

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

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 **John 20:19–31** and study notes in *The Lutheran Study Bible (TLSB)*.

MORE TIME Read "Apologetics Helps" on the back page in preparation for the "Live" section.

IN DEPTH Read the parallel account in **Luke 24:36–49** with study notes in *TLSB*.

SUPPLIES

FOR THIS LESSON

- ☐ Whiteboard or large sheet of paper
- ☐ Dry-erase marker or regular marker
- ☐ Variety of Bibles

FOR EVERY LESSON

- ☐ Student copies of *Defend Journal*
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Pens
- ☐ Shareable images from digital resource center
- ☐ Supplies for bonus activities



LEADER NOTE

As an option, ask youth to share the most unbelievable true story they have ever heard.



DEFEND JOURNAL

Hand out journals and turn to Lesson 14.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Help youth immerse themselves in the account with “Act It Out.”

LAUNCH

WALK-IN QUESTION

What do you find hard to believe?

PROVE IT!

Each person tells the group something they can do, such as speak Spanish or stand on one foot for a minute. If someone says, “Prove it!” the person must prove his or her claim.

SAY Do you easily believe people’s claims, or are you a skeptic? Today, we’ll hear about the skeptical disciple Thomas and how Jesus proved He was alive.

PRAY Heavenly Father, sometimes we doubt You and Your Word. Strengthen our faith and trust in You. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

LEARN

READ “THE BIG PICTURE” AND TALK IT OUT

► Would you have believed your fellow disciples if you were Thomas?

DISCUSSION POINTS

- Let youth share their thoughts.

LEARN ABOUT “THE PROOF ROOM”

Read **John 20:19–23** or ask a volunteer to read as others follow along. Ask youth to share what they would say to Thomas, either in their journal or to the group.

► **Imagine you are one of the ten disciples that Jesus appeared to. How would you explain to Thomas what happened?**

- Jesus said, “Peace be with you.” Jesus did what He came to do—He made peace between God and man.
- Jesus breathed on His disciples and gave them the gift of the Holy Spirit. The disciples, and the Church, would forgive sins in Jesus’ name.

Read **John 20:24–25**.

► **Why do you think Thomas refused to believe the other disciples?**

- Let youth share their thoughts.

Ask a volunteer to read **John 20:26–29**.

► **How did Jesus reach out to Thomas to lead Him to believe?**

- Jesus patiently and lovingly revealed Himself to Thomas, and Thomas responded in faith.

Ask a volunteer to read **John 20:30–31**.

► **What is the purpose of John’s Gospel?**

- John says he wrote his Gospel to tell about Jesus so that people would believe that Jesus is the Christ and that by believing, they would have eternal life.

LIVE

DISCUSS “GOD’S WORD GIVES LIFE”

Start the discussion by asking youth how they decide if something is true or fake. We may look for proof before we will believe something. Or if we trust someone, we might believe what they are telling us is true. God’s Word, the Bible, is truth. Have youth gather around a whiteboard or a large sheet of paper to jot down thoughts and ideas as they discuss the question below. Use the “Apologetics Helps” on the back page of this guide for additional support.

► Why did God give us the Bible?

DISCUSSION POINTS

- Ask youth, “What do people think the Bible is all about? Do they think it is a story-book of morals, a set of rules, history, or fables? No matter what people think about it, it is God’s true Word.”
- Is the Bible God’s book of rules? It does tell us how God wants us to live and interact with one another, but it’s much more than that.
- We know there is a God by looking at creation, but there is no other way to know Jesus Christ, our Savior, except through the Bible.
- The Bible describes for us God’s great plan of salvation, from Genesis to Revelation.
- The Holy Spirit gives us faith as we hear and believe the words of the Gospel.

CONSIDER “SO THAT YOU MAY BELIEVE”

John 20:30–31 says, “Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.”

► **God’s Word gives life. Who do you know that needs to hear God’s Word? Pray for them. Make a plan to share God’s saving Word with them in your next conversation.**

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Check for understanding by asking youth to share what they know about Jesus from the Bible.

LEAVE

Read the Bible Verse, written in the *Defend Journal*:

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

Ask for prayer requests. Offer to pray, or invite a student to pray for everyone.



CHRIST CONNECTION

Jesus died and rose again to forgive my sins and give me new life in Him.



LEADER NOTE

Bring in a variety of Bibles for youth to look at. Talk about the differences between versions and formats.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Share the Good News with “Share the Word.”



SHAREABLE DOWNLOAD

Connect with youth before and after the lesson by using the shareable images from the digital resource center.

APOLOGETICS HELPS

DEFEND THE FAITH

When Jesus breathed on His disciples and gave them the gift of the Holy Spirit, He also gave them and the Church the power to forgive and retain (or to not forgive) sins. We call this the Office of the Keys. The pastor acts on behalf of the congregation and in the stead and by the command of Jesus when he pronounces the forgiveness of sins during the Confession and Absolution.

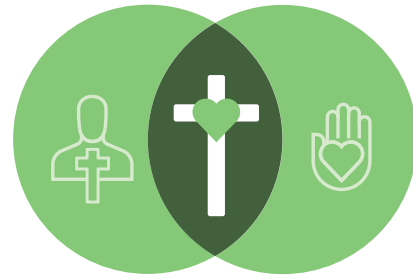
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

► What do I have to do to be saved?

This is the question the Philippian jailer asked Paul and Silas after God caused an earthquake and the jailed Paul and Silas were set free. Paul and Silas answered, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household” (Acts 16:31). Faith in Jesus Christ saves. “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Ephesians 2:8–9).

► Why do I sometimes have doubts?

Because we are sinful human beings, we may sometimes have doubts about God and faith in Jesus. The devil is always trying to get us to doubt God. When we question, we go to the place where God has promised to meet us: His Word. In God’s Word, God gives us truth, hope, forgiveness, peace, and life. Talk with your pastor or a Christian friend. Go to church. Go to God in prayer and ask Him to strengthen your faith. Cry out with the man before Jesus, “I believe; help my unbelief!” (Mark 9:24).



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

ACT IT OUT

5–10 minutes

Choose youth to be Jesus, Thomas, and the other disciples. Ask learners to retell the narrative using thoughts and ideas from their discussion of the text.

PEACE MURAL

10–15 minutes

Use markers or paints to write the word *peace* in large letters on a poster board. Have youth decorate the letters and the space around them, adding Bible verses about peace all around the word. Hang it in your room or in the hallway.

SHARE THE WORD

15–20 minutes

Make a poster asking your congregation to bring in any extra Bibles they have. You can also take donations to buy Bibles in bulk. Search locally for a shelter or other organization that is looking for donations of Bibles. Talk about how God’s Word gives life.