

Unit 28: Jesus Is Alive

Unit Description: Jesus' resurrection was no secret. For 40 days, Jesus appeared to His disciples and hundreds of others so that they would know He is alive forevermore. Jesus wants everyone to know Him, trust Him, and live for Him.

Big Picture Question: How do we know that God wants us to know Him? We can know that God wants us to know Him because He has revealed Himself through His Word.



SESSION 1: Jesus Appeared to the Disciples Luke 24



SESSION 2: Jesus Appeared to Thomas John 20



SESSION 3: Jesus Forgave Peter John 21



SESSION 4: God Wants Us to Know Him Matthew 28



UNIT 28 | SESSION 2

JESUS APPEARED TO THOMAS

JOHN 20

KEY PASSAGE:

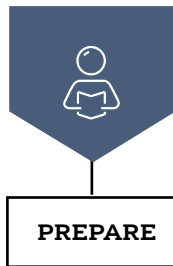
Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. John 17:3 NIV

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

How do we know that God wants us to know Him? We can know that God wants us to know Him because He has revealed Himself through His Word.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Jesus is still alive today. We have not seen Jesus, but if we believe in Him, we will be blessed. Jesus sends out believers to tell others about Him and gives us the Holy Spirit to help us.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

Toward the end of John 20, we find the disciples gathered, only a week after the discovery of the empty tomb. Word of His resurrection had already begun circulating, and Jesus even made Himself known to some followers. At this point in the story, we read of Thomas' response when faced with the news of Jesus' resurrected life.

What lessons can we learn from Thomas' doubt? Why did Christ declare our faith was more blessed than our sight?

Doubt comes so naturally to us. We so often feel the need to see things for ourselves before choosing to move forward in trust. This is as true for us now as it was for Thomas. However, unlike the doubting disciple, we do not have the scar-bearing Christ standing physically in our midst. Yet, Jesus declared this reality to be our blessing and advantage.

Thomas' encounter with Jesus offers us a significant truth about the necessity of faith. Like this disciple, we weren't physically present to witness the stone roll away or to see the Lord's burial clothes folded neatly where His body once lay. We weren't there racing at breakneck speed to see the empty tomb with our own eyes. However, we can receive the greater blessing of faith that only comes with the absence of sight. How great

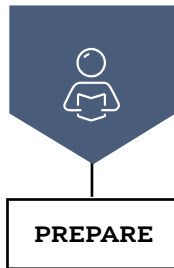
will be our joy when our faith does become sight!

Just as Jesus' resurrected body was able to appear to His disciples even while they hid behind a locked door, so can He break down the barriers to our faith. He welcomes doubters to enter in to His presence. Jesus stood among them despite their distress and fear. In fact, His initial greeting was one of gentleness and peace—not anger or apathy.

As you lead your kids this week, help them understand that Christ offers us the same peace and compassion given to Thomas and the others. He likewise commissions us to proclaim the good news to the ends of the earth. Just as Thomas heard of the resurrection through word of mouth, people around us are also dependent upon our sharing of the gospel's great news.

PEOPLE TO KNOW

Thomas: one of the first twelve disciples of Jesus. His desire for evidence of Jesus' resurrection earned him the nickname "doubting Thomas."



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- ☐ "Spell It Out" activity page

Session Starter (Option 2)

- ☐ cooked spaghetti
- ☐ cardboard box
- ☐ dried apricots
- ☐ bowls, 2



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video

Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ "Jesus Appeared to Thomas" video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- ☐ "Unit 28, Session 2" questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- ☐ "Cook Family Photo" printable

Key Passage Activity

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ "This Is Eternal Life (John 17:3)" song
- ☐ worship song of your choice (optional)
- ☐ sticky notes, 1 per kid



LOVE

Review & Bible skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set
- ☐ world map



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- ☐ dry erase board
- ☐ dry erase marker

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster
- ☐ index cards, 1 per pair

Journal and Prayer

- ☐ Journal Page
- ☐ "Live by Faith" activity page



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “Have you ever understood something you had trouble understanding before? Maybe you struggled with a math problem or you didn’t quite know how to do a certain skill. How did you come to understand how to do it?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Spell It Out” on the activity page.

SAY “Today, we will learn how Jesus appeared to Thomas, and how Thomas truly came to understand that Jesus is both Lord and God.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: BELIEVE IT OR NOT



Read the following facts below and ask kids if they believe each fact is true or not. Allow for discussion as to why they might have a hard time believing if it is true.

- A man held his breath underwater for almost 25 minutes.
- The farthest anyone has jumped is over 29 feet.
- Someone stayed awake for 11 days straight with no sleep.
- The top running speed reached by a man is around 27 mph.

