

BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

We're in... Unit 1: The God Who Reveals Himself

Unit 1 Big Question and Answer:
How Can I Know What God Is Like?
He Shows Me What He's Like!

PFI ESV Songs 1, Tracks 3,4

Unit 1 Bible Verse: Amos 4:13, ESV

"For behold, He who formed the mountains, creates the winds, and declares to man what is His thought. The LORD, the God of hosts, is His name."

PFI ESV Songs 1, Track 5

BIBLE TRUTH

We're learning... Bible Truth 4:
God Speaks through His Word, the Bible

God used many people to write down His words in the Bible. The Holy Spirit worked in their hearts and minds to help them write down exactly what God wanted written. That's why the Bible is called God's Word. It's the only book where God's words are written down perfectly.

When we read the Bible, God tells us about who He is, who we are, and why He made us. He tells us how we can be saved and how He wants us to live. He tells us of His great plans for this world and for the world to come.

There are many things that God has chosen not to tell us in the Bible. But in it, He has told us everything we need to become His people; to know Him, to live for Him and to look forward to life with Him forever. And by His Holy Spirit working in our hearts, He can use His Word, not to just know these things, but to do them in us.

BIBLE VERSE

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

Bible Truth 4 Bible Verse: Psalm 119:18, 72-73

"Open my eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of your law...The law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold. Your hands made me and fashioned me; give me understanding to learn your commandments."

CASE STORY

Adapted from *Religious Stories for Young and Old, vol. IV,*

compiled by Joel Beeke

Our story is called:

The Case of the Ragged Bible:

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

1. Who did the Ragged Bible belong to? Why was it ragged?
2. What did Sam do to replace it?

This story doesn't take place in Bible times. It takes place in the late 1700's on the island of Jamaica.

Far south of the coast of Florida, in the middle of the Caribbean Sea, lies the tropical, mountainous island of Jamaica. Long ago, when the Spanish and the English discovered the island, they found its mountain slopes to be a perfect place to grow sugar cane.

Sugar from sugar cane was the new favorite food of Europe, but there was a problem: it was too cold to grow sugar cane there. But then the Europeans found Jamaica. Its warm climate was perfect for growing sugar cane. So they came and set up huge sugar cane plantations on the island. Then they did something absolutely terrible: they kidnapped thousands of Africans and forced them to work the plantations for free, as slaves!

Life for many of the slaves was horrible. They were cruelly punished if they didn't work the long, tiring hours their owners demanded of them. And even if they did work hard, most were treated terribly. Very few certainly had the chance to learn to read, to have any sort of education, to enjoy freedom or have a chance to return home to Africa.

But the Lord in His mercy, brought good even out of the terrible evil of slavery. There were some people who cared about the slaves. They were kind to them. They taught them how to read; and most of all, they told them about Jesus and the Bible, God's Word.

Two slaves who received these kindnesses were a woman and her son, Sam. Sam's mother had been taught how to read. She heard about Jesus and had become a Christian. She loved God and His Word. Among the few things Sam's mother owned were some pages from the New Testament. These few words were worth to her than anything else she could have.

Sam had learned to read, too. When his mother grew

old and ready to die, she called him to her side, and said, "Don't stop reading the Bible, Sam!" Sam's mother knew that there was nothing else in the world like the Bible. It was the only book God has given us to tell us who He is, who we are and why He made us. When we read it, He tells us how we can be saved and how He wants us to live. She wanted Sam to know it and to know God like she did.

"I won't stop reading it, mother," Sam promised her.

Sam kept his promise to his mother. In the evening, when the day's hard work was done, Sam often sat at the door of his hut and read. He turned over the fragile, worn pages of his mother's New Testament. He read very slowly. Sometimes there were big words that he didn't know how to pronounce. Sometimes there were sections that didn't make sense. But still, Sam didn't give up. He tried to figure it out and asked God to help him understand.

Sam didn't just keep God's Word to himself. He knew that everyone needed to know God and His Word, yet many of the other slaves did not know how to read, nor did they have a Bible to read, anyway. Sam would read aloud to the other slaves as they worked in the sugarcane fields or in the sugar house where the cane was made into white, powdery sugar. More than anything else, Sam wanted to love God and know Him better. He wanted others to, as well. So he read over and over the few pages of the New Testament that he had.

Unfortunately, Bibles wear out from so much use. Before long, the pages of Sam's little book were falling apart. First the cover came off; then, page after page was lost, until it was nearly all gone. But even this didn't stop Sam from learning God's Word! He had read it so much that he knew most of the pages by heart. He would recite to himself and the others the chapters he had memorized. Sam knew that he mustn't stop reading the Bible. He needed it and so did the others. It alone was God's Word!

