

DOUBTING THOMAS

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: JOHN 20:19-29



The STORY

Read about Jesus appearing to the disciples and then Thomas in John 20:19-29.

Please note: *The discussion questions in the following sections are written to serve as a guide in teaching our youngest children. Three to six year olds are not going to be able to answer these questions like their older brothers and sisters. Please refer to the God's Story Preschool Curriculum Outline for additional ideas.*

After reading the story, use the following questions to involve the children in a discussion.

- What happened in this story? (Jesus appeared to the disciples after He rose from the dead.)
- What is amazing about Jesus appearing to the disciples? (First, He had been dead. On top of that, the door to the room was locked and Jesus simply appeared.)
- What did Jesus show His disciples and why? (Jesus presented them His nail scarred hands and feet. This was to show the disciples two things. First, He was the same man who was crucified. Second, that by His blood, as the Lamb of God, we can believe and be forgiven.)

CRAFT QUESTIONS

Coloring sheets have been provided that exemplify today's lesson: Jesus showing his palms to the disciples. Engage the children by asking:

- What is important about the nail prints in Jesus hands? (These nail prints remind us that He died on the cross. It is important to remember His death because it was through His death that Jesus brought us new life.)
- Why didn't Thomas believe? (Thomas did not believe because he did not see Jesus.)
- How are we like Thomas? (Since Jesus went to heaven He is no longer on earth for us to see. We need to believe by faith. We are the people Jesus was talking about in verse 29. The Bible tells us in 2 Corinthians 5:7 we are to live by faith not by sight.)

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SNACK QUESTIONS

While the children are eating the snack, engage the children by asking:

- Have you ever doubted something was true, if so what? (Be ready to manage their inappropriate answers.)
- What about doubting God? Is it ever hard for you to believe? (Don't try to convince them. Simply direct the doubters to pray to God and ask Him to reveal Himself just like Jesus revealed Himself to Thomas.)
- If you were Thomas, do you think it would have been hard to believe? (If most of the children say no, steer them down a more humble road, reminding them that apart from God's grace none of us would believe and choose to follow Christ.)

WHERE IS the Gospel?

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

After His resurrection, Jesus opened the minds of His disciples to understand the Scriptures (Luke 24:45). Jesus explained that He Himself was the central theme of Scriptures. Jesus very kindly introduced the disciples to the truth. He did not rebuke them for their former doubts; He called them to faith.

Thomas did not believe. Thomas was in need of Gospel truth. Jesus knew what Thomas needed and showed him His nail scarred hands. Jesus called Thomas to faith and opened His mind. Thomas immediately responded by addressing Jesus as God.

Thomas doubted but when confronted with the risen Lord who was slain for our sins, Thomas believed. Like Thomas we need to be reminded of Jesus' death that we too might believe. Though we have not seen, we have heard the Word and we can believe.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

BE A DOER OF THE WORD

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.