

BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

We're in... Unit 6: God, the Just and Merciful

Unit 6 Big Question and Answer and Song:

"How Did Bad Things Come to God's Good World?"
Bad Things Came Through Sin!"

PFI ESV Songs 6, Tracks 3,4

Unit 6 Bible Verse and Song: Romans 5:12

"Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned."

PFI ESV Songs 6, Track 5

BIBLE TRUTH

We're learning... Bible Truth 3:

God Treated the First Sinners with Justice and Mercy

Adam and Eve did not just disobey God once and stop. They had become sinners with sinful hearts that rebelled against God again and again. But sin didn't stop with Adam and Eve. They passed down the consequences of their sin to all their children.

Each and every one of us come from Adam and Eve's family—we are all their children. And because we are their children, we are all born sinners with sinful hearts and with bodies that will suffer and die. And also like Adam and Eve, we all deserve eternal punishment for our sins, too.

Yet God, in His great mercy, always planned to send His Son Jesus to save His sinful people by taking the punishment for their sins upon Himself. Jesus did this when He suffered and died on the cross. On the third day, He rose from the dead, showing He had beaten sin and death.

God promises to forgive all who confess their sins to Him and trust in Jesus as their Savior. He will give them each a new heart, filled with His Holy Spirit—a heart that knows and loves Him more and more. And one day, when they die, they will not receive the eternal punishment they deserve for their sins, but eternal life with God forever. How great is God's mercy through Jesus to sinful people like us!

BIBLE VERSE

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

Bible Truth 3 Bible Verse: Romans 5:17

"For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ."

CASE STORY

Genesis 4; Hebrews 11:4; 1 John 3:12

Our story is called:

The Case of the Gift No One Wanted.

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

1. What was the gift no one wanted? Who gave it? Who received it?
2. What did Jesus do to get rid of it?

Our story today takes place back in the beginning, when Adam and Eve rebelled against God.

What a terrible day it had been! How much Adam and Eve had lost! Their beautiful garden home, the pureness of love in their hearts; and all the dreams of unending, perfect life with God in the beautiful world He had made for them. How sweet had in been inside the Garden, in perfect fellowship with God and each other! And how sad it was already, outside the Garden, out of perfect fellowship with God and each other.

Sad, it was; but, there was no getting around it. This was the new normal. So, Adam and Eve set out to live in the world outside the Garden, armed with nothing more than the animal skin clothes that God had mercifully made them.

It didn't take long for Adam and Eve to see the effects of their sin, both upon themselves and the world around them. What would it be like to see the curse of sin slowly ruin every part of God's perfect creation and know it was your fault? Horrible, I imagine. Well, that is exactly what Adam and Eve faced the day they were sent out of the Garden!

Because of their sinful choices, Adam now had to fight weeds and thorns that choked the food crops he tried to grow. He had to fight off animals that now had turned wild and fierce. With pain, Eve gave birth to her sons, Cain and Abel. Both Adam and Eve felt an awful selfishness and wickedness grow in their hearts. It was all just as God had said it would be, and oh, how terrible it was to bear the consequences of their sin!

Adam and Eve hated the choices they made and they hated Satan for tempting them to rebel against God; but now there was nothing they could do. Nothing, that is, except have faith in God's promises. And that is what they did.

Adam showed his faith as he named his wife, Eve—the mother of the living. He believed God's promise to give

Eve children who would fight against sin and strive to love God. He believed that one day, one of these children would be the promised Savior who would bring Life--eternal life-- to God's people by crushing Satan's power.

Eve showed her faith at the birth of her first son, Cain. "With the LORD's help I have brought forth a man," she exclaimed. She could see that God had begun to fulfill His promises to them. Cain was the first child of many to come into the world. One of them, Eve believed, would be the Savior God would send to defeat Satan once and for all.

God never told them how long they would have to wait for this special son of hers who would crush Satan. But Adam and Eve believed the Savior would come. They knew how good and merciful God was. They knew how much He loved them. Perhaps they even thought that Cain or Abel might be the promised Savior.

But if they did, it became clear all too quickly that neither these boys were not the Savior! Even while the boys were just young children, Adam and Eve could see that the hearts of Cain and Abel were filled with selfishness and wickedness. No. Eve had not given birth to a Savior; she had given birth to more sinful people who needed saving, just like themselves. Adam and Eve had passed their sin down to their children!

