

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

Overview



Materials You'll Need

- no extra materials are needed for this lesson



Scriptures

Jn 20:19, 24-29

Bible Truth Objective(s)

Jesus Christ conquered death and offers everyone the chance for salvation

Behavioral Objective(s)

To identify ways to show faith in Jesus

Memory Verse

"Do not be unbelieving, but believing." (Jn 20:27)



Bible Knowledge

The Appearances of the Risen Jesus Christ

Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene in the garden by the tomb shortly after His resurrection (Mk 16:9; Jn 20:16). Although Mary did not have a good reputation before her conversion, Jesus chose to appear to her first, and commissioned her to preach the good news to the other believers. Jesus later appeared to other women (Mt 28:8-10) and to Peter (Lk 24:34).

He then appeared to the assembled disciples on the evening of His resurrection (Lk 24:36; Jn 20:19-25). The location was a house in Jerusalem, perhaps where the last meal had been shared. The disciples were hiding behind locked doors, fearful of the Jewish leaders. This also made Jesus' appearance even more miraculous. He was still in the same body in which He died, but now His flesh had been changed so that it was incorruptible and immortal. Jesus did not just appear to prove that He had risen. He also took the opportunity to remind them to wait for His Spirit to give them strength to do His work.

Eight days later, Jesus appeared to His disciples once more, this time including Thomas, who had

earlier doubted Jesus' resurrection (Mk 16:14; Jn 20:26-29).

Jesus also appeared to the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Mk 16:12; Lk 24:13-35), to five hundred people (1 Cor 15:6), to James and the apostles (1 Cor 15:7), and to Saul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-6). All of these appearances left no doubt in the minds of Jesus' followers that He was indeed the Son of God, the Savior.

The chief priests and Pharisees were afraid that Jesus' followers would steal His body to fulfill His words (Mt 27:63). Therefore, they asked Pilate to set up guards outside the tomb. When they discovered that the stone had been rolled away and the body missing, the leaders decided to bribe the soldiers who had been on guard. They instructed them to lie and say that Jesus' followers had stolen the body while the soldiers were asleep. This explanation did not make logical sense for a number of reasons. First, soldiers who fell asleep on the job would have been put to death (Acts 12:19, 26:42). They would have had to be handsomely bribed in order to risk their lives. Second, if they were really sleeping, they could not have seen anything. The chief priests and Pharisees were obviously desperate to quell any stories about Jesus really resurrecting.



Understanding Your Students

Young children think at a concrete level and have a hard time understanding the abstractness of God, or of anything unseen. To assist in the understanding of God's omnipresence, you should continuously remind them that although Jesus died on the cross, He is still alive with us in spirit. They should be reminded that He is with us all the time. He is there when we sleep, when we go to school, when we play, and as we worship Him.

Though they cannot literally see Him, teach your students to look for Him in other ways. He can be seen in the wonder of nature. He can also be felt with the heart. Your students may have trouble with this at first, but if it is consistently modeled by the teacher in

the classroom, it can become second nature to them. Begin by sharing some personal testimonies. For example, you could talk about a time you knew Jesus was there when you were very close to having an accident (if applicable), or discuss a time you witnessed something absolutely beautiful and just knew that God was truly behind it. Share testimonies of brothers and sisters in our church who undoubtedly experienced the presence of Christ in certain situations. Also allow the students to share their own testimonies on a weekly basis. They need to realize that God is always with us. We just need to see Him with our spiritual eyes. As the religious education teacher, you can create a sense that God is always with us. We should have strong peace and joy in our hearts knowing that the one who loves us more than any other is leading us by the hand through everything in life.



Vocabulary

Disciple

Jesus' student; someone who followed Jesus and learned from Him

Praise

to say nice things about someone or something



Before You Teach

When Jesus appeared to His disciples in the closed room (Jn 20:19-23), Thomas was not among them. So when the other disciples excitedly told Thomas about seeing Jesus, he replied that unless he saw the nail prints for himself and touched Jesus' side, he would not believe it. It would be eight days before Jesus appeared to them again. What might Thomas have been thinking during that time? Surely he didn't think all of the other disciples were lying about seeing Jesus. Yet, he had a hard time reconciling what they said to him with what his brain was telling him. There was no way Jesus could be alive. Although he was not right up there with the crowd during the crucifixion for fear of being arrested too, he likely saw Jesus nailed on the cross and breathe His last breath. He was probably very confused for the entire week. What exactly did he believe in?

