

Jesus Helps Thomas Have Faith- John 20:19-31

THE POINT

Focus:

- Jesus resurrected from the dead.
- Jesus cares that his followers believe his Word.

Application:

- We can trust that Jesus rose from the dead.
- We can trust Jesus with our questions and doubts.

HEART CONNECTION (7-10 MINUTES)

Activity

- 2 signs, one with "I doubt it" and "I believe it" - taped to each wall
- List of statements for kids to evaluate

Content:

Today we're going to play a games called "I Doubt It!". Do you know what doubt is? When someone tells you something that you just can't believe. For each statement that I read, you have to decide if you believe it (point toward Believe sign) or doubt it (point toward doubt sign).

Here are just a few suggestions -feel free to add in some of your own for your congregation, from your personal life, or about your city!

- **There are more than a million people in the world (True/Believe)**
- **All cats are vegetarians (False/Doubt)**
- **Our meets at 10am on Sundays**
- **Jesus love is for everyone (True/Believe)**

STORY CONNECTION (9-11 MINUTES)

MATERIALS:

- Coloring Page for Doubting Thomas (available online)
- Crayons or other coloring supplies
- Clipboards or hard work surfaces

Optional:

- Print an outline of a person (to represent Jesus) and have the children draw on the scars in Jesus' hands and side

Instructions:

Say something like:

Last week, we learned about how Jesus conquered sin and death by his resurrection. This celebration is called Easter, and it lasts for 6 weeks. During Easter, we'll learn more about Jesus' last days with his disciples. In our story today, he appears to many of his disciples.

One of the things Jesus' says three times in our story today is "Peace be with you".

When someone says, "Peace be with you", do you know how to respond? You say, "And also with you!" (Practice this a few times- you can make it more interesting by having them match your tone or volume).

While I read the story aloud, you can use your hands to work on coloring the story. Keep your ears on, though, to listen for the 3 times that Jesus shares peace.

Have the children sit in a circle for the story This helps include children who might feel shy, and it helps each child feel equally engaged. It reassures children that they are seen and welcome in the community.

This story is a beautiful opportunity to talk about resurrection bodies. We don't know exactly what resurrection bodies will be like, but we certainly won't be spirits or angels! We will have real bodies and will look like ourselves. Our bodies are a good gift and part of being human- they're not a "necessary evil" or a "limitation to overcome."

John 20:19-31

19 On the evening of that first day of the week, the disciples were together. They had locked the doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Jesus came in and stood among them. He said, "May **peace** be with you!" 20 Then he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were very happy when they saw the Lord.

21 Again Jesus said, "May **peace** be with you! The Father has sent me. So now I am sending you." 22 He then breathed on them. He 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."

Explain to the kids: Jesus is giving good news to his followers- their sins can be forgiven by praying to God!

24 Thomas was one of the 12 disciples. He was also called Didymus. He was not with the other disciples when Jesus came. 25 So they told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But he said to them, "First I must see the nail marks in his hands. I must put my finger where the nails were. I must put my hand into his side. Only then will I believe."

Stop here and ask of the kids- "What is Thomas asking for? He wants physical proof that Jesus is alive!"

26 A week later, Jesus' disciples were in the house again. Thomas was with them. Even though the doors were locked, Jesus came in and stood among them. He said, "May **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!"

Stop here and ask: "Why does Thomas say this? What is he saying?" He's saying, "I believe that it's you!, Jesus"

29 Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen me but still have believed."

30 Jesus performed many other signs in front of his disciples. They are not written down in this book. 31 But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. If you believe this, you will have life because you belong to him.

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WONDER CONNECTION (3-5 MINUTES)

MATERIALS: None.

I wonder what it was like for the disciples to see Jesus again.

I wonder how Thomas felt when he was away from the disciples when they first saw Jesus.

I wonder how Jesus' hands and side looked.

What do you wonder?

SPIRIT CONNECTION (7-10 MINUTES)

MATERIALS: Coloring supplies: paper, crayons, pencils, hard drawing surfaces (floor, clipboard, or a table).

Take a few minutes to talk quietly with the Lord while you draw, write, or just think inside your heard. Talk with God about the story today. This is a quiet time for you to spend with the Lord, not with your neighbor or anyone else.