

THE PROOF ROOM

Jesus Appears
to Thomas
John 20:19–31
AD 33

OVERVIEW

BIBLE TRUTH

Jesus died and rose from the dead for us.

BIBLE VERSE

Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed. John 20:29

LEARNER GOAL

I know the message of Jesus' resurrection is true: Jesus is alive.

LAW & GOSPEL

I sin when I rely on human reason instead of God's Word.

The Holy Spirit gives me eyes of faith to believe that Jesus died and rose for my salvation.

SCRIPTURE SNAPSHOT

With the words "Peace be with you" (v. 19), the risen Lord appears among His disciples gathered in hiding from the Jews. Thomas, who is not among the disciples that evening, doubts their report of Jesus' resurrection. Eight days later, while Thomas and the disciples gather in the locked room, Jesus appears among them once again. Thomas witnesses the physical truth of the resurrection as he touches Christ's wounds. Jesus concludes by telling Thomas and us, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed" (v. 29).

LESSON PREP

BASIC Read the Bible text and notes in *The Lutheran Study Bible*.

MORE TIME Read the leader devotion, found in the digital resource center.

IN DEPTH Read the section on "The Office of the Keys" in *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation* (2017).

SUPPLY LIST

FOR THIS LESSON

- ☐ Magnifying glass & hand mirrors
- ☐ Play dough
- ☐ Crayon-resist picture, paintbrush & colored water or tempera paint
- ☐ Bible Verse written on a slip of paper
- ☐ O-shaped cereal or pretzels
- ☐ Sandpaper or construction paper & gray yarn; unsharpened pencils (optional)

FOR EVERY LESSON

- ☐ Bible, songbook & classroom supplies
- ☐ Copies of *Discover Leaflet*, stickers & music downloads
- ☐ Supplies for bonus activities



LEADER NOTE

Use one or both activities to connect what the children know to what they will learn in the lesson. If class time is short, omit these and start with Jesus Time.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Use the “Sensory Activity” option.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Use the “Buddy Talk” to introduce the story.



LEADER NOTE

Show your Bible. Tell the children that all the stories in God’s Word are true. Read the Bible Verse from your Bible so the children realize it is from God’s Word.

LAUNCH

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

DISCOVERY Have the children use magnifying glasses to look at their fingers and their friends’ fingers. Comment on the lines and say, **No one has hands like yours!** Have the children look at themselves in a mirror. Say, **Look. It’s [Sloan]. I can tell it’s you because I can see your brown hair and freckles! Today we’ll hear how Thomas had to see and touch Jesus to be sure He was really alive.**

PLAY DOUGH Set out play dough and encourage the children to make something from it. Say, **You are using your hands to make something special. What did you make? In our story today, Jesus shows Thomas something special about His hands so Thomas will believe Jesus is really alive.**

JESUS TIME

SING “God, Our Father, Hear Your Children” (digital resource center) or “Jesus Came from Heaven” (*Little Ones Sing Praise*, p. 92)

SAY **Hi, boys and girls! Can you tell me the name of our very best friend? Yes, Jesus! He is glad you are here. He is with us no matter where we go. We can talk to our friend Jesus. Let’s do that now. When I point to you, say the words “We celebrate!” with me.**

PRAY **Dear Jesus, because You live, (point to children and have them say) we celebrate! Because You forgive, (point to children and say) we celebrate! Because You are with us always, (point to children and say) we celebrate! Amen.**

LEARN

INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STORY

Ahead of time, make a crayon-resist picture by drawing a flower (or cross) in white crayon on white paper. Also have a cup of water with some watercolor or tempera paint mixed with it and a paintbrush. Show the children the paper. Ask, **Do you see anything on this piece of paper?** Let the children answer. **Would you believe me if I said there was a picture on it? Well, there is. Let me show you.** Paint over the picture. The flower (or cross) will appear. **Look, what do you see? Some of you didn’t believe me when I said there was a picture on this sheet of paper. Do you believe me now? Yes. Now you can see the picture so you believe. Today we will hear about a man named Thomas. He didn’t believe Jesus was alive until he saw Him.**

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Tell the Bible story in your own words, using the *Discover Leaflet* as a guide.

SAY THE BIBLE VERSE

Write the Bible Verse from John 20:29 on a slip of paper and put it in your Bible. Have a child take it out of the Bible for you to read. Say, **The Bible tells us, “Blessed (hug self) are those who have not seen (cover eyes) and yet have believed (make a finger cross).”**

Thomas did not believe his friends when they said Jesus was alive. When did he believe? (When he saw and touched Jesus) We cannot see Jesus with our eyes. But we believe He is alive and with us. Where do we learn that? Yes, in the Bible. Jesus makes us His children through Baptism and His Word. He talks to us in His Word and tells us He loves us and is with us always. Say the words and do the actions with the children.

LIVE

DISCOVER LESSON TRUTHS

Separate each *Discover Leaflet* into two pages. Send the first page home with each child, or put the page into a purchased binder. Hand out the second page, stickers, and crayons.

SIDE 1 Talk about what Thomas is doing. Say, **Thomas didn't believe Jesus was alive until he saw and touched Jesus. Where do we hear that Jesus died for us and came alive again?** Have the children look for and circle the hidden Bibles.

SIDE 2 Say, **We can't see Jesus with our eyes, can we? How do we know Jesus died on the cross and came alive on Easter? How do we know He forgives our sins and promises to be with us always? How do we know He hears our prayers and gives us a home in heaven? Yes, the Bible tells us so.** Have the children put a Jesus sticker in the Bible. **Point and tell what you believe about Jesus. If the picture shows something you believe about Jesus, trace the lines to connect it to Jesus.**

ENGAGE IN ACTIVE LEARNING

Take time to reinforce lesson truths with one or more of these active learning options. Turn to "Active Learning" on the back page for instructions to do the activities below.