But if Adam and Eve passed down their sin, there was something else they could pass down, too: the promises of God. They could tell Cain and Abel of the perfect world they had known and of the perfect fellowship with God and each other they had shared. They could tell them of the serpent's tricks, of their sinful choices and how their sin meant they would die. But they could comfort them with God's promise to send a Savior to crush Satan one day. They could never be sinless themselves here on earth, but they could become children of God's promise and be saved through faith in Him.

Abel must have listened to Adam and Eve and believed. He knew he was a sinner like his parents and had no hope other than God for salvation. He was a child of the Promise. He looked forward in faith to the day God would send the promised Savior. Abel was a keeper of flocks—sheep and goats. When his animals gave birth to their firstborn, Abel would look among the new little animals for the best, the fattest, most perfect ones to present to God. God looked on Abel's sacrifice and saw how it reflected Abel's heart. Yes, it was a heart full of sin, but it was also full of desire to honor God above all else and trust in Him for salvation. The

LORD accepted Abel's offering and counted him as righteous—clean of sin through his faith in God.

But then there was Cain. Cain would have heard the same stories about God as Abel did. He would have known the same promises of a Savior God had made to them. And he certainly felt the same tug of sinful desires in his heart. But unlike Abel, Cain refused to believe. Cain was a farmer. And yes, Cain made offerings to God from the crops he grew, but he did not make sure to give God the first and best of his crops. He only gave Him "some" of his crops, and held back the best for himself. Cain did not honor the LORD in his heart or with his life.

When the LORD warned Adam and Eve about the "offspring of the serpent" that would be their enemies, it wasn't baby serpents or baby Satans (angels/demons can't even have children) that the LORD was speaking of. He was talking about people, like Cain, who would hold on to their sin and rebellion instead of turning to faith in God. These people would fight God and against the people who put their faith in God.

God looked at Cain's offering and saw right into Cain's unworshipful heart. He rejected his offering. This made Cain furious! He walked away from the altar downcast. God had accepted his brother Abel's offering, but refused his!

Then the LORD said to Cain: Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you don't do what is right, sin is waiting for you, it wants to have you, but you must master it." (Genesis 4:6-7) God was making it clear: He would accept Cain and his sacrifice if Cain would repent of his sin and worship God in his heart and with his first fruits. God was warning Cain to turn from the sinful desires of his heart and trust in Him that he might be saved.

But there was to be no turning in Cain. Cain didn't want to master his evil desires. He wanted to give in to them. Cain invited Abel to go out in the field with him, then attacked him and killed him! Instead of mastering the sin that tempted him, Cain had allowed his sin to master him. He had murdered someone—the very first murder in the world.

Much like He had done with Adam and Eve after they had sinned in the Garden, the LORD now came to question Cain: "Where is your brother Abel?" the LORD asked Cain.

"I don't know. Am I supposed to know where he is all the time? Am I my brother's keeper?" Cain lied, trying to hide

his sin, just like his parents had before him.

But nothing can be hidden from God. The LORD revealed what Cain wanted to hide, then gave him his punishment.

“What have you done?” the LORD said to Cain. “Listen! Your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground. Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth.

“LORD, “my punishment is more than I can bear,” Cain cried out. “Today You are driving me from the land, hidden from your presence; I will be a restless wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me,” Cain groaned. Cain didn’t like his punishment, but never once did he confess his sin and ask God’s forgiveness. How hard and selfish his heart was!

Yet even to this hard-hearted man God once more showed mercy. Cain had killed his very own brother. He deserved to be killed himself; but instead the LORD told him: “Not so; if anyone kills Cain, he will be punished himself seven times more than you.” Then LORD put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him. So Cain went out from the LORD’s presence and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

Cain was to be only the first of a long line of sinful children of Adam and Eve who each chose to reject God and His merciful offer of salvation. Until Jesus comes back at the end of time, there will always be unrepentant sinners like him.

But what of God’s promise that there would also be a long line of sinful children of Adam and Eve who would turn from their sins and have faith in God? What about these children of God’s Promise, as they are called? Adam and Eve had lost both sons in a single day: one murdered and one sent away to wander far from them and from God all the days of his life. Would there be no more children of the Promise? And what of God’s promise to send a Savior? How could there be a Savior with no children?

