

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 5:
God Has Revealed Himself Most Completely through His Son, Jesus

God sent His Son, Jesus, to leave His home in heaven to be our Savior. He was born as a baby here on earth. Jesus grew up and became a man. He was fully human, like us, but He was also, still fully God.

Jesus lived the perfect life that pleases God. He never did anything wrong. He taught about God and He did many amazing miracles. Most amazing of all, He offered up His perfect life as the full payment for the sins of God's people when He suffered and died on the cross. On the third day, He rose from the dead, showing that He had really beaten sin and death, then He rose back up to heaven where He lives now.

Jesus didn't live on earth long--only about thirty years. He taught about God and did miracles only about three of those years. But in that short, little bit of time, He showed us more about God than anything else in the whole world.

The Bible calls Jesus the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of Him. That means when we learn about Jesus and see what He is like, we are seeing what God is like: completely holy, powerful, loving and good. He hates sin, but He loves sinners who turn to Him for forgiveness and mercy! Thank You, God, for sending Jesus to show us what You're like!

BIBLE VERSE

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

Bible Truth 5 Bible Verse: Hebrews 1:1-3

"Long ago...God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son...He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature..."

CASE STORY

Our story is called:

The Case of the Not-Good-Enough Man.

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

1. Who was the Not-Good-Enough Man? What was he trying to be good enough for? How did he try to make himself good enough?
2. Who did he come to know that was good enough? Why was this person good enough?

This story doesn't take place in Bible times. It takes place in the early 1500's in the country of Germany.

One summer day, a young man named Martin was riding from home back to school at the University of Erfurt. What a nice visit it had been! His proud parents loved to hear how well their smart son was doing in law school. Martin's dad especially enjoyed thinking of how rich and respected Martin would make the family one day.

Suddenly, a deadly thunderstorm crashed down around Martin. Crack! Boom! Bang! A bolt of lightning hit the ground right next to Martin, jolting him from his horse.

Martin realized how close he had been to dying. "If I had died, I would have had to appear before God's righteous throne? He is perfectly righteous and I am a sinner. Surely I would face His judgement! I must find away to please God and be saved. But how?" Martin wondered.

As the storm raged on, Martin cried out to God, "God, if You save me from this storm, I will become a monk and spend the rest of my life serving you in church!" Martin promised.

God had kept Martin safe through the storm; and Martin kept his promise to become a monk. (A man who belongs to the Catholic Church and makes a solemn promise to live a special way for God and the Catholic Church).

Martin knew a monk's life was hard. He wouldn't be allowed own anything. He must leave his family and must never marry. Martin's dad would be furious when he found out, but Martin kept his promise to God. He sold all of his things, said good bye to his friends, and went to one of the big monasteries (places where monks live together) in Erfurt.

"Bang, Bang, Bang!" Martin knocked on the door to the monastery. A monk with a long black robe came to the door and let Martin in. Martin spent the next three weeks to convince the monks that he should become a monk,

"Bang, Bang, Bang!" Martin knocked on the door to the monastery. A monk with a long black robe came to the door and let Martin in. Martin spent the next three weeks to convince the monks that he should become a monk, but at last he did. They gave him a small room with no heat and only boards for a bed, just like the other monks. Martin had to get up long before sunrise every morning and say prayers for hours. He went and confessed to older monks as many sins as he could, in hopes that God might forgive all of them. He was given very little food and had to beg on the streets for one of his meals each day. Yes, life as a monk was very hard!

Martin worked very hard at being a good monk, but still he had no peace with God. No matter how many sacrifices he made, or sins he confessed, or good works he did, Martin knew it never was enough to please God. "I know that God is the perfectly righteous and I am an unrighteous sinner. There will never be enough good works that I can do to please Him on my own," he despaired. Martin began to think God was unfair for punishing sinners who could never please Him with their good works. He even began to hate God!

But there was something about God that Martin didn't understand. God, Himself, had made the way for sinners to come to Him, as Martin was soon to learn.

"Martin Luther, you are a troubled man and a fine student, his teacher told him one day. "So I am taking you off of kitchen and sweeping duty that the other monks must take part in and I want you to use that time to memorize the whole Bible instead. It will help you solve your troubles and make you an even better student."

As Martin read his Bible, he was surprised at what he read. There were many things the monks were teaching that were wrong, such as saying that people could buy God's forgiveness with money.

"That's not true!" Martin told them. "The Bible doesn't say that!" he insisted.

But the other priests said, "The Pope and church leaders says it's true, so it must be," they told him. But Martin knew they were wrong and was very upset at how they were leading people astray.

