

LIFE POINT

People can believe that Jesus is the Savior.

THOMAS BELIEVED



LEADER BIBLE STUDY



LEVEL OF BIBLICAL LEARNING

God's salvation is a gift that every person needs and can receive.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

John 20:19-31

UNIT VERSE

"For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life."

John 3:16 (CSB)

WEEKLY VERSE

"For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life."

John 3:16 (CSB)

SUGGESTED FOR THE WEEK OF

April 12

CONTEXT AND COMMENTARY FOR PERSONAL STUDY AND PREPARATION

(For age-appropriate language, use the Bible story on the following pages.)

Merriam-Webster provides three definitions of the word *doubt*: "to call into question the truth of," "to lack confidence in," and "to consider unlikely."

Thomas displayed doubt when the disciples said, "We've seen the Lord!" He called their story into question by pragmatically pointing out the effects of the crucifixion and the mortal wounds in Jesus' hands and side. He considered their claim highly unlikely, beginning his response with an uncertain "if." He lacked confidence in their claims by stating that he needed to see it to believe it. Thomas' doubt was certain. Considering what they all experienced, the resurrection claims were unbelievable. Would we have responded any differently in that situation?

Doubt is a normal part of the human experience. Many people who love Jesus deeply also experience seasons of doubt. Author C.S. Lewis wrestled with doubt after the loss of his wife. Preacher Charles H. Spurgeon confessed moments of doubt and depression. While in a Nazi prison camp, Corrie ten Boom struggled to see the goodness of God. Jesus came for people with doubts. He died for people with uncertainty. He rose again for people needing to overcome fear. Doubt is strong, but God's grace is stronger.

Believers can experience doubt when they encounter difficult circumstances beyond their control. While doubt is not sin, the consequences of sin can produce doubt. Through Christ, believers can have peace despite their circumstances, and they can know the freedom of forgiveness. (Ephesians 2:13-14; Romans 8:1-2)

God knows the frailty of the human heart. He understands doubt. God gives reassurance to the believer. First John 3:19-20 tells us, "This is how we will know that we belong to the truth and will reassure our hearts before him whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows all things."

Jesus knew what Thomas needed. The next time Jesus visited the disciples, Thomas was present. Jesus invited Thomas to touch His hands and His side. The unbelievable became real. Thomas could only exclaim, "My Lord and my God!"

Jesus knows what you need. As you pray this week, be honest with God. Share your doubts. Be specific, like Thomas. Imagine yourself in Jesus' presence. Look at the wounds in His hands and His side. Thank Him that His love never wavers and is bigger than your feelings.



FREE weekly Bible Studies for Life Kids audio training

<http://www.ministrygrid.com/inspired-empower/fbb-worship-for-the-lives-podcast>



PRACTICE BIBLE SKILLS

- ~~Call attention to the "Books of the Bible Chart."~~
- Ask four volunteers to each look up one of the Gospels in their Bibles. (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John)
- Ask the kids what story each of these books tells. (*the story of Jesus' life on earth*)
- Remind the kids that each of these Bible books tells the same story, but from four different people's perspectives. The four Gospels all tell about Jesus' life when He lived on earth.

➤ Printables:
"Books of the Bible Chart"

➤ Bibles



MISSIONS EMPHASIS

- ~~Tell kids: "Luis and Nohemi Sanchez started two Spanish-speaking churches in Missouri."~~
- * Practice counting from 1–10 in Spanish, using "Spanish Numbers 1–10."
- Form groups of two to four kids, giving each group a deck of cards.
- Lead the kids to play traditional card games, such as: "Go Fish" or "Crazy Eights," but use the Spanish words for the numbers as they play. For example: "Do you have any cincos?"
- Pray for the Sanchez family as they help and talk to people in their churches. Pray that their churches will continue to grow.

➤ Printables:
"Unit 2 Missions:
Midwest: Kansas City"
"Spanish Numbers 1–10"

➤ deck of cards



INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY

- Review the hand motions the group decided on in the last session. (Jesus took the punishment for people's sins.)
- * Show the "Unit 2 Banner" and state that people can believe that Jesus is the Savior.
- Lead kids to come up with hand motions to reflect this statement, such as placing hands over heart for *believe* and pointing up for *Savior*.
- Explain that today's Bible story will show us we can believe that Jesus is the Savior, just like the person in our story.

