



I'm a Believer

Bible Story: I'm a Believer (Faith Is . . .) • Hebrews 11:1-12:3

Bottom Line: You can know Jesus even though you've never seen Him.

Key Question: What are things you believe that you can't see?

Memory Verse: *Faith is being sure of what we hope for. It is being sure of what we do not see.*
Hebrews 11:1 (NirV)

Life App: Faith—Trusting in what you can't see because of what you can see

Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

Story: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 35 minutes)

Engage kids' hearts through a dynamic and interactive Bible story, worship, and prayer experience in a Large Group setting.

SFX: Play high-energy music as kids enter.

CG: Focus Theme Slide

Host enters.

Welcome

Host has lots of energy as he or she welcomes everyone to [Name of Environment]. Host is relatable and inviting. Host can talk about something that happened culturally throughout the week like a big sporting event (NBA and NHL Finals), movie opening, a viral video on YouTube, etc. Host tells them how excited he or she is that they're there and briefly runs through what they can expect. This is especially helpful for first-time guests to make them feel like they know what's happening.

Opener

HOST: “Hey, everyone! I am so pumped for another month here at [Name of Environment]. You better believe we are going to kick the summer off right! This summer our goal is to *Focus—Take a Closer Look*, and we have all sorts of games that will really make you pay attention—starting right now.”

“Have you ever looked at a picture that was so blurry that you couldn't even tell what it was? Well, we went ahead and made a game out of that!”

“We'll put an incredibly blurry image on the screen. If you think you know what it is, call it out! If nobody gets it, we will click the image one click clearer and the image will come more into focus. If still nobody gets it, we will go one click clearer. Finally, we will reveal what it is. Everybody got it? Alright, let's check out our first image!”

CG: Blurry Image 1a- Paper clip

“Anybody know what that is? *(Assuming no right answers)* Let's click one click less blurry!”

CG: Blurry Image 1b- Paper clip

(If no right answers)

CG: Blurry Image 1c- Paper clip

(Reveal answer)

CG: Blurry Image 1d- Paper clip

Play as many rounds as you have time for (10 pictures). Throw prizes (candy) toward the general direction of the right answer if you can't hear where the actual right answer came from. If someone gets the answer before the last slide, still quickly click through to reveal the progression of blurry to clear.

CG: Blurry Image 2 a-d Rose

CG: Blurry Image 3 a-d Sheep

CG: Blurry Image 4 a-d Scissors

CG: Blurry Image 5 a-d Slinky

CG: Blurry Image 6 a-d Rocking Chair

CG: Blurry Image 7 a-d Snorkel

CG: Blurry Image 8 a-d Beetle

CG: Blurry Image 9 a-d Water Bottle

CG: Blurry Image 10 a-d Ping Pong Paddle

HOST: *“(After the game) You all look so clear and high definition! Well done with that game . . . it played tricks on the eyes all right! Now let's stand and worship together!”*

Worship

SFX: *“We Believe” / track 1 from Kidmin Worship Vol. 4*

Communicator enters Worship Leaders exit.

COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT

INTRODUCTION

COMMUNICATOR: “Hey everybody! Great to see you. I’m so excited to begin another month together. So I’ve got a question for you to get us started today. What is something that you can’t see but you still know it exists?”

Pause for responses.

“Those are some great answers. Let’s talk about a few of those. *(Pick up basketball.)* So here I have a basketball. And if I hold it out and drop it . . . *(demonstrate)* it bounces right back to me. Why is this? Why didn’t it just fly away into the air never to be seen again?”

Pause for response.

“That’s right. A little thing called gravity. It is the very reason we are all in our seats right now rather than pinned against the ceiling. But . . . where is it? Where is this gravity? I can’t see it? Can you?”

“Or let’s take these papers for example. I’m going to set them down on this table here. And then I’m going to take this big piece of cardboard and do this . . .”

Communicator starts to wave the cardboard, creating wind that sends the papers flying everywhere.

“What just happened? I didn’t even touch the papers!”

Pause for response.

“Sure thing. We call that wind. It blew all the papers off the table. But where is it? Where is the wind? Can you see it?”

“For this last one, I’m going to ask [*name of audio/tech person*] to put on some tunes for us.”

SFX: High energy music

Communicator walks over to the speakers.

(Point at the speakers) “Do you see that? No? Well, right now tons of sound waves are coming out of those speakers and into your ears. *(Pretend to catch sound waves entering ears.)* But where are they? Why can’t we see them?”