SAY “These facts are true, but may be hard to believe. Would it be easier to believe them if you saw them with your own eyes? **[Allow responses.]** Today, we will learn how Thomas said he needed to see and touch Jesus before he would believe Jesus is alive. Let’s learn how Jesus told Thomas that those who have not seen Him, yet still believe, are blessed.”

☐ OPTION 2: WHAT IS IT?

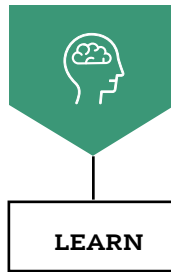
Before the session, place cooked spaghetti in a bowl and then insert the bowl into a cardboard box. On the back of the box, cut a hole big enough for kids to stick their hands in.

Invite kids one at a time to close their eyes and stick their hands in the box. Ask kids to describe what they feel. After everyone has had a turn, invite kids to guess what was in the box. Reveal the contents. Consider repeating the activity but switching out the cooked spaghetti with dried apricots.

SAY “Touching and seeing the contents in the box helped you to identify what it was. Today, we will learn how Thomas, a disciple of Jesus, said he would not believe Jesus is alive unless he saw and touched Jesus. Let’s get ready to learn how Jesus responded to Thomas.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “Hi, kids! I’m [your name], and I’m so excited you are here! Who brought their Bible to church today? Hold up your Bible and show me! [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] Our story today can be found in the Gospel of John.

Does anyone know who wrote John? [Allow responses.] The apostle John wrote this Gospel. In John 20, we learn that John wrote all the words of his Gospel so that people would believe in Jesus and have life in His name. Today, we will learn how Jesus appeared to Thomas so that Thomas would believe in Him. ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

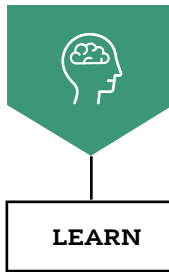
SAY “Last week, we learned our new big picture question: **How do we know God wants us to know Him?** Can you all tell me the answer? [Allow responses.] **We can know God wants us to know Him because He has revealed Himself through His Word.**

Our story today helps us understand that God wanted Thomas to know Him. We’ll learn that even when Thomas doubted Jesus’ resurrection, Jesus came and revealed Himself to Thomas. Maybe you have doubted like Thomas. But be encouraged! God loves you and wants you to know Him. He gave us His Son, Jesus—the Word made flesh—and He gave us His Word, the Bible, so we can know Him. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “After Jesus rose from the dead, He appeared to over 500 people throughout 40 days. Last week, we learned how Jesus suddenly appeared to 10 of His disciples in a room in Jerusalem. But Thomas wasn’t there. Today, we will learn how Jesus appeared to Thomas and how we can believe in Jesus even though we have not yet seen Him. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to John 20. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Appeared to Thomas.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

JESUS APPEARED TO THOMAS

“When Jesus appeared to His disciples in a house in Jerusalem, one of Jesus’ disciples, Thomas, was not there. Thomas heard the news. “We’ve seen the Lord!” his friends said. But **Thomas did not believe that Jesus was alive.**

Thomas said, “I want to see and touch the holes in His hands and His side, or I will never believe!”

One week later, Thomas was inside with the disciples when Jesus appeared again. “Peace be with you,” He said.

Then **Jesus said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and look at My hands. Reach out and touch My side. Don’t be an unbeliever; believe!”**

Thomas did believe. “My Lord and my God!” he said.

Jesus said, “You believed because you have seen Me. Those who believe in Me without seeing Me are blessed.”

Christ Connection: Jesus is still alive today. We have not seen Jesus, but if we believe in Him, we will be blessed. Jesus sends out believers to tell others about Him and gives us the Holy Spirit to help us.”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Act it out: Choose one kid to act out the role of Thomas as you act out the role of Jesus.

Cover your eyes: Invite kids to cover their eyes when you teach how those who have not seen Jesus are blessed.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Thomas had not been with the other disciples when Jesus appeared to them in the room in Jerusalem. Even though it had been eight days since Jesus appeared to the disciples, God still wanted Thomas to know Him and believe that Jesus is alive. Jesus didn’t skip out on appearing to Thomas. In fact, when Jesus appeared He spoke directly to Thomas.

What did Jesus say to Thomas? Look at John 20:27. **[Choose a volunteer to read aloud John 20:27.]** Jesus told Thomas to touch His hands and His side. Jesus knew that Thomas had doubted His resurrection.