➤ Pack Item
10: "Unit 2 Banner"

➤ Option: "Thomas Believed" coloring page (Printables)



STUDY THE BIBLE

1. BIBLE STORY

- Guide kids to turn in their Bibles to John 20.
- Explain that in this unit, the kids will learn about salvation: how Jesus saved us through His life, death, and resurrection. They will go through John 3:16, the Unit Verse, to learn something new about the gospel—the good news that Jesus came to save us from sin.
- Open your Bible to John 20 and tell the Bible story.

BIBLE STORY: THOMAS BELIEVED

Jesus' disciples heard that He was alive and gathered in a secret place with the door securely locked. They were afraid of the people who had arrested and put Jesus to death.

Suddenly, Jesus was with them! "Peace be with you," Jesus said. He showed the disciples where His hands and His side were wounded when He was on the cross. The disciples were very glad to see Jesus. Jesus explained that He wanted them to go and tell others that He was alive. He promised to send the Holy Spirit to help them, and He told the disciples to forgive others.

Thomas, one of the disciples, was not with the group. The other disciples told Thomas, "We've seen the Lord," but Thomas did not believe them. Thomas said, "If I don't see and feel the marks that the nails made in His hands and touch His side, I will not believe it!"

A week later, the disciples were together again. This time Thomas was with them. The door was locked, but that did not stop Jesus from coming and standing with the disciples. "Peace be with you," Jesus said to them.

Then Jesus went to Thomas. "Put your finger on My hands and look at them. Put your hand in My side. Believe in Me!"

Thomas realized it was all true, and Jesus is alive! Thomas said, "My Lord and my God!"

Jesus answered Thomas, "You believe because you have seen Me for yourself. Blessed are those who haven't seen Me and still believe."

› Pack Items

- 10: "Unit 2 Banner"
- 11: "Unit 2 Verse"
- 12: "God So Loved Poster"
- 13: "God So Loved Cutouts"—The cross cutout will be used during this session.

› Teaching Picture 7

› Music

› Videos

› masking tape

› random objects from the room, such as a marker, play dough, paperclips, tape, sticky notes, and a small toy

› gift bag—Place the objects in the bag.

› blindfold

› marker

› index cards—Write 1 or 2 words of the Unit Verse on each card. Make 2 sets. **Option:** "Unit Verse Cards" (Printables)

Teaching Tip: Save the "God So Loved Poster" and "God So Loved Cutouts" for use throughout the unit.



STUDY THE BIBLE

Jesus did many other things when He appeared to His disciples after He rose from death. Jesus' disciple, John, wrote about Jesus so that many people may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, who gives eternal life.

— BASED ON JOHN 20:19-31

2. REVIEW

- Explain that the disciples saw Jesus after He had risen. They told Thomas they had seen Jesus alive, but Thomas did not believe them.
- Show the teaching picture and remind kids that Thomas believed Jesus had risen once he saw Him. Thomas believed Jesus was the Son of God.
- Attach the cross “God So Loved Cutout” over the correct blank on the “God So Loved Poster.” Remind the kids that we can believe Jesus died and rose again for us, just like Thomas.
- Read each Review Question. Invite kids who would like to answer to rise up from their seats and stand up. Call on the first to rise up from his seat.
- Invite a volunteer to pray, praising God that we can believe that Jesus rose from the dead and that He can save us from our sins, just like He said He would.
- Show the “Scripture Sketches” video.



3. LIFE ACTION

- ~~Encourage kids to sing “Believe (John 3:16).”~~
- Show the gift bag of objects to the kids.
- Invite one volunteer to put on a blindfold and choose something from the bag. She can guess what the object is without looking at it.
- Lead a new volunteer to the front and repeat until all the kids have had a chance to try.
- Explain that the kids could not see the objects, but they could guess what they were through other ways (how they felt).
- State: “Thomas did not believe Jesus had risen until he saw Him. However, Jesus tells us we can believe in Him without seeing Him! We can know who He is and trust what He says by reading His Word and praying.”
- Show “The Adventures of Dab and Derek” video.