In our walk of faith, we are encouraged to walk

by faith and not by sight. This is because God knows very well that when we rely on our eyes, we become weak. What we are capable of with our human strength is very limited. How far can we really see, even if we had perfect vision?

However, Jesus knows and understands our weakness. That is why He is a merciful God. When He appeared to Thomas eight days after Thomas made his comment, He specifically asked the disciple to take a good look at the nail prints and offered to let him touch His side. Immediately, Thomas believed. Then Jesus said, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." Jesus showed Himself to Thomas to help him overcome his unbelief. He did not want his disciple to spend the rest of his life unsure of his faith. Yet Jesus was quick to remind him that the truly blessed ones are those who believe without seeing. That is the mark of true faith. While the study of science can support the greatness of God, our faith in Him can only come through what our heart believes.



Bible Story

Look around the room. Look at all the things we have in our classroom. I see chairs for you and for me to sit on. I see windows and a door. What else can you see? (Allow students to give their opinions).

Now let's close our eyes and see if we can remember all the things we just saw. I'll name some things, and you tell me if this thing is in our room. There are small chairs in our room. (Yes.) There are windows in our room. (Yes.) There is a door. (Yes.)

Okay, everybody open their eyes. How did you know that these things are in our room? (We saw them.) Usually, we believe things that we can see with our eyes. And sometimes when we can't see the things, we might not believe them.

Our Bible story today is about a man named Thomas. He did not believe what his friends told him. Let's find out what happened.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

In our last lesson, we learned that Jesus died and came back to life. Some of His friends went to find Him in His tomb but He was not there anymore. An angel appeared and told His friends that He had risen. We know that Jesus is alive and with us all the time now. Isn't that wonderful?

On the very same day that Jesus came back to life, some other wonderful things happened. After the friends heard the news from the angel, they were very excited about what they saw and heard. They wanted to go and tell the other believers. But one of them, Mary Magdalene, stayed behind. She was crying because she didn't really know where Jesus was. As she cried, Jesus appeared to her.

Jesus asked her, "Why are you weeping?"

Jesus was asking Mary why she was crying. But Mary didn't know it was Jesus talking to her. She thought it was the gardener talking to her.

She replied, "Tell me where Jesus is."

Then Jesus said, "Mary."

When Mary heard her name, she realized it was Jesus talking to her.

Jesus continued to say, "Go and tell everyone that I am going to My Father, my God."

Mary couldn't believe her eyes and her ears. Jesus was really alive. She listened to Jesus and

quickly went to tell all the believers what she saw.

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

On that same night, all His disciples gathered together in a room. They were afraid that the people who killed Jesus would come and hurt them too. So they got together in a house and locked all the doors to keep themselves safe.

Then something happened that surprised them. Someone came in without even opening the door. Who do you think it was? (Allow for responses.) It was Jesus. Jesus had come in through the locked doors. He wanted to see His disciples so He could tell them to feel happy and not to be afraid.

He said, "Peace be with you."

All the disciples were amazed and surprised. They couldn't believe their eyes. It was Jesus. The disciples looked at Jesus' hands. They saw the marks where the soldiers had nailed Him to the cross. They knew it really was Jesus and that He was alive. How excited and happy they were to see Him.

Jesus Appears to Thomas

But one of Jesus' disciples, Thomas, was not in the room that night. So he did not see Jesus after He became alive again. The other disciples were so excited about what they had seen that they told Thomas all about what happened: that Jesus was truly alive, that they had seen Jesus, and they were even with Him in the same room. Thomas listened to them, but do you know what? Thomas didn't believe them.

Thomas said to his friends, "I want to see the marks on Jesus' hands where He was nailed to the cross. Then I will know that it is really Jesus and He really is alive."

Thomas didn't see Jesus like the other disciples did. So he didn't believe what they said. He didn't think that Jesus was really alive.

A week later, Jesus' disciples met in the same house. This time, Thomas was with them. Again, the doors to the house were locked. Just like the last time, Jesus came into the house and stood before His disciples.

Jesus said, "Peace to you."

The disciples were glad Jesus was with them again. They were also glad that Thomas was able to see Jesus for himself.

Jesus looked at Thomas. He said, "Thomas,

come and touch my hands. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.”

Jesus said these things to Thomas because He wanted Thomas to believe that He was alive.

The first time, when his friends told him about Jesus coming back to life, he did not believe. Do you think Thomas believed now? (Allow students to respond.) Thomas was surprised but He knew now that what the other disciples had said was true. It really was Jesus.

Thomas said, “My Lord and my God ”

Jesus said, “Thomas, because you have seen Me, you believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

Jesus was telling Thomas that he believed Jesus was alive after he saw Him. But how wonderful it is when people are able to believe that Jesus is alive, even without seeing Him.



