

Faith Like Thomas

LOWER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: Thomas Sees Jesus' Wounds

Scripture: John 20:24-29

Memory Verse: 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.' - John 20:27

The Children's Sermon

We envy people who have the kind of faith that requires no physical proof, but for many of us, this will not happen. This doesn't mean that faith which asks for proof is useless. We know from historical records that Thomas goes on to become a very effective apostle. He carries the Good News to the people across Asia Minor and into India. His doubts were a stepping stone to faith.

Some of you are very young, and faith is a wonderful part of being young. You have faith that your needs will be taken care of for you. God is watching over you. He gave you mothers and fathers, teachers, and older brothers and sisters to watch out for you.

Some of you are a bit older and coming to the age where you are asking questions and perhaps like Thomas are setting up in your minds conditions to accept answers. It's part of growing up and it's part of growing in faith.

Jesus must have known this when he blessed those who believe without seeing. But he loved Thomas just as much and he loves you too. He loves you when you believe. He loves you when you ask questions. He wants you to grow in your faith. Jesus spent a lot

of time answering questions of people who were working at their faith. You are not alone when you ask questions.

So, let's talk more about Thomas. Thomas was one of Jesus' friends, called disciples. He was a very brave and loyal friend to Jesus, but even he had moments when he found it hard to believe without seeing. This is why we sometimes call him "Doubting Thomas." But this story about Thomas can teach us a lot. It shows us that it's okay to have questions and doubts.

The Doubting Thomas Sermon is not just a story about someone who didn't believe. It's a story about how Jesus helps us believe. After Jesus came back to life, he visited his friends, the disciples. But Thomas wasn't there the first time Jesus came. When the other disciples told Thomas that they had seen Jesus, he didn't believe them. He said he needed to see Jesus and touch his wounds to believe.

Now, you might wonder, why did Thomas need to see Jesus himself? Well, sometimes seeing something with our own eyes makes it easier to believe. Thomas was like that. He wanted to be sure. And that's not a bad thing. Jesus understands that sometimes we need a little help to believe.

A week later, Jesus came back. This time, Thomas was there. Jesus didn't get mad at Thomas for doubting. Instead, he showed Thomas his wounds and let him touch them. Jesus was kind and patient. He helped Thomas believe. And Thomas did believe! He said, "My Lord and my God!" This was a big moment for Thomas. His doubt turned into strong faith.

The Doubting Thomas Sermon teaches us that Jesus is patient and kind. He knows we might have doubts or questions, especially when we can't see or touch. But Jesus says it's okay. He's there to help us believe, just like he helped Thomas.

Now, let's think about how we can have faith like Thomas. Remember, Thomas' faith became strong after he asked questions and saw Jesus. We can ask questions too. When we read the Bible, pray, or talk to someone we trust about our questions, we are learning. And as we learn, our faith can grow stronger.

Sometimes, we might feel like we're the only ones who have questions or doubts. But guess what? Lots of people, even grown-ups, have questions too. It's a normal part of growing in our faith. The Doubting Thomas Sermon reminds us that we're not alone in our questions. Jesus is always ready to help us understand and believe, just like he did for Thomas.

It's also important to remember that faith is not just about believing in things we can see. Faith is trusting in God, even when we can't see Him. It's believing that He loves us, takes care of us, and has a plan for us, even when things are hard to understand.

So, what can we do when we have doubts like Thomas? We can pray and ask Jesus to help us believe. We can talk to our parents, teachers, or friends about our questions. And we can remember the Doubting Thomas Sermon, knowing that it's okay to have questions. Jesus loves us and wants to help our faith grow.

Now, are there any questions? Remember, just like Thomas, you can ask anything. Jesus loves you no matter what, and He's always ready to listen and help your faith grow.

In the Doubting Thomas Sermon, we learn that it's okay to have doubts and questions. What's important is that we keep talking to Jesus, keep learning, and keep asking. Our faith can grow stronger every day, just like Thomas'. And remember, Jesus is always with us, helping us believe, even when it's hard.

So, let's be brave like Thomas. Let's not be afraid to ask questions and seek the truth. Jesus is ready to show us just how much He loves us and help our faith grow stronger. And just like Thomas, we can say, "My Lord and my God!" with all our hearts.

Bible Memory Verse

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.' - John 20:27

You Will Need:

- Playdough (enough for each child to have a small amount)
- Construction paper
- Markers

Get Ready:

- Cut the construction paper into large enough pieces for each child to have one.
- Write the memory verse on each piece of construction paper with markers.

Do This:

1. Give each child a piece of construction paper with the memory verse and a small amount of playdough.

2. Ask the children to use the playdough to form small hands and a side (just a simple shape to represent Jesus' side). They can place these shapes on the construction paper to help visualize the verse.

3. Encourage the children to place their finger on the playdough hands and side, and say the memory verse out loud. This will help them remember the verse and understand the story of Thomas seeing Jesus' wounds.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- Red playdough
- Band-aids
- Blindfolds
- A copy of John 20:24-29 printed out or available on a device

Get Ready:

- Create small playdough models of hands and a side (just simple shapes will do) beforehand to represent Jesus' wounds. Make enough for each child or for small groups, depending on your class size. You can use the models from the Bible Memory Verse.
- Set up a "discovery" area on a table or on the floor where you'll place the playdough wounds.
- Prepare a reading area where you'll share the scripture from John 20:24-29 with the children.