4. UNIT VERSE

- Show the “Unit 2 Verse” and invite kids to read it aloud.
- Form two groups and give each group a set of “Unit Verse Cards.”
- Encourage the kids to put the verse in the correct order.
- The first team to complete the verse and have one teammate stand up and read the verse wins.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

- › What did Jesus say to the disciples when He appeared to them? (“Peace be with you.”)
- › What did Jesus show the disciples? (*His hands and His side*)
- › Who was not in the room the first time Jesus appeared to the disciples? (*Thomas*)
- › What did Thomas say to Jesus, and what do you think Thomas meant? (“*My Lord and my God!*” *Thomas meant that he recognized Jesus and believed He is alive.*)
- › Whom did Jesus say was more blessed than Thomas? (*those who have not seen Him and still believe in Him*)
- › Why did John write about Jesus in his book? (*John wrote about Jesus so that people would believe Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, who gives eternal life.*)



LIVE IT OUT

CHOICE 1

- › Kids Activity Pages
- › pencils
- › chair
- › dry erase marker and marker board or poster board

CHOICE 2

- › Kids Activity Pages
- › pencils
- › plastic cups (1 per pair of kids)

CHOICE 1

UNDERSTANDING FAITH

- Place a chair in the middle of the room and encourage the kids to gather around it.
- Choose one volunteer to sit in the chair.
- Ask the volunteer in the chair why he did not examine the chair first. (such as test if it is sturdy, look underneath to see how the legs are attached to the seat)
- Mention that the volunteer automatically sat in the chair because he knew the chair was made to hold him. He trusted the chair to do what it was meant to do.
- Explain that we can trust Jesus like this because He did what God sent Him to do. We can trust that Jesus died and rose again for us. We did not see Jesus like Thomas did, but Jesus says that we are even more blessed than Thomas, because we can believe without seeing Him!
- Lead the kids to think of things they believe about Jesus and write their ideas on the board.
- Encourage kids to use their ideas to fill in “Believe Hands” on their Kids Activity Pages.

CHOICE 2

HANDS, SIDE, CUP

- Form pairs of kids. If you have an odd number of kids, enlist a leader to participate with the child who does not have a partner.
- Instruct the pairs to stand facing each other and place a plastic cup on the ground between each pair.
- Call out: “hands,” “side,” or “cup.” If you call out: “hands/side,” each person must touch her own hands/side, respectively. If you call out “cup,” everyone must try to pick up the cup on the floor in front of them.
- Whichever person from each pair gets the cup first wins. The other partner is out.
- Encourage the kids who are still in the game to find a new partner and repeat until there is one winner.
- Say: “Thomas told others he would not believe Jesus had risen from the dead unless he touched the scars on His hands and sides. When Jesus appeared to Thomas, Jesus told him to touch His hands and side. Thomas believed! He knew Jesus was alive again.”
- Guide kids to complete “Believe Word Search” on their Kids Activity Pages and allow volunteers to share the answers.



LIVE IT OUT

CHOICE 3

HANDS CRAFT

- Invite kids to make a hands craft.
- Give each person a piece of construction paper. Set out markers and scissors for the kids to share.
- Instruct the kids to trace their hands on their construction papers and cut them out.
- Lead the kids to cut a hole in the middle of their paper hands cutouts.
- Direct kids to write *My Lord and my God!* on their paper hands, just like Thomas said when he saw Jesus and touched the mark on His hand.
- Say: “Thomas knew Jesus was alive when he saw Him and touched His hands and side. Jesus appeared to many people after He rose again, and many people believed He was the Messiah, the Son of God, who gives eternal life.”
- Lead the kids to think of things they believe about Jesus and write their ideas on the board.
- Encourage kids to use their ideas to fill in “Believe Hands” on their Kids Activity Pages.

WRAP UP

- As kids leave, encourage them to give you a high five and say: “Jesus is the Savior!”
- Remind kids to take home their One Conversation pages and review them with their families.

CHOICE 3

- › Kids Activity Pages
- › pencils
- › construction paper
- › markers
- › scissors
- › dry erase marker and marker board or poster board