Check For Understanding

1. **Who did Jesus first appear to?** (Mary Magdalene.)
2. **Where were Jesus’ disciples when He appeared to them?** (They were in a locked room because they were afraid the Jewish leaders would arrest them too.)
3. **Did Jesus have to open the door to get in?** (No, He appeared to them in the locked room, without even opening the doors.)
4. **One of His disciples wasn’t there that night. What was his name?** (Thomas.)
5. **What did Thomas say to his friends when**

Jesus Is Alive Today

Today, we cannot see Jesus like the disciples did. Jesus is in heaven preparing a wonderful place for us. Even though you cannot see Jesus, do you believe that He is alive? (Allow students to answer.) All the people who saw Him, like Mary Magdalene and the disciples, couldn’t believe that Jesus could come back to life. But they saw Him and they believed. They knew He was really God because only God could perform such a miracle. Today, we know that Jesus is alive. How do you know that Jesus is alive? (Allow a variety of responses.) We know He is alive because we see many miracles. We also have His precious Holy Spirit living inside of us. All of these things tell us that Jesus is alive. Every day, He is protecting us and watching over us. Let’s praise God and be glad for the wonderful things He has done for us.

they told him they saw Jesus? (He said he would not believe unless he saw Jesus with his own eyes.)

6. **What did Jesus do eight days later?** (He came to see His disciples, and He showed Thomas the nail prints in His hands.)
7. **How did the disciples feel when they saw Jesus?** (They were happy that Jesus was alive.)
8. **Have you ever seen Jesus?** (No, but we believe in Him because the Bible tells us many stories about Him.)
9. **Do you believe He is alive today?** (Yes. We know Jesus is alive today because we can talk to Him in prayer anytime we want to. Jesus listens to us and He will answer us.)



Life Application Story

Having Faith in Jesus

It was a cold winter morning. Mrs. Lewis had gotten up a little bit early and made pancakes for everyone. She thought it was the kind of weather

where everyone would want to eat something fresh and hot. As she put the last of the batter onto the pan, she looked at the clock on the oven.

“Hmm, Julie and Tommy are usually up by now,” she thought to herself. Just as she was taking the last pancakes out, Tommy came into the kitchen.

“Pancakes ” he shouted. “Yummy ”

"Here is your plate. Where is your sister?" asked Mrs. Lewis.

"I don't know. Probably in her room," Tommy said as he gobbled up the pancakes.

Mrs. Lewis went to Julie's room to check on her. When she knocked on the door, there was no answer. She opened the door a little and peeked in. Julie was still in bed.

"Julie, I cooked your favorite. Get up so you can have some," Mrs. Lewis called out.

Julie let out a soft, "No, thanks."

Mrs. Lewis knew something was not right. Julie would never refuse pancakes. She opened the door wider and walked to the bed.

"What's the matter honey? Are you not feeling well today?" Mrs. Lewis asked.

"Not very well," Julie said. "My throat hurts and my body feels tired all over. I was going to tell you but I didn't want to get up."

"Let me take a look," Mrs. Lewis.

She touched Julie's forehead. It was warm.

"Well, you may be getting sick. How about I go and get you some medicine to make your throat feel better?" Mrs. Lewis asked.

"Okay," replied Julie.

Mrs. Lewis went out of the room. She went back to the kitchen to tell Tommy about her sister. Then she grabbed a bottle of medicine and headed back to Julie's room. As she walked in, she saw Julie, kneeling on the bed.

"What are you doing?" asked Mrs. Lewis.

"I'm praying to God. You always tell me that if I am sick, I can ask God to make me better," Julie answered.

"Yes, and I am so proud of you for doing it," smiled Mrs. Lewis. "Actually, I went to the kitchen to tell your brother to come to your room as soon as he is done eating so that we can all pray together. I guess you beat us to it."

Just as Julie got back into bed, Tommy walked in.

"Okay, let's pray," he announced.

The three of them closed their eyes and prayed to God for a few minutes. When Mrs. Lewis opened her eyes, she saw that Julie had fallen asleep.

"Thank God Julie feels a bit better," whispered Mrs. Lewis.

"How do you know?" Tommy asked in a soft voice.

"Because she was able to fall asleep, and I didn't even give her the medicine yet," explained Mrs. Lewis.

"You mean God already made her all better?" asked Tommy as they walked out of the room. Mrs. Lewis slowly shut the door to Julie's room so as not to wake her.