God in His faithfulness and mercy gave Adam and Eve another son, a boy named Seth. And though Seth was of course a sinner, he was a child of the Promise, too. Like Abel, he called upon the name of the LORD. He loved God and looked forward in faith to the promised Savior that God would send. Here was a son, through which God

would bring even more children. Here was a son through whom God would even send Jesus one day, to crush Satan’s power and bring salvation. And of course, that is just what the LORD did, just as He promised He would, at just the right time, to save all who turn from their sins and trust in Him as their own Savior. How faithful God is to His sinful people!

Our Bible Truth is:

All People Are Born Sinful, All People Need God’s Mercy

Our Bible Verse is: Romans 5:17

“For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.”

What about you and me? We are children of Adam and Eve, too. Like Cain, Abel and Seth, there is much sin in our hearts, in what we do and say, and in how we treat God. And just like them, we have a choice to make. We can harden our hearts against God and be an “offspring of the serpent” like Cain. Or, like Abel and Seth, we can become children of the Promise who humbly confess our sins to God, turn away from disobeying Him and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.

Let’s praise God for mercifully making a way to save us through the Savior Jesus. Let’s ask Him to soften our hearts and the hearts of all children of Adam and Eve to turn in faith to Him.

SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU

1. A Question about the Bible Truth, True or False:
 Adam and Eve disobeyed God, but when they died that was the end of sin.
Answer: False. Sadly, Adam and Eve passed their sinfulness down to all of us, their children.

2. Crack the Case Questions
a. What was the gift no one wanted? Who gave it? Who received it?
 Sin! Adam and Eve passed it down to all their children. That's all of us!

b. What did Jesus do to get rid of it?
 Jesus, the Son of God, came to be our Savior. He was human, but He never sinned. He lived a perfect life and offered it up as the perfect payment for the sins of all who would ever turn from their sins and trust in Him. He suffered and died on the cross and rose from the dead on the third day in victory. Because of Him, we can be saved from our sins even now. And when we die, we can be free from sin and live in God's presence forever!

3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse:
Romans 5:17
 "For if, by the ___ of the one man, death reigned through that one ___, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of ___ and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ."
 Answers: trespass; man; grace.

BIBLE TRUTH HYMN

Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy
PFI ESV Songs 6, Track 12

Verse 3
 Come ye weary, heavy-laden,
 Lost and ruined by the Fall;
 If you tarry till you're better,
 You will never come at all.

Refrain:
 I will arise and go to Jesus,
 He will embrace me in His arms.
 In the arms of my dear Savior,
 O there are ten thousand charms.

Words: Joseph Hart Music: Walker's Southern Harmony

From Adam and Eve on down to us, we are all are weary and heavy-laden with sin. Try as hard as we might, we can never get rid of our sin on our own. And, we can never make ourselves acceptable to God on our own. But God, in His great mercy, offers all who are ruined by the Fall to find forgiveness of sins and eternal life through Jesus. We don't have to wait until we are less sinful to come to Jesus. He will take us as we are. And there, we came find not only forgiveness for our sins and rest for our souls, weary with sin. We can find wonderful fellowship with God. And that is better than even ten thousand things that charm us (that we think are delightful.)

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, alone worthy of our worship.

C God, we confess that we too many times we choose to not love You when things are hard. We want to please and protect ourselves, instead of pleasing and depending upon You. We need a Savior!

T God, we thank You for giving Your people the courage to live for You and to love You, even when it is very hard.

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 so that we would love and live for You, even when it is very hard.

BIBLE VERSE SONG

For If by the Trespass
PFI ESV Songs 6, Track 13

"For if, by the trespass of the one man,
 death reigned through one man,
 For if, by the trespass of the one man,
 death reigned through one man,
 Then how much more will those who receive
 God's abundant grace and righteousness
 Reign in life, Reign in life,
 Through one man, Jesus Christ."
 Romans Five, seventeen.

Words: Romans 5:17, NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2011

Adam and Eve passed on their sinful hearts to their children--all of us! That means that we all are born sinners. How terrible! But God promised to show mercy to all who look in faith to the Savior who would crush Satan's power. Yes! All who turn from their sins and trust in Jesus are saved from the punishment they deserve from God for their sins. Sin came through one man, Adam. But Jesus, the Son of God and the son of man, gives His grace and perfect righteousness--everything they need to be saved!