

# Faith Like Thomas

## UPPER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

**Theme:** Thomas Sees Jesus' Wounds

**Scripture:** John 20:24-29

**Memory Verse:** Then Jesus told him, 'Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.' - John 20:29

## 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 Jesus told him, 'Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.' - John 20:29**

You Will Need:

- Blindfolds
- Various objects (e.g., a plush toy, a book, a ball)
- A container to hold the objects

Get Ready:

- Gather various objects and place them in a container.
- Create a safe space in your classroom where children can move around blindfolded without getting hurt.

Do This:

1. Divide the class into pairs and have one child in each pair be blindfolded.

2. The child who is not blindfolded will pick an object from the container and place it in the hands of their blindfolded partner.

3. The blindfolded child will then have to guess the object by touch alone. After the guess, discuss how believing in something you can't see can be challenging but is a part of faith, connecting the activity to the memory verse.

## Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A printout of John 20:24-29 for each child
- Red paint and paintbrushes
- White T-shirts (one per child)
- A large piece of fabric or a roll of butcher paper
- Markers
- Scissors

Get Ready:

- Set up a painting area with red paint, brushes, and white T-shirts.
- Prepare a reading corner with cushions and copies of John 20:24-29.
- Lay out the large piece of fabric or butcher paper on a flat surface with markers nearby.

Do this:

1. **Reading and Discussion:** Start by gathering the children in the reading corner. Hand out the printouts of John 20:24-29. Read the passage together. Discuss the significance of Thomas' doubt and how Jesus addressed it. Emphasize Jesus' statement, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

2. **T-shirt Activity:** Move to the painting area. Each child gets a white T-shirt. Explain that they will dip their fingers in red paint and press them onto the T-shirt to symbolize Jesus' wounds, as Thomas saw. While they work, encourage them to reflect on the meaning of faith and belief without seeing.

3. **Faith Banner:** Using the large piece of fabric or butcher paper, invite the children to write or draw what faith means to them, inspired by the day's scripture. They can cut out their contributions if using paper or directly decorate the fabric. This banner becomes a collective expression of their understanding and belief in Jesus, akin to Thomas' declaration of faith upon seeing Jesus' wounds. Display this banner in your Sunday School room as a reminder of their faith journey.

## Snack Activity: Doubting Thomas' Cookie Wounds

You'll Need:

- Sugar cookies (homemade or store-bought)
- Red icing
- Toothpicks
- Small candy pieces (like mini chocolate chips or red hots)

Get Ready: Lay out the sugar cookies on a clean surface. Have the red icing, toothpicks, and small candies within reach for each child.

Do this:

1. Discuss John 20:24-29, focusing on Thomas' doubt and how Jesus showed him His wounds as proof of His resurrection. Explain how Thomas' doubt turned into belief.

2. Use the red icing to draw 'wounds' on the sugar cookies, symbolizing the wounds of Jesus that Thomas needed to see to believe. Kids can use a toothpick to help apply the icing if needed.
3. Place a small candy piece on each 'wound' to represent the nails. As they do this, encourage the kids to talk about what it means to have faith even when we have doubts.
4. Enjoy the cookies together, reflecting on the importance of believing in Jesus even when we can't see Him.

## Game Activity: Doubting Thomas Tag

You'll Need:

- A spacious area to run around
- Band-aids (enough for each child to have one)
- A blindfold

Get Ready: Clear the play area of any obstacles that might cause the children to trip or fall. Place the band-aids in a central location that is easily accessible.

Do this:

1. Explain the story of Thomas and Jesus from John 20:24-29, emphasizing Thomas' doubt and the moment Jesus invites him to touch His wounds. Mention how Jesus helped Thomas believe.
2. Choose one child to be 'Jesus' and another to be 'Thomas.' 'Jesus' will wear the blindfold, symbolizing the initial absence from the gathering of disciples. 'Thomas' will not be blindfolded, representing his disbelief.

3. The rest of the children are 'disciples' and will scatter around the play area. 'Jesus' will call out 'Do not doubt, but believe!' and try to tag 'Thomas' by listening to his voice. 'Disciples' can help guide 'Jesus' by repeating Jesus' words.

4. Once 'Thomas' is tagged, he goes to the central location, takes a band-aid, and sticks it on 'Jesus' (the child playing Jesus can remove the blindfold at this point to see). This act symbolizes Thomas touching Jesus' wounds and believing.

5. Rotate roles so each child gets a chance to be 'Jesus,' 'Thomas,' and 'disciples.' Discuss how it felt to be 'Thomas' and the importance of faith even when we cannot see.

## Craft Activity: Seeing Faith Through Art: Thomas and Jesus

You'll Need:

- Construction paper (white and various colors)
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Template of Jesus' hand with wound (to be prepared by the teacher)

Get Ready: Prepare a template of Jesus' hand with a wound mark on it. This can be a simple drawing of a hand with a circle in the middle to represent the wound. Make enough copies so each child can have one.

Do this:



1. Begin with a discussion on John 20:24-29, focusing on Thomas' doubt and how Jesus showed him His wounds as proof of His resurrection. Emphasize the importance of faith even when we cannot see.
2. Give each child a template of Jesus' hand and have them color it. They can also color a piece of construction paper as the background.
3. Once the hand is colored, have the children cut it out and glue it onto their colored background paper. Encourage them to write a faith statement or prayer around the hand, expressing their belief in Jesus even though they have not seen Him.
4. Conclude the activity with a group sharing session where children can voluntarily show their artwork and share their faith statements. This encourages open expression of faith and reflection on the scripture.

## Prayer Activity: Seeing is Believing: Thomas' Journey

You'll Need:

- A Bible or printed copy of John 20:24-29
- Blank paper
- Coloring pens or pencils

Get Ready: Read John 20:24-29 to familiarize yourself with the story of Thomas and Jesus.

Do this:

1. Begin with a group reading of John 20:24-29. Encourage the children to imagine the scene where Thomas meets the risen Jesus and is invited to touch His wounds.
2. Ask the children to draw what they imagine the scene looked like on their blank paper using the coloring pens or pencils. While they draw, discuss the importance of faith and believing in what we cannot see.

3. After everyone has finished their drawings, lead a group discussion. Ask the children to share their drawings and explain how they represented the story. Conclude with a prayer, asking God to help us have faith like Thomas, believing in Jesus even when we can't see Him with our eyes.