"Maybe not all better, but well enough for her to get some sleep," said Mrs. Lewis. "And I am sure it had to do with the fact that your sister prayed to God to help her, even before she took any medicine. That shows God that she has a lot of faith. God likes to see us trust Him, even when we are sick."

"We prayed for her too," Tommy added.

"Yes, and I am sure God heard our prayers. When we trust God to take care of us, even when we can't see it right away, that shows faith in Him. It is just like when Jesus became alive again. Remember Thomas, who didn't believe it? He wanted to see Jesus for himself. Later on, he did see Jesus and he believed. But Jesus said that those who believe in Him, even without seeing Him, are truly blessed. That means when we have faith in God, no matter what, God will help us and bless us," Mrs. Lewis said.

"Just like how He is helping Julie now," offered Tommy.

"Yes, just like now," Mrs. Lewis smiled. "Oh, I had better keep those pancakes warm for later. She might get hungry. Come on, let's go to the kitchen and clean up."

Questions to Think About

1. **Have you ever prayed to God to make you better?** (Allow students to answer.)
2. **How can we show faith in God?** (Allow students to answer.)
3. **How does God feel when we have faith in Him?** (It makes God happy because we are showing we love Him and believe in Him.)



Activity 1

Jesus Is Alive □

Review the story by reading the rebuses.

A long time ago, Jesus died on the cross. But He rose again. Jesus came back to life. But His disciples did not know that right away. After Jesus died, the disciples stayed together in a house with doors that were locked. They were afraid. But Jesus wanted them to be happy that He was alive. So one night, He went right through the locked doors and showed Himself to the disciples. They were happy to see Him alive. But Thomas was not there at that time. So a week later, Jesus went to see the disciples again. This time, Thomas was there. He was happy and believed.



Activity 2

How Do We Know Jesus Is Alive?

Draw lines to connect the pictures to the matching words.

1. Praying with the Holy Spirit.
2. Reading the words of God, the Bible.
3. Having miracles that show us He is alive.

Who Is Showing Faith?

1. Praying to God for someone who is sick.
2. Saying grace in front of friends at school.
3. Someone is saying, "Oh my God " when he breaks something.



Activity 3

Jesus Is Alive □

To help the students review the story of Jesus' resurrection, sing the popular children's hymn, "Jesus Is Alive." Review the lyrics with the students and explain what they mean to impress Jesus' great love to the students.

Jesus is alive □ **Jesus is alive** □


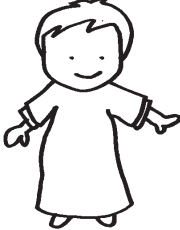
Sing of God's most wonderful surprise.

*Sing from sea to sea,
Tell the news from shore to shore,
Jesus is alive forevermore* □


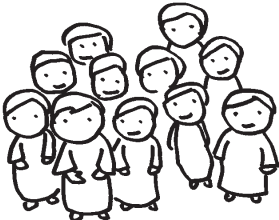
Activity 3:1

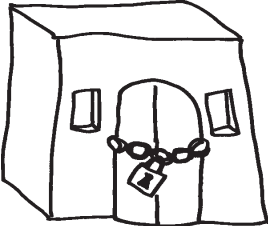
Jesus Is Alive!


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Activity 3:2

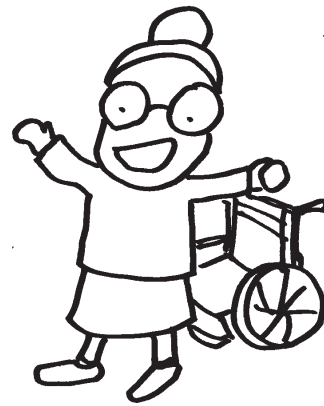
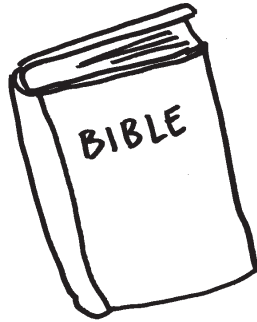
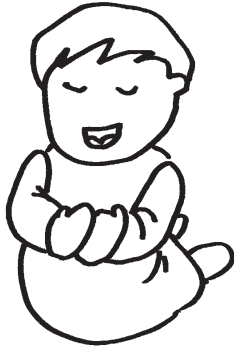
How Do We Know Jesus Is Alive?

Draw lines to connect the pictures to the matching words.

Miracles

Praying with the Holy Spirit

Reading the words of God



Who Is Showing Faith?

Look at each picture. Talk about who is showing faith, and how others can show faith.

1.



3.

2.