After five years, Martin was sent to the monastery at Wittenberg to be a teacher. One day as he was preparing his lessons, he read the Bible passage that was to change his life. It was Romans 1:16-17: "I am not ashamed of the

gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes... For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith!"

Martin noticed a word in this passage he hadn't noticed before: "It says by faith—the free gift of God—the righteous shall live!" Martin exclaimed. "It's by the faith we are saved. God freely saves sinners who trust in Jesus' righteousness. Christ gave His righteousness as the perfect payment for our sins when He died on the cross. This is how sinful people please God! Through Christ alone! This is how I can be saved!"

God flooded Martin's heart with peace. "Yes, God is perfectly righteous. But oh, how loving and merciful He is, too! In Christ, He has provided us with the righteousness we cannot earn ourselves," he realized.

"Oh God, I love you! Jesus, I love you!" Martin exclaimed. "Thank You for forgiving my unrighteousness, my sins! I see now that it is through believing in Jesus' death for me that I can please You! His life given up on the cross paid for all of my sins, once and for all!"

Martin was so excited. He wanted to tell everyone. this good news. "Stop giving those priests money to pay for your sins!" Martin told the people. "Your money will never take away your sins. Turn from your sins! Put your faith in Jesus Christ. He's the one who can make you pleasing to God."

Many people were overjoyed to hear Martin's good news, but others were not—including the Pope and the king! They had his books burned and him arrested. They hoped to kill Martin, but an important man rescued him and hid him away in his castle for two years. God protected Luther from his enemies and gave him twenty-four more years to write and preach. Many thousands of people were saved. And, like Martin Luther, they had peace with God. He had forgiven their sins because of their faith in Jesus and His righteousness.

Finally at the age of sixty-two, Martin Luther died. As he died, he prayed one last prayer to God. "O my heavenly Father, God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God of all comfort, I thank You, that You have revealed to me Your dear Son, Jesus Christ, in whom I believe, whom I have preached and confessed, and whom I have loved and praised. I pray You, dear Lord Jesus Christ that my soul may

be [put in your care]. O heavenly Father, though I must leave this body and this life, I know for certain that I will be with You for eternity and that no one can tear me out of Your hands," he prayed.

Gone was the fear of God as the Righteous Judge who would not accept an unrighteous sinner like him. God had revealed Himself as not just the Righteous Judge, but as the loving, merciful God through Jesus Christ. By faith in Jesus that God gave him, Martin knew that He was pleased with him...and he left this world for the next in complete peace.

**Our Bible Truth is:
God Reveals Himself Most Completely through
His Son, Jesus**

Our Bible Verse is: Hebrews 1:1-3 ESV

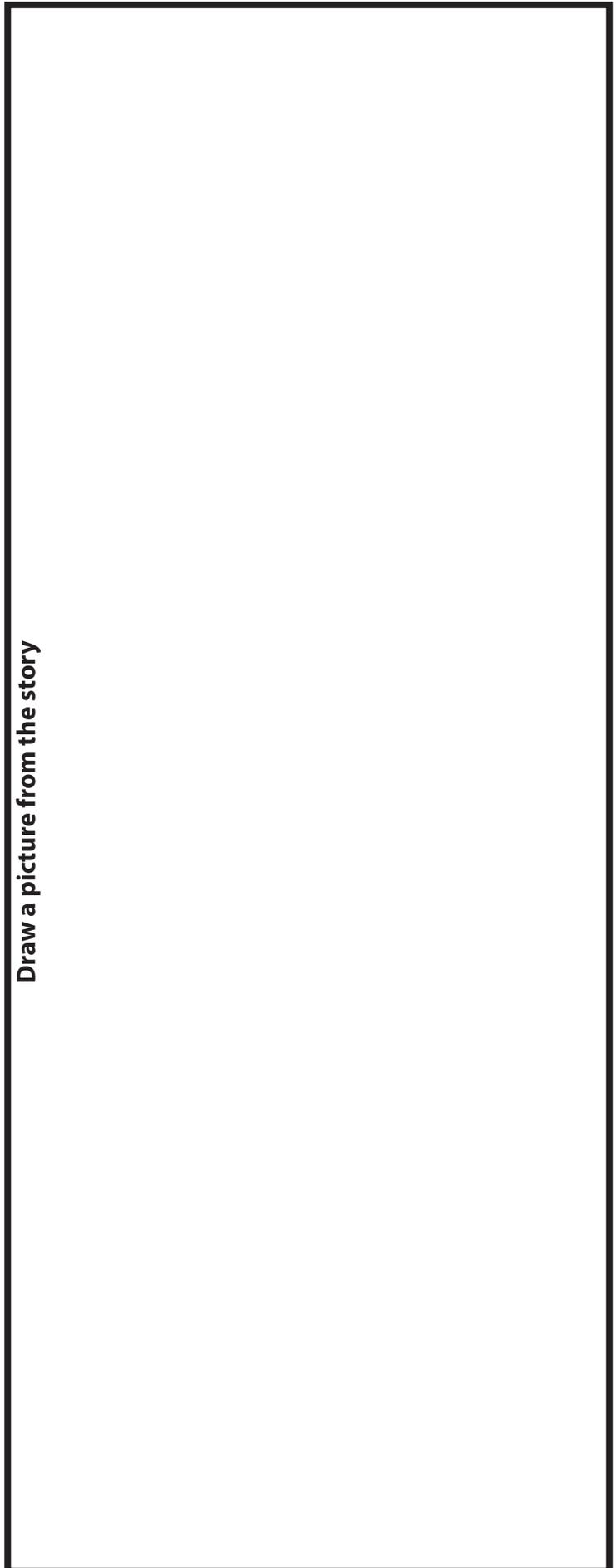
"Long ago...God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son...He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature..."

