

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 2:

The Holy Spirit Gives God's People Courage

God gives His people many good things to enjoy, but He also calls them to do difficult things. God does not expect His people to do these things on their own. He gives them His Holy Spirit, to live inside of them and help them do everything He calls them to do.

God's Holy Spirit helps God's people do things they would never have the courage to do on their own. He gives them the courage to tell others the good news of salvation. He gives them the courage to obey Him, even when they are tempted not to. He gives them courage to keep trusting in God and to joyfully endure any hard things God may have them go through. He even gives them courage to boldly face their enemies who want to hurt or kill them.

Not only does God's Holy Spirit give them the courage to do whatever God calls them to, but He also reminds them of God's promises to use everything that happens to them for their good and God's glory. And, He reminds them that one day God will bring them home to live with Him in heaven, where there will be only joy and happiness in God's presence forever.

God's Holy Spirit can give us courage to live for God, too, when we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

BIBLE VERSE

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

Bible Truth 2 Bible Verse: Acts 4:29,31, ESV

"And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness...And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness."

CASE STORY

Matthew 16:13-20; Acts 2-4

Our story is called:

The Case of the Rock Man.

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

1. Who was the Rock Man? Who gave him this nickname? What did it mean?
2. How did Rock Man not live up to his nickname? Who changed him to fit his nickname?

This story takes place in New Testament times, when Jesus lived on earth.

Jesus and his disciples had been traveling north for a few days. Behind them lay the hills of Galilee. Now they climbed up into the mountains to Caesarea Philippi. How beautiful it was, with its waterfalls and pools of clear, cool water, straight from the melted snow of Mt. Hermon, the tallest mountains near Israel.

For years, people had come to Caesarea Philippi to honor idols. They left their worship offerings to them by the springs of water, nicknamed the Gates of Hell. Now Jesus brought His disciples to this same water to reveal Himself as the Son of God.

"Who do you same that I am?" Jesus asked them.

Peter—called Simon back then-- spoke up right away. "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God," Peter blurted out.

Jesus was pleased. The Holy Spirit had revealed this to Peter. Jesus turned to Peter and said, "Your name is no longer Simon. I call you 'Peter'" the Rock. And on this Rock I will build my church and the gates of Hell will not overcome it." (Matthew 16:13-20)

Peter was pleased. Jesus said he had faith like a big, strong rock! He would build His Church on faith like Peter's and chose this place, called the Gates of Hell, to tell them that nothing would ever defeat His Church.

But time passed. Jesus' enemies, the Jewish leaders, grew stronger. They made plans to arrest and kill Him. One night, down in Jerusalem, they sent soldiers to the Garden of Gethsemane and captured Him.

Peter the Rock crumbled into Peter the Pebble, a man of little faith and even less courage. Three times that night, Peter was accused him of being with Jesus and all three times he denied Jesus. He was so afraid of being arrested and maybe killed!

And where was Peter the Rock after Jesus died on the

cross? A rock would have helped Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea and the women take Jesus' body and prepare it for burial. But Peter the Pebble hid with the other disciples, in fear of the Jewish leaders.

Peter the Pebble was ashamed. He loved Jesus, but he had chosen to deny His dear Master. Could Peter the Pebble ever become Peter the Rock, who bravely trusted God? It would take a miracle!

On Pentecost day, that miracle, that act of God, happened. With a great roar, the Holy Spirit came down to live inside the hearts of Peter and Jesus' other followers. He worked in Peter's heart, giving him courage to live for Jesus. He was no longer Peter the Pebble. By the Holy Spirit, he was Peter the Rock.

Immediately, Peter went out to speak to the crowd of thousands of people who had gathered. He told them how Jesus, the Son of God, had died as the perfect sacrifice for sinful people. All who confessed their sins and trusted in Jesus as their Savior would receive forgiveness and new life through Him. Thousands received Peter's message and were saved.

And that was just the beginning of what God did through Peter the Rock! These thousands of new believers met together in the temple courts to worship and praise God. And who led them? None other than Peter the Rock and the other disciples. The Holy Spirit had changed them. He had given them courage to STOP fearing the Jewish leaders and START trusting God. Every day, new people were saved as they heard the gospel and saw the disciples' changed lives. The Jewish leaders noticed the disciples' changed lives, too. They watched as thousands of Christians gathered in the Temple courts to. They listened to praise Jesus, the Son of God... and they did NOT like it!

"This problem with Jesus is just getting worse!" they told each other. "Now there are thousands worshipping Jesus as God's Son. Something must be done, but what?" they wondered.

They watched for a chance to arrest the Christians, especially the leaders, like Peter.

At last the Jewish leaders had their chance.(from Acts 3): "One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon. Now a man crippled from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. When he saw Peter

and John about to enter, he asked them for money. Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, "Look at us!" So the man gave them his attention.

Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." Taking him by the right hand, Peter helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into Solomon's Colonnade in the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God. When all the people saw him, they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder."

