

TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

All I Ask

Jesus Appears to Thomas
John 20:19-29

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Whatever happens, remember
God is bigger than your questions.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

In this world you will have
trouble. But be encouraged!
I have won the battle over
the world.
John 16:33b, NIV

HOST SUPPLIES

- Printed script
- Masking or gaffer's tape

STORY SUPPLIES

- Several kid volunteers
- White sheet to create a scrim, either attached to a simple pipe-and-drape setup or PVC frame or hung from the ceiling (Keep the sheet as taut as possible.)
- Spotlight (ideal) or large, bright floodlight to illuminate the scrim from behind so you can see the shadows of the kid volunteers

PRELUDE: Setting the tone for the experience

See the **Getting Ready** pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today. In the **Prelude** folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

SMALL GROUP

15
MIN

SOCIAL: Providing time for fun interaction

Early Arriver
Opening Activity

LARGE GROUP

35
MIN

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- HAPPY APRIL
- HOPE
 - All month long, we will be focusing on the message of HOPE
 - HOPE: Believing that something good can come out of something bad
 - For HOSTS and COMMUNICATORS, please be ready to share your own stories of HOPE while

MONTHLY WORSHIP LINEUP:

Week 1 - This Is Living & Graves Into Gardens
Week 2 - Never Gonna Stop Singing & Way Maker
EASTER - WHAT I SEE & GRAVES INTO GARDENS
Week 4 - Never Let Me Go (new) & The Blessing

SMALL GROUP

25
MIN

PUZZLED

Believe there's
a bigger picture

WEEK
FOUR
APRIL 2022

LARGE GROUP

K-3

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

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John 16:33b, NIV

MONTHLY LIFE APP

Hope—Believing that
something good can come
out of something bad

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

LARGE GROUP

ENGAGE KIDS' HEARTS THROUGH A DYNAMIC AND INTERACTIVE BIBLE STORY, WORSHIP, AND PRAYER EXPERIENCE IN A LARGE GROUP SETTING.

AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS KIDS ENTER.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP

WORSHIP

Worship Leaders enter

WORSHIP LEADER:

AUDIO: *Never Let Me Go (new)*

AUDIO: *The Blessing*

Host enters.

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): COUNTDOWN (30- OR 60-SECOND VERSION)

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME

OPENER

HOST: "Hey, everybody! It's so great to see your smiling faces. I'm glad you're here today, because all month long we've been talking about hope!"

SLIDE: LIFE APP

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME TRANSITION TO LIFE APP

"Hope is believing that something good can come out of something bad."

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): LIFE APP TRANSITION TO THEME

"Of course, the biggest and best reason we can have hope is because Jesus is alive! Last week, we talked about how Jesus died on the cross, came back to life, and made a way for us to be with God FOREVER. When we think about what Jesus did for us, we can have hope in any situation. We can remember that God loved us enough to send Jesus FOR us. And that can help us [*Basic Truth*] trust God no matter what!"

"Today, we'll talk about someone who had a bit of a hard time trusting God. But before we get to that, let's have some fun! I've got some very PUZZLING questions to ask you, and I want to see how you answer them."



PRELUDE **SOCIAL** **STORY** **WORSHIP** **GROUPS** **HOME**

25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

“These are all ‘Would you rather’ questions. There are no right or wrong answers. Just move to this side of the room if you’d rather choose the first answer. *(Indicate the left side the room, from the audience’s perspective.)* Or move to this side of the room if you’d rather choose the second answer. *(Indicate the right side the room, from the audience’s perspective.)* If you’re REALLY sure, go all the way to that side. If you just can’t decide, you can stand in the middle on the tape line. *(Point to the tape line.)* Make sense? *(Pause for response.)* Cool! I’ll play, too!

Jump down into the audience. Read the questions from the printed script. Feel free to edit them or add your own questions that you think will get a big reaction from your kids (i.e. local sports teams, etc.).

For each of the questions, point to the side of the room that corresponds with each choice.

“Would you rather . . . eat M&M’S® *(point to one side)* or Sour Patch Kids® *(point to the other side)*?”

Move to one side of the room to show your own preference. Comment on the preferences of the kids around you (if there’s a strong preference overall, if they just can’t decide, etc.) Have some fun by asking kids why they chose their answers.

“Would you rather . . . always be dressed up or always wear your pajamas?”

“Would you rather . . . swim in the ocean or play in the snow?”

“Would you rather . . . have all toes or all fingers?”

“Would you rather . . . have a flying carpet or your own personal robot?”

“Would you rather . . . be invisible or have the ability to fly?”

“Would you rather . . . be a bird or a horse?”

“Would you rather . . . swim in a pool or jump on a trampoline?”

“Would you rather . . . eat a cheeseburger or a taco?”

“Would you rather . . . see a giant ant or a tiny giraffe?”

“Would you rather . . . be a superhero or a cartoon character?”

“Would you rather . . . drink sour milk or eat rotten eggs?”



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10 MINUTES

"Would you rather . . . be the smartest person in the world or the strongest person in the world?"

"Would you rather . . . have a water balloon fight or play laser tag?"

"Would you rather . . . have really small hands or really big feet?"

Go back on stage after the last question.

"That was fun! Some of those were really tough questions. I wasn't sure WHAT to pick! Thanks for playing along, everyone."

