

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

John 20:19-31

At this stage in their development, fifth- and sixth-graders have a difficult time understanding what faith is. They can grasp the concept of trust, but “having faith” in a God they can’t see may be a bit of a stretch. Use this lesson to help them make the connection between trusting God and having faith in him. Then help them see that trusting God with their lives is the best choice they could ever make.



► Bible Point


Believe in Jesus.

Key Verse

“Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see” (Hebrews 11:1).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will grow in specific areas of their faith.

LESSON	WHAT KIDS DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<p>1</p> <p>Getting Started</p>	<p>Can You See Him? <i>(about 10 min.)</i></p> <p>Look into a special poster and find pictures of Jesus.</p>	<p>tape</p> <p>Teacher Pack: “Face Value” poster</p> 	<p>Tape the “Face Value” poster to a wall.</p>
<p>2</p> <p>Bible Exploration</p>	<p>Doubter’s Debate <i>(about 20 min.)</i></p> <p>Consider the roles of the disciples and Thomas as they prepare a debate on faith.</p>	<p>Bibles, Bible Buzz, pens</p>	<p>Tear out the Lesson 7 pages from each Bible Buzz student book.</p>

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



LESSON	WHAT KIDS DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	Real-Life Faith <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Make a collage of faith.	Bible Buzz; magazines; ½ of a poster board, scissors, and a glue stick for every 3 or 4 kids	
	Help Me Believe <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Identify areas of faith struggles and commit those to God.	Bibles, Bible Buzz, pens	
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Buzz	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	Bible Buzz	

***Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.*



Jesus Appears to His Disciples

John 20:19-31

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS



Scared Disciples

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Hiding in a room with the doors locked “for fear of the Jews” — that’s where Jesus found his disciples the evening of his resurrection day! They knew Jesus had been crucified. Some, no doubt, had seen him die. They had heard from the women that Jesus had risen, but they hadn’t seen him. Confusion must have ruled their thoughts and conversation that evening.

Seeing Jesus

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Jesus must have looked somewhat different in his new spiritual body. Mary didn’t recognize him at first outside the tomb (John 20:14). And apparently Jesus’ appearance to the disciples didn’t immediately allay their fears because his first words were “Peace be with you!” Then he showed the disciples the wounds in his hands and side to verify his identity. It may have taken a moment, but finally the disciples’ fears and confusion fell away, and they were overjoyed!

Our Advantage

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Having faith was not easy for these first-century disciples. Thomas was really no different from the others. The other disciples demonstrated by their actions that they doubted Jesus’ resurrection until they actually saw him. It’s easy to think that those living in Jesus’ day had an advantage over us in developing faith. But we may have the advantage. Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection didn’t fit the disciples’ expectations of the Messiah. They had to reconsider all their preconceived notions of the Messiah. They had to match Jesus’ actions with what the Old Testament Scriptures predicted about the Messiah. Only then could they fully have faith.

What Is Faith Anyway?

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Faith means trusting Christ for everything. It means believing in his sacrifice on the cross and living a life of gratitude for what he’s done. It means giving up any hope of winning God’s favor by our human efforts. It means seeking Jesus above all else.

The Jesus Connection

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Reread John 20:29. Jesus is talking about you! It takes great faith to believe when you can’t see or touch Jesus; that’s why he calls your relationship with him “blessed”!

Do you ever feel like Thomas? Jesus revealed himself to Thomas and allayed his doubts. What doubts or faith questions do you have? Speak openly to God about them in prayer, and then look for ways God will reveal himself to you through Scripture, your pastor’s words, Christian friends, prayer, nature, or the promptings of the Holy Spirit. You can write your prayer here.





Can You See Him? Supplies

tape
Teacher Pack
“Face Value” poster

Can You See Him? Easy Prep

Tape the “Face Value”
poster to a wall.

Doubter’s Debate Supplies

Bibles
Bible Buzz
pens

Doubter’s Debate Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 7
pages from each Bible
Buzz student book.

1 GETTING STARTED

Can You See Him?

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Point out the “Face Value” poster, and ask kids to tell you what the picture shows. They’ll easily be able to tell you the picture shows a smiling girl.

Ask:

- **Why were you able to tell me so easily what this picture shows?**

Say: **The picture of the smiling girl is obvious. But there’s more.**

Have kids form a line and slowly walk past the picture, looking closely at it, and share what they see in the dots that make up the girl’s face. If kids are having a hard time telling what the images are, have them look at the images within the letters of the title.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What made seeing Jesus in this picture so difficult?**
- **Tell about a time you saw Jesus in the middle of a situation that didn’t seem to be about him.**

Say: **All of you clearly saw the picture of the smiling girl. But Jesus may have been harder to see. Today we’re going to look at the faith of the disciples after Jesus’ resurrection. Most of the disciples had faith in Jesus when they saw him resurrected. But one disciple didn’t see Jesus, and he didn’t accept at face value what the other disciples said. Let’s explore the disciples’ experience as we learn to**
▶ **BELIEVE IN JESUS.**

2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Doubter’s Debate

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Earlier some women claimed that Jesus’ tomb was empty and they had seen**



the Lord. The disciples didn't all respond to this news in the same way. Let's take a closer look at their response.

