

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 NIV Songs 10, Tracks 3,4

Unit 10 Bible Verse: Ezekiel 36:26, NIV 1984

"I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you."
PFI NIV 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

"Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness....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."

CASE STORY

adapted from Religious Stories for Young and Old, vol. IV
editor Joel Beeke

Our story is called:

The Case of the Gardener and the Gunpowder.

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

1. Who tried to scare the gardener? What did they want to take from him?
2. What did the gardener use as gunpowder? Who helped the gardener with the thieves and then helped the thieves?

This story does not take place in Bible times. It takes place in the 1600's in England.

During those days there was an old man who lived all by himself. Everyone called him, "The Old Gardener" because it was by gardening that he made his living. All day he would tend to his plants.

But at night, the old gardener was not just an old gardener. He would go down to the barn, not with his rake and hoe in hand, but with his Bible, to do what he loved most of all: preach the Word of God. Having no where else to meet, a small group of people came to the barn many nights...and THREE TIMES on Sunday to hear the old gardener read and preach from the Bible.

The Old Gardener was an even better preacher than he was gardener. The Holy Spirit worked in his heart, giving him wisdom and boldness to preaching God's Word well. More and more people came to hear the him preach, and soon his barn was full to bursting. So, even though everyone was very poor, they decided to save enough money to build a church building big enough to fit them all. Each meeting, people would bring their little bits of money to the Old Gardener until at last they had collected enough to build their church building.

News traveled around the area about the Old Gardener's growing church and the money they were collecting to build a church building. Most people heard and were happy for the Old Gardener and his congregation. But there were three, young students--Jack, Tom and Charles--who heard the news, and looked for a chance to steal the church's money. They came up with a trick to frighten the Old Gardener during the night, then grab the money for the church building.

One night, Jack, Tom and Charles painted their faces black and dressed themselves with some strange clothes

so no one would recognize them. At midnight they snuck up to the Old Gardener's house. Seeing the candlelight glowing in one of the rooms, the young men knew that the gardener had still not gone to sleep. Now was their chance!

The three young men threw the door to the house open very roughly and noisily entered the big hallway. In a corner stood a big table and upon it a bag partly opened and filled with a sort of black kernels. Some of those black kernels had split out and were lying on the floor. On the wall hung a hunting gun.

The old man, who by the light of his candle, was reading the Bible, turned around in surprise when he heard the noise behind his back. Jack, the leader of the three rascals, called to him with a loud voice, "I am the devil!" Thinking he could scare the old man.

Those words might have scared many men that dark night, but the Old Gardener was not just any man. Here was a man who loved God, who read His word and had the Holy Spirit at work in his heart. He knew enough of the Bible to know these were bad men, not the devil. Would the Holy Spirit give him courage to face these men? Yes, He would! The Holy Spirit was working in the Old Gardener's heart to give him courage to face these bad men without fear.

The old man moved his glasses down his nose a little and looking over them, he said, "No, you are not the devil, I see that; but you are a friend of him." This was not at all the response they expected!

The two other young men thought it was their time now to say something too, and they shouted, "We have come to take the money which you folks have saved to build a little church!"

Now the eyes of the gardener began to gleam with courage. With a strong voice he answered, "If the Lord shall be my Shield and Help (and that He is), what shall man do to me? That money does not belong to me, it belongs to the Lord. Never will I give it to you. If you dare, you will have to take it by force!"

When he spoke those words, an idea came to mind. With a quick move of his hands he took the burning candle and set it in the midst of the black kernels on the floor. The three students did not expect the old gardener to put up such a fight. He seemed like just an old gardener to them before. Now they saw that he had a courage they had

never expected. They hadn't known what boldness the Holy Spirit could bring to the hearts of God's people's!

Tom followed the move of the gardener, in a moment he turned pale with fright. With a trembling voice he cried, "Boys, that black stuff is gunpowder!" Soon it will explode and we all will fly up in the air!"

The three boys were terribly frightened and wanted to run away, but the old man called to them and said, "Halt! Fall down on your knees, or...I'll..." when he spoke those words, he shook the candle to and fro through the black kernels.