The Temple courts were in an uproar as people ran to see the healed man with Peter and John. The Jewish leaders came, too. What would Peter do? He was right in the courts of the Temple, the very headquarters of the Jewish leaders! Here was their chance to catch Peter. Would he be Peter the Pebble and run away? Or could he be Peter the Rock, and speak to the crowds about Jesus—even in front of the Jewish leaders?

He stayed Peter the Rock! Peter did NOT run. The Holy Spirit living inside of him gave him rock-like faith. Peter saw the crowds and said: "Men of Israel, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? He was healed through Jesus. He was crucified by you, but God raised Him from the dead. There is forgiveness of sins to all who confess their sins, turn from them and trust in Jesus." The Holy Spirit worked in the hearts of many and about two thousand people believed and became followers of Jesus that day.

The Jewish leaders were furious! They seized Peter and John and put them in jail. What would happen to Peter now? Would he be Peter the Pebble again; or, would he stay Peter the Rock even now?

The next morning, soldiers led Peter, John and the before the Jewish leaders. "Yesterday you healed a man more than 40 years old. This is unheard of. By whose power did you do this?" they asked him.

The Holy Spirit gave Peter courage to say: "Know this: It is by the name of Jesus Christ, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by

which we must be saved.”

The Jewish leaders were amazed. Peter and John were simple men, who had never even gone to school, yet they spoke so well and with such courage!

“What are we going to do?” they asked each other. “We cannot deny the miracle, but we must stop this thing from spreading any further. These men must stop speaking!”

“This time we are releasing you,” they warned Peter and John, “but stop teaching about Jesus....or we will punish you.”

“Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God’s sight to obey you rather than God,” Peter and John replied. “For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”

When the Jewish leaders released Peter and John, they went to tell the other believers what had happened. Everyone praised God and prayed. And what did they pray? Was it, “Lord, don’t let us be hurt. Get us out of this trouble!”? No, those would be prayers of Pebbles. The Holy Spirit lived in these people and made them brave. He gave them all rock-like faith.

They prayed, “Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miracles and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”

Did God answer this prayer? Yes, he did. After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was SHAKEN! And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

Our Bible Truth is:

The Holy Spirit Gives God’s People Courage

Our Bible Verse is: Acts 4:29,31

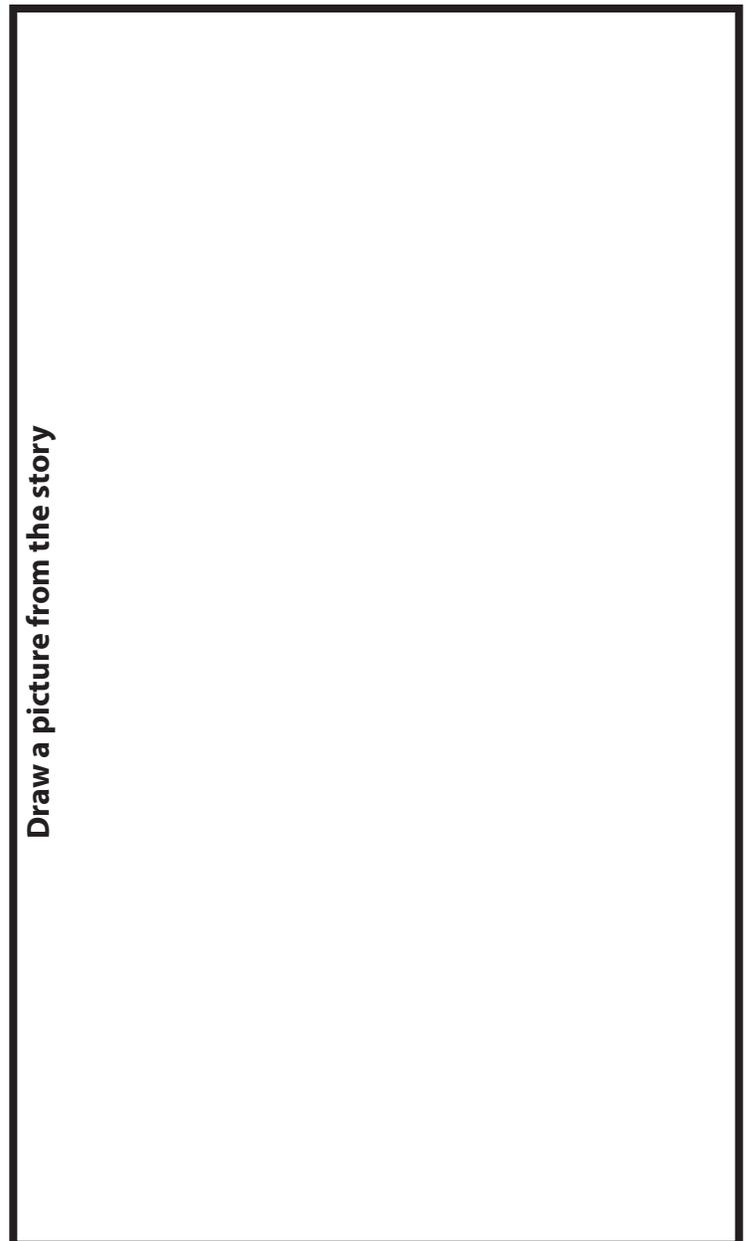
“And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness...And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.”