What did Jesus tell Thomas to do? Look at John 20:27. **[Choose a volunteer to read John 20:27.]** He told Thomas to believe! Then what did Thomas say to Jesus? Look at John 20:28. **[Choose a volunteer to read John 20:27.]** Thomas believed and called Jesus his Lord and his God. Jesus was patient with Thomas and appeared to Thomas so he would believe.

Like Thomas, we may have doubts, but when we turn to Jesus and His Word, we can know that Jesus will be there to help us believe. Jesus is alive, and He wants us to know Him! God’s Word teaches us all about Jesus so that we can know Him and trust in Him even though we have not yet seen Him. Knowing and trusting in Jesus is the only way to truly be blessed. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ Jesus is still alive today. We have not seen Jesus, but if we believe in Him, we will be blessed. Jesus sends out believers to tell others about Him and gives us the Holy Spirit to help us. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 28, Session 2” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. What should we do if we have a friend who does not believe in God?
2. Why is it important to believe in Jesus without seeing Him?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Print the photo and display it as you talk about the missionaries.

SAY “ Josh Cook is a lead church planter in Denver, Colorado. Josh began to love big cities and wanted the many people who live in large cities to know Jesus. In October 2016, Josh, his wife, Sarah, and daughter moved to Denver to learn more about the city. Josh began meeting with a small team to consider where they might start a new church. ”

Explain that in 2018, Dwell Church was started and held its first gathering in a neighborhood of Denver called West Colfax. Tell kids the church first met in an elementary school and now



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

meets at a middle school. Share how the church gathers together at the school for worship on Sunday mornings and meets in homes throughout the week in community groups. Pray for Josh as he leads Dwell Church and pray for more people to help start new churches in Denver, Colorado.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud John 17:3 together.

SAY “ Thomas knew that Jesus is alive when he touched His scarred hands. We have God’s Word to know Jesus and believe in Him so that we can have eternal life. ”

Provide each kid with a sticky note and assign each kid a word or two from the key passage to write on their sticky note. For larger groups, consider forming kids into two teams. Direct kids to place the sticky note on their forehead. Challenge kids to line up in order of the key passage as you say it aloud. After a couple of rounds, direct kids to line up in order of the key passage while they say the key passage aloud on their own.

Lead kids to sing “This Is Eternal Life (John 17:3).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

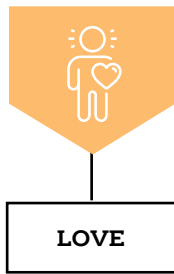
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Dear God, thank You for Jesus and thank You for the Bible. Give us eyes to see You in the Scriptures so that we can know You. Help us share Jesus with others. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Israel Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to John 20. Practice a quick run through of the Gospels by having kids name them aloud. Explain that Matthew, Mark, and Luke see the stories of Jesus in similar ways. Tell kids that the Gospel of John tells different events and miracles that Jesus did to help us understand that Jesus is the Messiah who gives eternal life to all who believe in Him.

Consider comparing the New Testament Israel Map to a modern-day map to help kids understand where these stories took place. (Tip: Locate the areas in and around modern-day Jerusalem [H4].) Choose a volunteer to read aloud John 20:29.

SAY “ Thomas is often known as ‘Doubting Thomas’ due to his failure to initially believe Jesus is alive. Even though Thomas doubted, Jesus did not turn him away. Instead, Jesus invited Thomas to see His scars and touch them. Thomas believed after he saw Jesus. Though we do not see Jesus with our eyes right now, Jesus invites us to have a relationship with Him and to investigate the truth by learning more about Him in the Bible. When we believe in Jesus, we experience His presence through His Spirit in us. One day, all who trust in Jesus will see Him face to face. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ Can a Christian doubt God? Have you ever doubted? Explain. ”

Discuss how every person struggles with doubts at times. Remind kids that it can be hard to trust and believe when we cannot understand or see with our own eyes. Tell kids that we can ask God to help us believe when we struggle with doubts. Remind kids that God has proven He is trustworthy and faithful throughout the Bible. Encourage kids to remember that we can go to God’s Word to strengthen our faith.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 Pet. 1:8-9.)

SAY “ Thomas said, ‘My Lord and my God.’ What did Thomas believe about Jesus? ”

Help kids understand that Thomas not only believed that Jesus is alive, but he also believed that Jesus is God and that He is the Ruler. Tell kids that Thomas’ belief shows that he really trusted in Jesus and had a personal relationship with Him because he said ‘my Lord.’

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read John 1:1.)

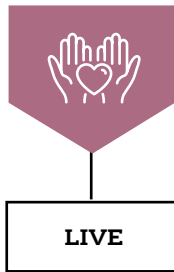
SAY “ How would you share with someone who doesn’t go to church that Jesus is alive? ”

Answers will vary. Remind kids that they can tell their story of how Jesus changed their life. Explain that they can also share the Bible with them and point them to the truths of Jesus being alive just as they learned today. Encourage kids to share the gospel with others.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Acts 4:10,12.)