The rascals threw themselves down on their knees, and Jack, pleaded, "Sir, please be careful and take the candle away from that gunpowder. If one spark falls, we are perhaps all dead. I ask you for forgiveness. We have done a great evil to trouble you this night as we have. We will gladly make it good by giving you a large amount of money for the building of your new church."

"We will, too," the other two boys said with trembling voices.

The Holy Spirit had given the Old Gardener courage to stand up to these young men, but now He gave him courage to speak to them about Jesus: "Bad men run away in fear as if they will be harmed, even when there is no one seeking to harm them," the Old Gardener told them. "Your money will I accept, but before you get up off your knees, there is something I must tell you about what happens to rebellious people who do not change their ways," he told them.

The old gardener opened his Bible and read it to the young men. Looking at them earnestly he told them about the holiness of God, the eternal punishment that we all deserve for our sins against Him and about the gift of salvation to all who turn from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior.

"Boys, we all need God's mercy through Jesus. Without it there is no hope for any of us. Come, let us sing a song of praise to Him for all that. Here, have this little hymn book."

He told them what verse to sing, and with a loud voice the Old Gardener started to sing. To his delight, the three students joined him with trembling voices.

When the hymn ended, the Old Gardener picked up the money which the boys had laid down on the table, Ashamed and puzzled, Jack, Tom and Charles ran off to their homes as quickly as possible.

After about five months, the little church building was finished. All of the church gathered in its own little building for its very first meeting. And who of all people should have sneaked in among them but Jack, Tom, and Charles, the three burglars.

When the old gardener's sermon came to an end, he thanked all the people who gave the money to build the church. Then he added, "A big amount of the money for this church building came from three young men who one night came to scare me and take the money one night. They, however, made a great mistake when looking upon a heap of black kernels of rapeseed, believing it was a dangerous heap of gunpowder," he told the congregation. "I didn't show them their mistake, but accepted the money they offered me for the trouble they caused me that night." The three young men were again ashamed and puzzled. The whole time it had never been gunpowder, only seeds!

Because of these three young men, the church became known as "The Little Rapeseed Church. They had come to do harm, but the Lord used their sinful plan to tell them about the good news of salvation through Jesus. These young men praised God for His goodness to them; and they, too, became Christians and regular members of the The Little Rapeseed Church.

Our Bible Truth is:

