?"

Answers: body; within; you.

BIBLE TRUTH HYMN

Breathe on Me, Breath of God

PFI ESV Songs 10, Tracks 9,10

Verse 1

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what Thou dost love,
And do what Thou wouldst do.

Verse 2

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Until my heart is pure,
Until with Thee I will Thy will,
To do and to endure.

Words: Edwin Hatch Music: Robert Jackson

We are all sinners. We were made to love and obey God, but we have all turned away from that most wonderful of lives. Only God can change us and He can, by His Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is nicknamed the "Breath of God." Our breath fills our body with the air that it needs to live. The Holy Spirit fills God's people with Himself so that they can know and love God and have His eternal life. God will send His Holy Spirit to work this way in us when we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. This song is a prayer asking Him to do this.

AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY

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

A God, we praise You for always keeping Your promises to Your people. We praise You for being so patient and forgiving with Your sinful people.

C God, we confess that just like the Israelites we have hard hearts that choose not to love You or live by Your good ways. We need a Savior!

T God, we thank You for giving Your people the Holy Spirit to live in their hearts and truly change them.

S God, work in our hearts! Help us to turn away from our sins and trust Jesus as our own Savior. Send the Holy Spirit to live in our hearts, that we might know Your close fellowship in our own hearts.

BIBLE VERSE SONG

A Temple of the Holy Spirit

PFI ESV Songs 10, Track 11

Do you not know? Do you not know?
Do you not know, that your body is a temple?
Do you not know? Do you not know?
Do you not know, that your body is a temple?
A temple of the Holy Spirit within you,
A temple of the Holy Spirit within you,
Whom you have from God,
Whom you have from God.
First Corinthians Chapter Six, verse nineteen.

Words: 1 Corinthians 6:19, ESV Music: Constance Dever ©2015

God created every person with a body and a special heart, made to know and love God. When we become God's people, God fills that heart with His Holy Spirit. That makes their bodies like a temple--a special place of God's presence-- inside their bodies. What an amazing gift from God that we all can have!