□ MOVE

Have the children use their hands to play I Can Touch.

□ SNACK

Serve O-shaped snacks. Talk about how the treat looks like mouths that can tell what we believe about Jesus. Ask the children what they can tell.

□ CREATE

Thomas is thought to have gone to India to spread the Gospel. Asian elephants are common in India and its art. Have the children use their hands to make a handprint elephant. Thomas told others what he believed about Jesus. Who can they tell?

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

What parts of today's story can the children retell? Ask, **How did Thomas know Jesus was alive? How do you know Jesus is alive and with you?**

LEAVE

SING "Jesus in Jerusalem" (digital resource center) or "Do You Know Who Died for Me" (*Little Ones Sing Praise*, p. 93). Add this stanza:
**Do you know who gives me peace? Jesus does, Jesus does.
Lovingly He gives me peace. Yes, He really does.**

SAY **Jesus showed Thomas He was alive, and Thomas believed. Jesus shows us who He is in His Word. He tells us He is our Savior, who died on the cross for us and rose again. He gives us His peace.**

PRAY **Dear Jesus, thank You for Your love. Thank You for dying on the cross to take away our sins. Thank You for coming to life again on Easter to give us the promise of eternal life. I believe You are my Savior. Amen.**



CHRIST CONNECTION

Jesus died and rose again to forgive us our sins and give us eternal peace with the Father.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Do the "Hands and Fingers" activity to give the children an opportunity to think about how they can share the Good News about Jesus, our Savior.

ACTIVE LEARNING

□ MOVE

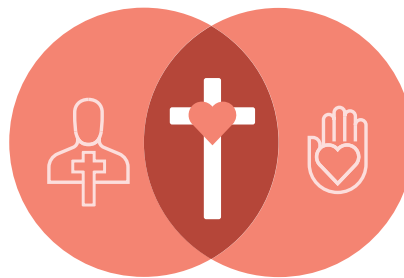
Say, **Thomas touched Jesus' hands and side. Let's use our hands to touch some things too.** Have the children move around to find and touch items in the room that match your descriptions. Adjust the examples to fit what you have. If you have a small room, have the children stand in a circle, and give them items to pass around. Say, **I can touch something smooth . . . something rough . . . something soft . . . something hard . . . something green . . . something blue . . .** Then have the children reach high and "touch the sky," reach low and touch the ground, and reach wide and touch a friend.

□ SNACK

Serve O-shaped pretzels or cereal. Talk about how these can remind us of open mouths. Say, **Thomas used his mouth to say, "My Lord and my God!" when he touched Jesus and saw He was alive. You can also use your mouth to say, "Jesus is my Lord and my God!"**

□ CREATE

Tell the children they will use their hands to make elephants. Trace around a hand, with fingers slightly spread apart, onto sandpaper or construction paper. Cut out, slightly rounding the area by the wrist as the back of an elephant. Turn the hand so the fingers become the legs of the elephant. Attach an elephant-head sticker to each side of the thumb. Attach a blanket sticker to each side of the palm. Make a tail for the elephant from gray yarn. *Option:* Tape the elephant to a pencil to make it "walk." Say, **I wonder if Thomas rode an elephant to tell people about Jesus. Who can you tell?**



CONNECTING IDENTITY & CALLING

IDENTITY: WHO AM I?

God reveals the truth of Jesus' resurrection in His Word.

CALLING: WHY AM I HERE?

I know that Jesus' resurrection is proof of the promise of my resurrection.

GROWING IN FAITH FOR LIFE

See how this lesson builds on previous learning for each age.

ADULT

I can recognize how Jesus' death and resurrection are at the center of the Christian faith.

YOUTH

I can share how Jesus' death and resurrection gives us new life in Him.

ELEMENTARY

I understand how Jesus' death and resurrection gives me new life in Him.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

I know the message of Jesus' resurrection is true: Jesus is alive.

★ BONUS ACTIVITIES

SENSORY ACTIVITY

10 minutes

Have the children sort objects by how they feel. Label four boxes with words, and attach examples: (1) **Soft** with soft material, (2) **Hard** with a stone, (3) **Smooth** with a plastic lid, (4) **Rough** with sandpaper. Set out a variety of objects with these textures to sort (e.g., cotton balls, fake fur, a ball, a hand mirror, cereal, a brush). Talk about what we learn through the sense of touch. Say, **In today's story, Thomas wanted to touch Jesus so he would know for certain Jesus was alive.**

BUDDY TALK

10 minutes

Tell the children you are expecting a special guest. Have the puppet pop out with a washcloth over his head. When asked if he is your guest, he says, "Yes, it's Buddy." Ask the children if they believe him and say it's hard to tell who the guest is when you can't see him. Have puppet pull off the washcloth to prove it. Laugh and say, **I did not believe you, but I can see with my own eyes, it really is you, Buddy! In our Bible story, Thomas didn't believe Jesus was alive till he saw with his own eyes.**

HANDS AND FINGERS

15 minutes

Compare hands and fingerprints and talk about how everyone's are different (color, size, shape, unique fingerprints). Set out an ink pad, and have the children make thumbprints on their page. Show them how to make dot eyes and a smile to turn their prints into people. Talk about how we want to share the Good News that Jesus is alive with others. Ask, **What can you tell people about Jesus?** (He is our Savior, He is with us always, He is our Friend and Helper, etc.)