SFX: Music off

“Because just like gravity and wind, sound is another one of those things that we can’t see, yet we know it exists. Why? Because we see the effect of it. We see the effect of gravity when objects fall. We see the effect of wind when papers fly or feel our hair move in the breeze. We experience the effect of sound when we hear music or feel the vibrations.”

TENSION

COMMUNICATOR: “There are all sorts of things we don’t technically see but know exist because of what we experience. But what about when it comes to our faith in Jesus. Think about this for a moment: many of us have put our faith in Jesus, but I would guess that you haven’t actually *seen* Him, right? So how do we **KNOW** that He is real enough to trust Him with our lives?”

That's a big question. And first of all, let me tell you that if you've ever wondered that, know that you're not alone. Believing that Jesus is really God's Son and that all of God's promises about Him are true can be really difficult for many people. Thankfully, we don't have to wonder about these questions on our own. We have each other, and we have the Bible. If you're wondering what it means to put your faith in Jesus—or what faith really is in general—the Bible is the BEST place to look. The Bible is filled with stories of people who had faith. In fact, there's a whole chapter of the book of Hebrews that talks about them. Let's head there now."

TRUTH

COMMUNICATOR: "The book of Hebrews is near the end of the New Testament of our Bible. We're not exactly sure who wrote it, but the author included some incredible insight into what it means to have faith in Jesus. And even though we find Hebrews near the end of our Bible, this particular chapter is going to take us on a journey back through some amazing stories we find in the Old Testament. But before we get to those, the author starts with a really important definition that will help us as we move forward. Check it out."

(Read directly from Hebrews 11:1, NIV.) "Faith is being sure of what we hope for. It is being sure of what we do not see."

"It is the definition for faith! Faith is about being sure of what we put our hope in. It's about trusting in what we can't see yet. But how do we do that? Well, I think the next verse starts to answer that for us."

(Read directly from Hebrews 11:2, NIV.) "That is what the people of long ago were praised for."

"Huh? What people? What is the author talking about? Well, this chapter of Hebrews is sometimes called the 'Hall of Faith' because it briefly retells the story of people throughout the Bible who gave us some examples of faith, trusting in what they couldn't see yet. Hearing their stories can start to help us trust even more in what we can't see as well."

"The Hall of Faith starts with some names you might have heard, Abel, Enoch, Noah. Then the author moves into the story of a man I'm guessing many of you might remember. Let's pick it up here in Hebrews 11, verse eight."

“(Read directly from Hebrews 11:8, NIV.) ‘Abraham had faith. So he obeyed God. God called him to go to a place he would later receive as his own. So he went. He did it even though he didn’t know where he was going.’”

“WAY back in the beginning of our Bibles, God called a man named Abram. That’s the same guy here named Abraham. God asked him to leave EVERYTHING behind: his country, his people, and his father’s household. And God didn’t even tell him where he was going yet. In other words, God called Abraham to TRUST in something he couldn’t even SEE yet. Sound familiar?”

“But when God called Abraham to leave, He also made him an incredible promise. He promised to give Abraham many descendants, and through those descendants, God would bless the whole world!”

Pull out a mini globe and set it on a table.

“This was a big promise, and it didn’t happen right away. In fact, Abraham’s faith made life hard for a while. Check out the next verse. *(Read directly from Hebrews 11:9, NIV) ‘Because of his faith he made his home in the land God had promised him. Abraham was like an outsider in a strange country. He lived there in tents. So did Isaac and Jacob. They received the same promise he did.’”*

“Because of his faith, Abraham ended up living like an outsider. But so did his son and his grandson. The promise kept getting passed down. Each generation received the promise—the promise to be blessed with many descendants who would bless the whole world. But this didn’t happen right away. It would take faith to believe that it would actually happen *someday*. Abraham, and then Isaac, and then Jacob, and then Joseph all chose to believe this promise.”

“But the Hall of Faith doesn’t stop there. The writer of Hebrews moved on to Moses, whose parents had faith in ignoring the king’s command and choosing to hide him instead. And then Moses . . . *(Read directly from Hebrews 11:24-25a, NIV) ‘Moses had faith. So he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter. That happened after he had grown up. He chose to be treated badly together with the people of God.’”*

Pull out a staff and set it on the table.

“Moses could have had a comfortable Egyptian life but rather chose to follow God’s call to stand with his people as a rescuer and leader. Moses trusted what he could not SEE—a far away promised land— rather than falling for the temptation of what he could see. And God used Moses to rescue His people from Egypt, give them a set of rules to follow, and form a nation out of them.”