Do this:

1. Start by reading John 20:24-29 together. Explain that Thomas didn't believe Jesus was alive again until he could see and touch Jesus' wounds.

2. Blindfold a volunteer and gently guide them to the discovery area. Let them touch the playdough wounds without seeing them, just like Thomas did. Ask them to guess what they're touching and explain how Thomas might have felt when he touched Jesus' wounds.
3. After the blindfolded activity, give each child a band-aid. Discuss how Jesus' wounds were a sign of His love and sacrifice for us. Let them place band-aids on the playdough wounds as a symbol of healing and belief in Jesus, even though we can't see Him with our eyes today.
4. Conclude by emphasizing that we can believe in Jesus and His love for us, even if we can't see Him, just like Thomas came to believe.

Snack Activity: Doubting Thomas' Finger Sandwiches

You'll Need:

- Bread (whole wheat or white)
- Your favorite sandwich fillings (e.g., turkey, cheese, lettuce, tomato)
- Pretzel sticks
- Plastic knives for spreading
- Cookie cutters (optional, to make shapes)

Get Ready: Prepare a clean surface for making sandwiches, and have all your sandwich ingredients ready. If using cookie cutters, select a few fun shapes that can fit a sandwich.

Do this:

1. Help each child make their sandwich with their chosen fillings. This represents the body of Christ, reminding us that Jesus was real and appeared to His disciples.

2. Once the sandwiches are made, use a pretzel stick to gently poke five 'wounds' into the top of the sandwich: one for each hand, one for each foot, and one for the side of Jesus, just as Thomas wanted to see Jesus' wounds to believe.
3. If using cookie cutters, press them into the sandwiches to create fun shapes, symbolizing how Jesus can transform our doubts into faith. Explain that just like the pretzel marks, Thomas saw Jesus' wounds and believed. We can believe in Jesus even though we haven't seen Him because of the stories and testimonies in the Bible.

Game Activity: Doubting Thomas Tag

You'll Need:

- Band-aids (enough for each child to have one)
- A spacious area to run around
- A printout of John 20:24-29

Get Ready: Before the game, read John 20:24-29 to the children and explain how Thomas doubted Jesus' resurrection until he saw Jesus' wounds. Explain that the band-aids will represent Jesus' wounds in this game.

Do this:

1. Choose one child to be 'Thomas.' The rest will be 'Disciples.' Each disciple gets a band-aid to stick on their clothing.
2. When you say 'Go,' Thomas tries to tag the disciples. When a disciple is tagged, they show Thomas their band-aid (Jesus' wound) and say a simple phrase like 'Jesus is alive!'
3. After being shown a band-aid, Thomas says 'I believe!' and both players sit down together. The game continues until all disciples have been tagged and have shown Thomas their band-aids.

4. Gather the children and discuss how seeing the wounds helped Thomas believe, and how we can believe in Jesus even though we haven't seen Him.

Craft Activity: Seeing is Believing: Thomas' Discovery

You'll Need:

- Construction paper (preferably skin-toned)
- Red marker or paint
- Scissors
- Glue
- A printout of a simple outline of a hand

Get Ready: Print or draw a simple outline of a hand on the construction paper. This will represent Jesus' hand with wounds.

Do this:

1. Cut out the hand outline from the construction paper. If you're using a printout, place it on top of the construction paper and trace it before cutting.
2. Use the red marker or paint to draw a small dot in the center of the hand and a few smaller dots around it to represent Jesus' wounds.
3. Talk about the story of Thomas and Jesus from John 20:24-29. Explain how Thomas doubted Jesus' resurrection until he saw Jesus' wounds. Emphasize the importance of faith and believing even when we can't see.
4. Glue the hand to another piece of paper and encourage the children to write or draw a message about what they learned from the story of Thomas and Jesus. Suggestions include 'Believing is seeing' or 'Jesus loves us so much, He shows us His wounds.'

Prayer Activity: Seeing and Believing: Thomas'

Journey

You'll Need:

- A blindfold for each child
- A large picture of Jesus (preferably showing His hands and side)
- Sticky notes

Get Ready: Before the class, place the picture of Jesus on a wall that's easily accessible to the children. Write different feelings such as 'happy', 'sad', 'scared', and 'surprised' on the sticky notes and place them around the room.

Do this:

1. Share the story of Thomas from John 20:24-29, focusing on how Thomas wanted to see Jesus' wounds to believe He was alive. Explain that sometimes we might not see Jesus, but we can still believe in Him and feel His presence in our lives.
2. Blindfold a child and guide them to the picture of Jesus on the wall. Allow them to touch the picture, especially where Jesus' hands and side would be. Ask them how they feel knowing Jesus loves them so much that He got those wounds for us.
3. After each child has a turn, discuss the different feelings we can have when we think about Jesus and His love for us. Let the children pick a sticky note with a feeling on it and share a time they felt that way. Conclude with a prayer, thanking Jesus for His love and asking for faith to believe in Him even when we can't see Him.