The Holy Spirit Gives God's People Courage

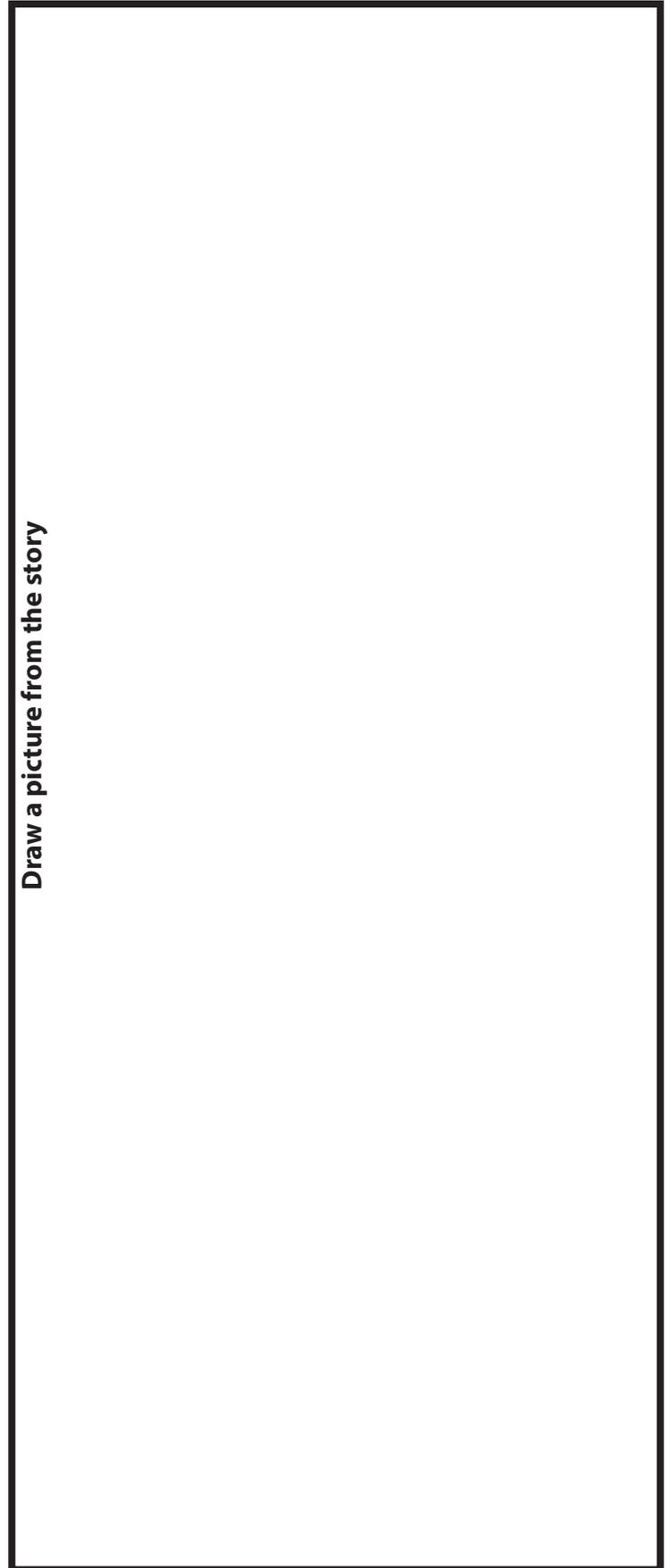
Our Bible Verse is: Acts 4:29,31

"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."

Our Bible Verse reminds us of how the Holy Spirit made Jesus' first disciples brave to speak God's Word, even when other threatened to hurt or arrest them. Our story shows us that in just the same way, the Holy Spirit worked in the heart of the Old Gardener to make him brave to face the three burglars and even speak God's Word to them.

And what about you and me? If we turn from our sins and believe in Jesus, will the Holy Spirit live in our hearts? Will He give us courage to boldly stand and be strong for Jesus? Will He give us courage to tell others about Jesus,

no matter what? Yes, He will! Let's praise God for giving His people the Holy Spirit to make them brave to do His will, no matter what!



Draw a picture from the story

SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU

BIBLE TRUTH HYMN

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

God's Holy Spirit helps God's people do things they would never have the courage to do on their own.

Answer: True.

2. Crack the Case Questions

a. Who tried to scare the gardener? What did they want to take from him?

Answer: Some boys tried to scare the gardener and take the money for the church building.

b. What did the gardener use as gunpowder? Who helped the gardener with the thieves and then helped the thieves?

Answer: Rapeseed that looked like gunpowder in the darkness. The Holy Spirit living in the gardener's heart gave him courage to face the thieves and to encourage them towards the Lord. The Holy Spirit later worked in the boys' hearts. They turned away from their sins and trusted in Jesus as their Savior.

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

"Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your ___ to speak your word with great ____....After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and ___ the word of God boldly."

Answers: servants; boldness; spoke.

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

PFI NIV Songs 10, Tracks 12,13

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 Your Holy Spirit to Your people, to make them courageous to tell others about Jesus.

C God, we confess that many times, like the young men, we are greedy for money and other things that others have that we want. We need a Savior!

T God, we thank You for giving Your Holy Spirit to live inside Your people. Thank You that He works in them and changes them into the people You wants them to be. He could even change people like those young men! He can even change us!

S God, work in our hearts. Help us to turn away from our sins and trust Jesus as our own Savior. Send Your Holy Spirit to work in our hearts. Make us courageous to live and speak and even suffer for You.

BIBLE VERSE SONG

Now, Lord, Consider Their Threats

PFI NIV Songs 10, Track 14

Now, Lord, consider their threats,
Enable your servants to speak Your word,
Now, Lord, consider their threats,
Enable your servants to speak Your word,
With great boldness, With great boldness.

After they prayed,
The place where they were meeting was shaken,
And they were all filled,
They were all filled with the Holy Spirit,
And they spoke boldly, And they spoke boldly,
And they were all filled, They were all filled with the Holy Spirit.

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!