After a number of years, Sam's master freed him and gave him a cottage of his own to live in. Now Sam could spend more time than ever teaching the others about the Bible and Jesus. But now when Sam told them what the Bible said, the others replied, "Well, it may be true but show us in the book. We want to see it ourselves."

But sadly, Sam no longer had a book to show them.

One day Sam heard that a missionary had brought a new shipment of Bibles to Kingston, the capitol of Jamaica, and was selling them very cheaply.

"Imagine that!" thought Sam, "Whole Bibles, not just a piece like I had! If I had enough money I could read ALL of God's Word. I could share ALL of it with the others! I must get one of those Bibles!" he decided. So Sam gathered up his money—a dollar (which was worth a lot more than it is now)—and set off for Kingston.

The journey to Kingston was a long, fifty-mile walk from Sam's hut. It was too hot to walk in the middle of the day, so early in the morning Sam would set off, rest in the middle of the day, then set off again late in the evening. After a few days of travelling like this, Sam at last came to the missionary's house where the Bibles were.

Sam saw them all in a row. New Bibles, all complete! "Oh, Sir," he cried, "how wonderful are these Bible. I want to buy one," Sam said. "How much are they?"

"A dollar and a half," was the answer. Sam's face looked sad. "What is the matter?" said the missionary asked.

"I only have a dollar," Sam replied.

"These Bibles cost a lot to make. I can't sell it to you for less than \$1.50," the man told Sam. "But what is your name and where do you come from?" asked the missionary. How amazed he was to learn how far Sam had traveled on foot just to get a Bible.

"Surely, a man who's willing to walk fifty miles both here and back just to get God's Word, is a man I can trust," the missionary thought. "Isn't this one of the very people I have come to help? Do I really want to stop a man like this from getting a Bible?"

"Well," he said to Sam, "you have come a long way and I don't like to send you home without the book. Will you promise, if I let you have it, to pay me the half dollar as soon as you get it?"

"Oh yes, Sir," cried Sam, "I will do that."

So Sam set off home with a glad heart and his Bible in his hand. After a few days, he made it home.

"Joy, joy!" shouted Sam to the others as he held up the Bible above his head for all to see.

They gathered around him and said, "Now, Sam, read it! Read it!"

Sam read, "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn it, but that the world might be saved through him."

"Go on! Read more! We want to hear all of God's book! We want to know all that God says," they cried when he finished.

"No, I will not go on. Not until the book is not paid for. We have to find the money," Sam told them. They all gathered what money they had and came up with the fifty cents.

After a few days' rest, Sam set out again to Kingston and paid the money, and from that time he had the joy of having a complete copy of the Bible. It was his comfort the rest of his life and his joy to share with the others, too.

Our Bible Truth is:

God Speaks through His Word, the Bible

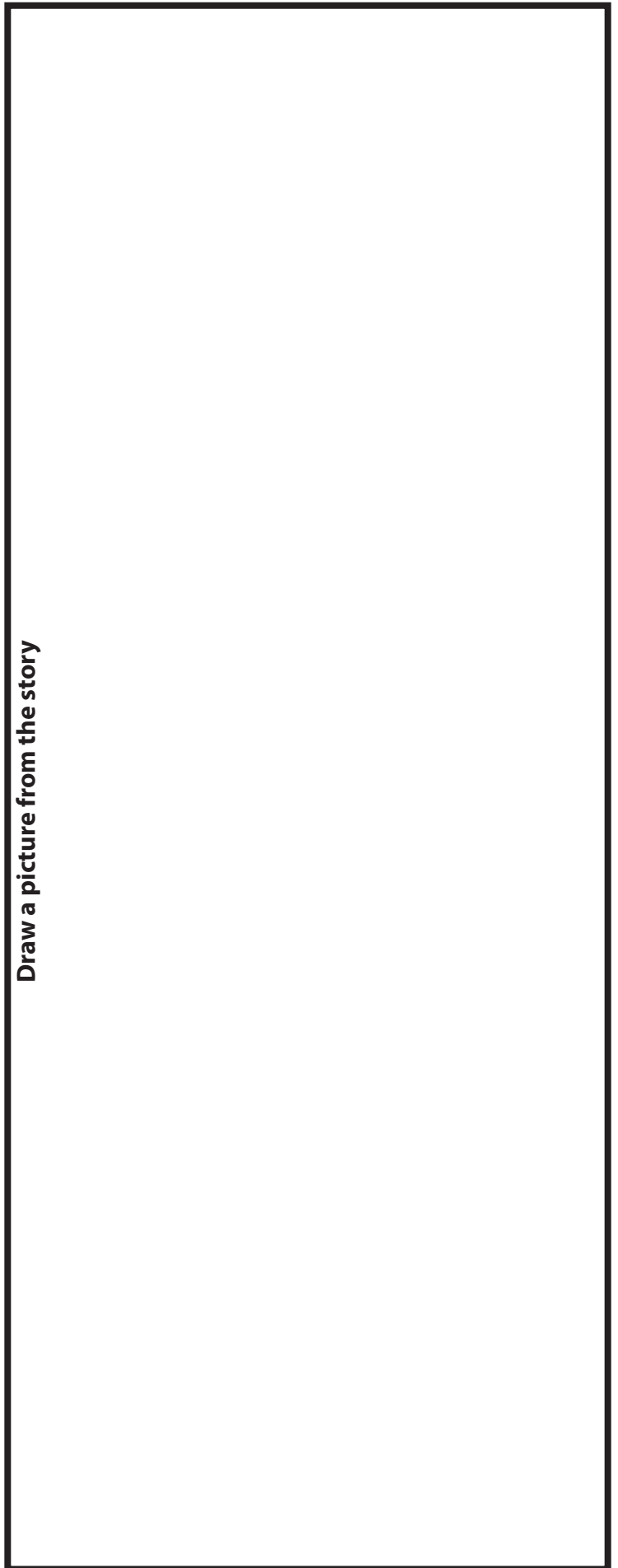
Our Bible Verse is: Psalm 119:18,72-73 ESV