Distribute this week's Bible Buzz pages, and have kids find the "Doubter's Debate" section. Form four groups. Assign the role of the disciples to two sets of kids, and have them read the instructions under the heading "The Disciples." Assign the other two groups the role of Thomas, and have them read the instructions under the "Thomas" heading. Make sure groups only answer the question about what kind of faith it would take, at this point. When both groups have read their assigned Bible passages and answered the questions, proceed with these additional instructions:

Say: **You've just been assigned to a debate team to debate the following question: What does it mean to have faith?**

Based on what you read about your group's person or people, work with your group to explain faith. Then write your group's debate points under "What does it mean to have faith?" on your Bible Buzz page. The Disciples group should argue that belief just requires hearing the truth. The Thomas group should argue that you need to see it for yourself to believe. Base your points on supporting those claims.

Give groups a few minutes to create their lists. Then have the groups each choose a debater to present the group's list of points. Have one "Disciples" group present its list first. Then have a "Thomas" group follow. Then give groups opportunities for rebuttal. Repeat this with the other two groups.

Ask for a willing preteen to read John 20:26-29 aloud.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Do you identify more with Thomas or the disciples? Explain.**
- **Which is harder—doubt or belief? Explain.**
- **What are some things you doubt?**

Say: **Jesus didn't condemn Thomas for his doubts. He even asked Thomas to examine his wounds. We don't know if Thomas did this, but we do know he confessed the name of Jesus when he said, "My Lord and my God!"**

Thomas needed to see Jesus to believe he was alive. But we can ► BELIEVE IN JESUS even though we can't see him. Jesus even said in verse 29, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."



Real-Life Faith Supplies

Bible Buzz magazines
½ of a poster board, scissors, and a glue stick for every 3 or 4 kids

Help Me Believe Supplies

Bibles
Bible Buzz pens

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Real-Life Faith

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Direct kids to find and read the Key Verse, Hebrews 11:1, on their Bible Buzz pages: “Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.”

Have preteens get into groups of three or four; distribute half of a poster board, magazines, scissors, and a glue stick to each group.

Say: **Believe it or not, people use faith all the time. Sometimes we don't see it simply because we don't look for it. Look through the magazines, cut out pictures that represent “faith” to you, and create a collage.**

Give kids about 10 minutes to search the magazines and create their collages.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What about your pictures makes you think about faith?
- What made it hard to find pictures or create a picture about faith?
- After creating your collage, what are some new thoughts you have about faith?
- How has this exercise strengthened your faith?

Say: **These collages show us how faith isn't always something we can define or illustrate easily. But we do know that we can ► BELIEVE IN JESUS, even though we can't see him. Hebrews 11:1 tells us that “faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.” Thomas had a hard time believing in a Jesus he couldn't see, but we can have faith that Jesus is there and that he loves us.**

Help Me Believe

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Thomas isn't the only one who has ever had questions about his faith.**

Distribute Bibles, and ask a willing preteen to read John 20:19-20 aloud.

Say: **Notice that the other disciples weren't overjoyed to see Jesus until after he had shown them the same evidence that Thomas asked for a short time later. As we've learned from our discussions today, faith has to be wrestled with before it can be understood.**



Have kids find the Key Verse, Hebrews 11:1, on their Bible Buzz pages again: “Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.”

Ask:

- **How can this verse encourage you in your faith struggles?**

Say: **Because Jesus didn’t condemn Thomas for his faith struggles, we know he also doesn’t condemn us for ours. In fact, it’s often through our struggles that we grow in our faith.**

Have kids find the “I Am a Thomas, Too!” section on their Bible Buzz pages.

Say: **Thomas’ faith had both strengths and weaknesses. Under each heading, write a prayer to God about your faith.**

Give kids a few minutes to write their prayers.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What was difficult about writing these prayers?**
- **How did this exercise help you see what it means to have faith?**
- **How has God already helped you grow in your faith?**
- **What’s one area in which you want to have a stronger faith?**

Say: **Thomas’ faith was encouraged when he saw Jesus. Jesus said we are blessed when we believe in him even though we can’t see him. Let’s ► BELIEVE IN JESUS today.**

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You’ll Do

Say: **Let’s think about how we can ► BELIEVE IN JESUS this week.**

Have kids find this week’s Daily Challenges on their Bible Buzz pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Write down a list of things you believe about Jesus.**
- **It’s okay to have doubts. Being honest about your doubts helps you grow in faith. Tell a trusted family member about a faith weakness or doubt you have.**

Daily Challenges
Supplies

Bible Buzz



- **Create a faith collage. Include pictures of faith in your life. These can be symbols of things you believe about Jesus or things in your life that represent faith. Each day add to it a phrase or picture that encourages your faith.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell the kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, place, and other ideas.**

Say: **Thomas needed to see Jesus before he would believe. That's not possible for us, but we can show we still ► BELIEVE IN JESUS this week by following through on our Daily Challenges.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and how we can believe in Jesus. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Buzz pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families! Available at group.com/digital.

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids. Encourage kids to quietly pray the prayers they wrote on their Bible Buzz pages.

**Weaving Faith at
Home
Supplies**

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Bible Buzz