God sent His Son, Jesus, to show us what He is like and to save His people. The Bible calls Jesus the radiance of God's glory and the exact imprint of His nature. That means when we learn about Jesus and see what He is like, we are seeing what God is like: completely holy, powerful, loving and good.

It took Martin Luther ten years of studying and crying out to the Lord before he could see this truth, but it is different for us! We know about the love and mercy God shows to all who turn from their sins and turn to trust in Jesus as their own Savior. We know that all who do this are completely forgiven of their sins, now and forever. If we repent of our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior, He will do this for us, too.

Let's praise this God who though perfectly righteous, has shown us such love and mercy. And let's ask Him to give each of us the gift of faith to believe in Jesus so that we can be saved and know Him and the pleasure of His love and forgiveness, just like Martin Luther.

Draw a picture from the story



SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU	BIBLE TRUTH HYMN
<p>1. A Question about the Bible Truth, True or False: In Jesus' short life on earth, He showed us more about God than anything else in the whole world. Answer: True.</p> <p>2. Crack the Case Questions: a. Who was the Not-Good-Enough Man? What was he trying to be good enough for? How did he try to make himself good enough? Answer: Martin Luther. He tried to do lots of good works and keep all of God's laws so God would accept him and save him from his sins.</p> <p>b. Who did he come to know that was good enough? Why was this person good enough? Answer: Jesus. Jesus was the perfect Son of God. He was perfectly pleasing to His Father. He gives His righteousness to us when we repent of our sins and believe in Him. Martin Luther learned that it was by faith in Jesus rather than his own good works that he could be accepted by God.</p> <p>3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse: Hebrews 1:1-3 "Long ago...God ___ to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his ___...He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact ___ of his nature..." Answers: spoke; Son; imprint.</p>	<p>O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing <i>PFI ESV Songs 1, Track 22</i></p> <p>Verse 1 O, for a thousand tongues to sing, My great Redeemer's praise, The glories of my God and King, The triumphs of His grace!</p> <p>Words: Charles Wesley Music: Carl G. Glaser</p> <p>This hymn reminds us that Jesus is the great Redeemer who came to earth to show us what God is like and to save His people from their sins. When we see what God has done through Jesus, we want to sing of His glorious love and mercy and grace shown to undeserving sinners.</p>
AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY	BIBLE VERSE SONG
<p><i>A=Adoration, C=Confession, T=Thanksgiving, S=Supplication</i></p> <p>A God, we praise You for being the Provider of Your people's righteousness through Jesus.</p> <p>C God, we confess that we are all sinners who can never do enough good works to please You. We need Jesus to be our Savior!</p> <p>T God, we thank You for sending Jesus to pay for the sins of Your people! Thank You that no one is too sinful to find forgiveness in Jesus.</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. Please help us to be more grateful for all You do for us through Jesus!</p>	<p>The Son Is the Radiance <i>PFI ESV Songs 1, Track 23</i></p> <p>The Son is the radiance, the radiance of God's glory, The Son is the radiance, the radiance of God's glory, And the exact imprint of His nature, And the exact imprint of His nature, The Son is the radiance, the radiance of God's glory, The Son is the radiance, the radiance of God's glory, Hebrews Chapter One, verse three.</p> <p>Words: Hebrews 1:1-3, ESV Music: Constance Dever ©2012</p> <p>The Bible tells us that when we see what Jesus is like, we are seeing what God is like. There is nothing or no one else who can show us more about God than Jesus. That's because Jesus is God!</p>