"Open my eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of your law...The law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold. Your hands made me and fashioned me; give me understanding to learn your commandments."

Sam walked two hundred miles just so he might have a copy of the Bible. What about you and me? How much do we care whether or not we have God's Word so that He can speak to us? Do we neglect the Word as Sam's mother warned him not to? Do we try to learn about God, who we are and why He made us?

Let's praise this God who has revealed Himself through His Word, the Bible. Let's ask Him to give us hearts that hungry to know Him and do not neglect His Word. Let's ask Him to help us to turn away from disobeying Him and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.

Draw a picture from the story



SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU	BIBLE TRUTH HYMN
<p>1. A Question about the Bible Truth, True or False: When we read the Bible, God speaks to us about who He is, of who we are and how we can be saved. Answer: True. He tells us these things and many more.</p> <p>2. Crack the Case Questions: a. Who did the Ragged Bible belong to? What was it ragged? Answer: Sam's mother, then Sam. It was ragged from being used so much.</p> <p>b. What did Sam do to replace it? Answer: He walked all the way around the island twice to get a new one and pay for it.</p> <p>3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse: Psalms 119:18,72-73 "Open my eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of your ____...The law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of pieces of silver and _____. Your hands made me and _____ me; give me understanding to learn your commandments." Answers: law; gold; fashioned.</p>	<p>Amazing Grace <i>PFI ESV Songs 1, Track 20</i></p> <p>Verse 4 The Lord has promised good to me, His word, my hope secures; He will my shield and portion be, As long as life endures.</p> <p>Words: John Newton Music: Virginia Harmony: arr. Edwin O'Excell</p> <p>This hymn reminds us that God's people read in His Word His promises to do good to them. They know that they can have unfailing hope in Him for their salvation, their protection and provision for all their needs. They know they can depend on Him for these things their whole lives because God always does what He promises to do.</p>
<p>AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY</p>	<p>BIBLE VERSE SONG</p>
<p><i>A=Adoration, C=Confession, T=Thanksgiving, S=Supplication</i></p> <p>A God, we praise You for being the Giver of the Bible, Your perfect Word.</p> <p>C God, we confess that many times we don't love Your Word and don't want to read it, listen to it or obey it. We need Jesus to be our Savior!</p> <p>T God, we thank You for wonderful Your Word is. Thank You that in it, You have given us everything we need to know about You, how we can be saved and how You want us to live.</p> <p>S God, we ask that You would work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. We ask that You would help us understand, love and live by Your Word, the Bible.</p>	<p>Open My Eyes <i>PFI ESV Songs 1, Track 21</i></p> <p>Open my eyes that I may behold, Wondrous things out of your law. Open my eyes that I may behold, Wondrous things out of your law. The law of your mouth is better to me, Than thousands of pieces of silver and gold. Your hands they made me and fashioned me. Give me understanding That I may learn your commandments. Open my eyes that I may behold, Wondrous things out of your law. Open my eyes that I may behold, Wondrous things out of your law. Psalm One-nineteen, eighteen, seventy two and three.</p> <p>Words: Psalm 119:18,72,73, ESV Music: Constance Dever ©2012</p> <p>There is no book like the Bible! It alone is God's Word, written down perfectly. When we read the Bible, God speaks to us about who He is, who we are, and why He made us. He tells us how we can be saved and live to please Him. That is why it is more precious to God's people than even a lot of money—because they want to know those things and live out those things most of all.</p>