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

☐ **OPTION 1: CHURCH PLANT**



Prompt kids to imagine they are part of a new church plant. Lead kids to consider what items or plans they may need to prepare for if they were helping in the Kids Ministry of the church plant. Ask questions such as “What supplies would be needed for kids?” “How would you form kids into groups?” “What would the order of activities be for kids?” etc.

Use a dry erase board to record the kids’ ideas. Discuss how these items are just a few of the considerations church planters have to make when starting a new church.

SAY “ Starting a new church can be challenging! Church planters have to think through and plan for many steps. We can pray for church planters and ask God to give them wisdom and strength as they start new churches in different communities. ”

☐ **OPTION 2: CREATING BY FAITH**



Form kids into pairs. Allow the pairs to decide who will be the artist. Provide the other kid in the pair with an index card that contains a word that the artist will draw such as a tree, car, or snowman. Provide the artist with a piece of paper and a pencil. Direct kids to not say the word on the card or let the artist see the word. Challenge kids to give step-by-step instructions to their artist on what he needs to draw and where. Explain that they can tell them to draw a specific line or a circle, where to draw each part, etc. After a few minutes, ask all the artists to share their drawings and see how close they came to the item on the card.

SAY “ As the artist drew their picture, they weren’t sure what the final drawing would look like. They depended on their partner to give good instructions. God has given us what we need to trust in Him by faith. God wants us to know Him. **We can know God wants us to know Him because He has revealed Himself through His Word.** ”

2 JOURNAL AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page. As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas.

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God’s glory and my good?
- Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

Review the gospel and encourage kids to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions. Then pray, asking God to help us share Jesus with others so they can know Him, too. As time allows, lead kids to complete “Live by Faith” on the activity page.



JOURNAL PAGE

1. What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
2. What does this story teach me about myself?
3. Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
4. Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
5. How does this story help me to live on mission better?



Unit 28 • Session 2

JESUS APPEARED TO THOMAS

John 20

**HOW DO WE KNOW THAT GOD WANTS US TO KNOW HIM?
WE CAN KNOW THAT GOD WANTS US TO KNOW HIM BECAUSE HE HAS
REVEALED HIMSELF THROUGH HIS WORD.**

When Jesus appeared to His disciples in a house in Jerusalem, one of Jesus' disciples, Thomas, was not there. Thomas heard the news. "We've seen the Lord!" his friends said. But Thomas did not believe that Jesus was alive.

Thomas said, "I want to see and touch the holes in His hands and His side, or I will never believe!"

One week later, Thomas was inside with the disciples when Jesus appeared again. "Peace be with you," He said.

Then Jesus said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and look at My hands. Reach out and touch My side. Don't be an unbeliever; believe!"

Thomas did believe. "My Lord and my God!" he said.

Jesus said, "You believed because you have seen Me. Those who believe in Me without seeing Me are blessed."

Christ Connection: Jesus is still alive today. We have not seen Jesus, but if we believe in Him, we will be blessed. Jesus sends out believers to tell others about Him and gives us the Holy Spirit to help us.

Spell It Out | Replace each letter with the letter that comes before it in the alphabet to spell out what Thomas said to Jesus. For example, H=G.



NZ MPSE BOE NZ HPE!



Live by Faith | Jesus told Thomas that those who believe in Him without seeing Him are blessed. Look up the Bible verses about faith and match them to their correct description.

Romans 1:16-17

Romans 3:28

2 Corinthians 5:7

1 John 3:2

- A.** We are only justified by faith in Jesus.
- B.** Those who place their faith in Jesus will one day be like Him.
- C.** The righteous live by faith in Jesus.
- D.** We walk by faith, not by sight.

NAME:



the **GOSPEL** PROJECT

Jesus Appeared to Thomas

BIBLE STORY SUMMARY:

- When Jesus appeared to His disciples in Jerusalem, Thomas wasn't there. Thomas did not believe that Jesus was alive. Thomas wanted to see and touch Jesus' scars.
- Later, Jesus appeared to Thomas and told him to touch His scars. Thomas believed!
- Jesus said that those who believe in Him without seeing Him are blessed.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Jesus is still alive today. We have not seen Jesus, but if we believe in Him, we will be blessed. Jesus sends out believers to tell others about Him and gives us the Holy Spirit to help us.

KEY PASSAGE: John 17:3

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

How do we know that God wants us to know Him? We can know that God wants us to know Him because He has revealed Himself through His Word.