“Well then, the author of Hebrews starts to list all sorts of names, saying that they don’t have the time to tell all of the incredible stories of faith. But in doing so, they list some unexpected names, like Rahab and Samson, but also some expected ones like David.”

Pull out a crown and sets it on the table.

“Why David? Well, think about it. God promised David that one day he would be king, but it didn’t happen right away. In fact, what happened right away was anything but the royal treatment. On a number of occasions, Saul, the current king, tried to KILL David before he ever took the throne! But David trusted in a promise he couldn’t SEE, and in the end, he became king. But that’s not all. God also made a bigger promise that one day, the greatest of all Kings—the KING of Kings, Jesus—would come from David’s family line.”

“The Hall of Faith concludes in a way that might actually surprise you a bit. It doesn’t end with heroic stories of how all of these people of faith were rewarded. It actually ends with stories of how these people died, many in tragic ways. And we read these words, *(Read directly from Hebrews 11:39, NIV) ‘All these people were praised because they had faith. But none of them received what God had promised.’*”

“That might sound a bit depressing, but that is because the story doesn’t end there. You see, the reason that they died waiting for what God had promised is because the Promised One hadn’t come yet! But when Jesus came, He gave sight to their faith. Look at how the author of Hebrews says it.”

“(Read directly from Hebrews 12:2a, NIV) ‘Let us keep looking to Jesus. He is the one who started this journey of faith. And he is the one who completes the journey of faith.’”

“This is an amazing verse! If faith is like a long-distance race, Jesus was there at the starting line. But Jesus also completes the journey. He’s there at the finish line, too! All of the promises that Abraham, Moses, and David were waiting for . . . they are completed in Jesus. But how? The verse continues.”

“(Read directly from Hebrews 12:2b, NIV) ‘He paid no attention to the shame of the cross. He suffered there because of the joy he was looking forward to. Then he sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.’”

Communicator pulls out a cross and sets it on the table.

*“Because Jesus died and rose again, He proved that He was the one who could fulfill all of the promises. How is God going to bless the world like he promised Abraham? (Pick up globe.) Jesus. Jesus is God’s Son, but Jesus is all the descendant of Abraham. And through Jesus God blesses the entire world. Think about it. God so loved *the world* that He gave His only Son!”*

“(Pick up staff.) Jesus is like Moses, rescuing and leading his people to a better Promised Land!”

“(Pick up crown.) Jesus is the descendant of David—the KING of Kings—who will sit on the throne forever, just like God promised to David.”

“In all of these ways, and so many more, Jesus completes the journey of faith.”

APPLICATION

COMMUNICATOR: “Now I know what some of you might be thinking. ‘But I still can’t SEE Jesus!’ Hopefully what you have seen here is that even when we can’t see Jesus, we can trust the stories of those who did see Jesus, whose lives were affected by Jesus, and who wrote down their experiences so we could know Jesus, too. So many of these people lived their lives in faith that God was going to keep His promise, which He ultimately did through Jesus.”

Hold up cross again.

“But what you may not know is that this Hall of Faith was written for those who came AFTER Jesus. See, life was getting hard for those first followers of Jesus. People were trying to stop the message of Jesus. The first followers of Jesus in the early church were starting to wonder if following Jesus was worth it—if Jesus really

was the Son of God sent to rescue us. They needed a reminder that they could still look to Jesus even if they could see Him. They could trust the stories about Him. They could trust the promises. They just needed to be reminded to look at the wind blowing the branches around them, if you know what I mean. Jesus was at work. He was with them, and in that they could trust and have hope. In fact, the writer of Hebrews reminds them that Jesus went through similar trials. *(Read directly from Hebrews 12:3, NIV) 'He made it through these attacks by sinners. So think about him. Then you won't get tired. You won't lose hope.'*

"When you struggle to trust that Jesus is really there, look around at people who follow Jesus. See how following Jesus has impacted them. Think about the ways He is working in your own life. See what He is doing here in this church. Read His Word and see the way that He fulfilled God's promises throughout history and how He is still keeping His promises today!"

LANDING

COMMUNICATOR: "Today as you go to Small Group, think about this."

CG: Key Question Slide

"What are things you believe that you can't see?" We put faith in all sorts of things we can't see or don't fully understand. Think about that when it comes to your relationship with Jesus. And if you're not sure what all this means for you, ask someone who you know already has a relationship with Jesus. And when you get to Small Group, you'll talk more about what it looks like to put your faith in Jesus. Before you head to groups, let's pray and thank God for keeping His promises and sending us Jesus! Let's pray."

Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard. After prayer, Communicator dismisses kids to Small Group.

SFX: Play high-energy music as the kids exit.