The Holy Spirit made Peter the Pebble, into Peter the Rock, full of courage and faith. Only Him, living inside God’s people’s hearts that could give them the courage they would need to spread the good news about salvation through Jesus.

But what about you and me? Do you think that the

Holy Spirit only was for Peter, John and those other first followers of Jesus? No, He was not! Could the Holy Spirit make even us with little faith and lots of fear like pebbles, be turned into ROCKS with big faith and big courage like Peter? Yes, He can. Like our Bible Truth says, the Holy Spirit comes to live inside of ALL who confess their sins to Jesus and turn to trust in Him. He will even come to live in us, if WE turn from our sins and trust in Jesus! You and I do not have to be Pebbles, either. The Holy Spirit can work in us to give us courageous, rock-like faith to live for Him.

Let’s praise God for sending His people the Holy Spirit, God who dwells inside His people. Let’s ask Him to send the Holy Spirit to live inside us, changing our hearts to to love and obey God, and giving us great boldness to tell everyone about Jesus.



Draw a picture from the story

SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU

BIBLE TRUTH HYMN

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

God calls His people to do difficult things sometimes, but He gives them His Holy Spirit to help them do them all.

Answer: True!

2. Crack the Case Questions

a. Who was the Rock Man? Who gave him this nickname? What did it mean?

Answer: Jesus nicknamed Cephas "Peter," which means "Rock." Jesus meant that upon the faith like that which God gave Peter in Jesus, would the church of God's people be built.

b. How did Rock Man not live up to his nickname? Who changed him to fit his nickname?

Answer: Peter's faith crumpled when Jesus was arrested. He chose to deny he even knew Jesus rather than risk getting arrested, too. But after Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead, He forgave Peter. When the Holy Spirit came upon all the believers, He filled Peter's heart, too, making his faith strong like a rock so that he boldly told all that Jesus was the Christ.

3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse: Acts 4:29,31

"And now, Lord, look upon their ___ and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness...And when they had ___, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all ___ with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness."

Answers: threats; prayed; filled.

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

PFI ESV Songs 10, Tracks 15,16

Verse 3

And though this world with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us.
We will not fear for God has willed,
His truth to triumph through us.
The Prince of Darkness grim, We tremble not for him.
His rage we can endure, For lo' his doom is sure,
One little word shall fell him.

Verse 4

That word above all earthly powers,
No thanks to them abideth,
The Spirit and the gifts are ours,
Through Him who with us sideth,
Let goods and kindred go, This mortal life also,
The body they may kill, God's truth abideth still.
His kingdom is forever.

Words and Music: Martin Luther

We do not have to look very far to see signs that God's good world and good ways are challenged by a powerful enemy called Satan. He and other angels rebelled against God long ago. No wonder his nickname is the "Prince of Darkness" and these rebel angels are called demons! They love to oppose God. These enemies also want to cause trouble for God's people. This may sound very scary. No one wants to have powerful enemies like these. But the good news is that they are not even close to a match for God. He is so much more powerful than they are. He will always win over any of their wicked plans. And thanks to Jesus, God gives His people powerful gifts to fight these enemies, too. He puts His Holy Spirit in their heart to make them bold. He gives them other abilities that help them fight, too. Yes, with Jesus on the side of God's people, it doesn't matter what Satan might have planned. God will always win. His kingdom is forever.

AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY

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

A God, we praise You for being the Giver of the Holy Spirit to Your people. Through Him, You make them courageous to tell others about Jesus.

C God, we confess that many times, like Peter, we are fearful and choose to avoid suffering for Jesus, even though we know all that He suffered to save sinners like us. We need a Savior! We need the Holy Spirit to work in our hearts!

T God, we thank You for giving Your people the Holy Spirit to change them into the people You want them to be. You know that they cannot do it on their own. You give them Your Spirit to be their powerful helper.

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 work in our hearts, making us courageous to live and to speak and even to suffer for You and for the gospel.

BIBLE VERSE SONG

And Now, Lord

PFI NIV Songs 10, Track 17

And now, Lord, look upon their threats,
And grant to your servants to continue to speak,
Your word with all boldness, Your word with all boldness, Your word with all boldness,
And when they prayed, they were all filled,
With the Holy Spirit and continued to speak,
The word of God with boldness, the word of God with boldness,
The word with boldness.
Acts Four, twenty-nine and thirty-one.

Words: Acts 4:29,31 NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012
These words are a prayer of some of God's people that's in the Bible. There are times when the enemy they face is too powerful for them, on their own. But, they know that they never have to face anything on their own. God has given them His Holy Spirit to work in their hearts and help them be bold to do whatever He wants them to do. He delights to answer this prayer!