

Jesus & Doubting Thomas

John 20:19-31 Children's Message

He's alive...no doubt! Believing the unseen

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Main Objective: It can sometimes be difficult to understand and explain how we know that God's word is true. Kids and adults all wrestle with doubts. This message uses the story of Thomas to remind children that if we believe in Jesus we are called blessed. We cannot always know things beyond a shadow of a doubt, but through faith and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we trust the reality of the Bible.



Law/Gospel Theme: The world sometimes tells us to be skeptical and hunt for evidence to support whatever we might consider. There are plenty of things that are difficult to verify, especially in the life of a Christian and the story of the resurrection. But we know from the Bible that Jesus rose, and that He appeared to His disciples. He also told them that those who believe without sight are especially blessed.

Optional Materials: Paper bags or boxes; items to show (stuffed animal, ball, flower, etc.)

Message: Note: All elements are open to adjustment. Cater to the needs of your group.

Greet children and introduce the "guessing game" of the message.

Good morning!

Today we are going to talk about trust, and how we can know that something is true...what if I told you that I have climbed Mount Everest? Would you believe that? *(Take responses...hey, maybe you have climbed Mount Everest!)*

Why or why not? What if I told you I brushed my teeth this morning? That might be a little more believable, but you still didn't watch me do it, so you would have to take my word for it. Well, look at this bag. Would you believe me if I told you I had a ball in this bag? How do you know?

Have one child come up to look. (child's name), is it a ball? Ask other children do you believe her? Do you believe me? Hold it up. Now we can know for sure, right? Okay, well, here's another bag. What do you think is in here?

This time, I want (another child) to come up, but you can't look at the inside of the bag. You may only touch the item. What do you think it is? Can you know for sure without seeing it? It might be a little trickier... (Address the group again) Would you believe him/her if you didn't see what this was?

Well, in our gospel lesson today, someone had a hard time believing what others tried to tell him. The story of Jesus appearing to his disciples after Easter is so exciting. Imagine watching Him die, and feeling so upset, and then seeing Him alive again! But one disciple missed out.

He wasn't there in the room when Jesus came, and didn't see him personally. He did not believe what his friends told him about witnessing Jesus, and promised that he wouldn't believe it until he saw Jesus face to face. When Jesus did show up later, and showed His wounds, Thomas must have felt embarrassed. But the neat thing is that Jesus said "blessed are those who have not seen, and yet still believe."

He commended people who believed in Him without witnessing face to face. Do you know who that is? That's us! We haven't physically seen Jesus, but we can still believe in Him.

How? How do we know about Jesus? (*Hopefully someone pipes up with "the Bible" answer*). That's right! We might hear about Jesus from other people, and that is great. But we have the word of GOD, most importantly.

We have the stories of the Bible, and we know what God's word says is true. In order to trust someone or something, we have to know that it is trustworthy. God has most definitely proved Himself trustworthy. He does what He says He'll do. His promises are real and are true.

The Bible gives us great hope. We can't see God necessarily, but we see His evidence and know He gives us life. The Bible is God's word, given to us so that we can know and believe!

Prayer: Offer thanks that we can trust God, and ask for help in doing so:

(Have kids repeat each line, if desired)

Dear God,

Thank you for saving us

Thank you for your love

Help us to believe

Even in what we cannot see.

Thank you for Jesus!

In His name, amen

Bible Verses to Reference:

[John 20:19-31 \(NIV\) Jesus Appears to His Disciples](#)

¹⁹ On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

²¹ Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone’s sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”

Jesus Appears to Thomas

²⁴ Now Thomas (also known as Didymus^[a]), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!”

But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”

²⁶ A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.”

²⁸ Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”

²⁹ Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

The Purpose of John’s Gospel

³⁰ Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But these are written that you may believe^[b] that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Footnotes:

[John 20:24](#) Thomas (Aramaic) and Didymus (Greek) both mean twin.

[John 20:31](#) Or may continue to believe

[New International Version \(NIV\)](#)

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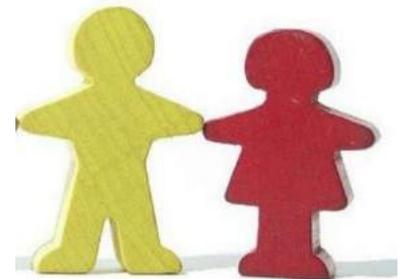
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