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25 MINUTES

BIBLE STORY

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

Storyteller enters

NOTE: For the story today, you'll use a scrim made with a large sheet, lit from behind. As you tell the story, you'll ask for kid volunteers to pose between the light and the fabric to create each scene. (You'll want to practice with the scrim beforehand to make sure everything will look good.)

SETTING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: "Hi, everyone! For today's story, we're looking at what happened after Jesus died on the cross then came back to life. When Jesus died, His followers were really scared. They didn't know what would happen next—or if the religious leaders might come after them because they were friends with Jesus. So they gathered together in a room with the door locked.

"Okay, can I have three of you who would like to play the disciples? (*Reference the scrim.*) Let's pretend this is the room where the disciples were staying. Raise your hands if you'd like to act-out a part in our shadow theater.

Choose three kids and have them sit down behind the scrim (between the sheet and the light source). When the kids are in place . . .

"Lights, please!

LIGHTS: DIM IN THE ROOM, SCRIM LIGHTS ON

"Ah, yes, very good. Wave for us, disciples.

The "disciples" wave.

LIGHTS: SCRIM LIGHTS OFF (KEEP THE ROOM LIGHTS DIM FOR THE REST OF THE STORY)

"Earlier that day, the disciples had heard the news from Mary that Jesus' tomb was empty . . . and that she had seen Jesus—alive. But could that actually be true?"

JESUS AMONG THEM

STORYTELLER: "Suddenly, Jesus stood among them! Even though the doors were locked, He was right there in the middle of that room! Okay, who would like to play Jesus?"

Choose a kid to play Jesus. Have him stand behind the scrim, along with the disciples (who should still be seated). Have the kid playing Jesus raise his arms. Then cue the lights. When the kid playing Jesus is in place . . .

"Lights, please!

LIGHTS: SCRIM LIGHTS ON



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PRELUDE **SOCIAL** **STORY** **WORSHIP** **GROUPS** **HOME**

25 MINUTES

“Look at that! Jesus really was alive. And He was standing right there in the room with His friends! Jesus said to them, ‘May peace be with you!’ (John 20:19, NIV) He showed them the places on His hands and side where He had been hurt while on the cross.

“The disciples were VERY happy to see Jesus. (Pause and clear your throat.) The disciples were VERY happy to see Jesus.”

The disciples should move their arms like they’re cheering.

LIGHTS: SCRIM LIGHTS OFF

DOUBTING THOMAS

STORYTELLER: “But there was one disciple who had missed the whole thing. Thomas wasn’t there when Jesus appeared to His friends. Let’s see . . . Thomas . . . Thomas.

Choose a kid to play Thomas. Have him stand behind the scrim, along with the other disciples. Have the kid playing Jesus step out of the scrim (temporarily). Direct the kids to stand so that Thomas is by himself, facing the other disciples in a clump. Have Thomas fold his arms. When everyone is set, cue the lights. When everyone is in place . . .

“Lights, please!

LIGHTS: SCRIM LIGHTS ON

“When Thomas got back, the other disciples told him what had happened. They said, ‘We have seen the Lord!’ (John 20:25, NIV)

“But Thomas wasn’t so sure. Maybe he thought this news sounded too good to be true. He said . . .

Open the Bible to John 20:25 (NIV) and read.

“First I must see the nail marks in his hands. I must put my finger where the nails were. I must put my hand into his side. Only then will I believe.”

LIGHTS: SCRIM LIGHTS OFF

THOMAS BELIEVES

STORYTELLER: “The following Sunday, the disciples gathered again behind locked doors. This time, Thomas was there with them. Once again, Jesus appeared among them!

Walk to the scrim and place the kids with the disciples sitting down and Jesus and Thomas standing up, facing each other from opposite sides. Have the kid playing Jesus raise his hands. When everyone is set, cue the lights.

“Lights, please!

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LIGHTS: SCRIM LIGHTS ON

"Jesus stood among His friends, and again, He said, 'May peace be with you!' (John 20:26, NIV) Listen to what Jesus then said to Thomas.

Open the Bible to John 20:27 (NIV) and read.

"Put your finger here. See my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.

"Thomas DID believe. He cried out, 'My Lord and my God!' (John 20:28, NIV), because he had seen with his own eyes that Jesus was alive. Jesus said to Thomas . . .

Open the Bible to John 20:29 (NIV) and read.

"Because you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen me but still have believed.

LIGHTS: SCRIM LIGHTS OFF, ROOM LIGHTS UP

"Let's give a big hand to our shadow actors! (to the actors) You can all head back to your seats."

Kid volunteers return to their seats.

WRAPPING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: "Thomas now knew for SURE that Jesus was alive. And Jesus wasn't upset or angry with Thomas for having doubts or questions. Instead, Jesus lovingly answered Thomas and showed that no question is too big for Him.

SLIDE: BOTTOM LINE

"Whatever happens, remember God is bigger than your questions.

"All of us will have times when we have questions. Maybe we're just not sure why things are happening the way they are, or maybe we're having a hard time finding hope. In those times, it helps to remember how BIG God is and to trust that God always sees the bigger picture in our lives. Let's pray."

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

PRAY

STORYTELLER: "Dear God, thank You for this story that reminds us that we can have hope in You. We know that we can be like Thomas sometimes. We have questions because we don't understand what's happening around us, or maybe things in our lives just aren't going the way we want. In those moments, please Help us remember that You are so much bigger than our doubts and questions. Thank You for being there with us, through anything we might face in life. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

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CLOSER

Host enters as Storyteller exits.

HOST: “It’s very normal to have questions. I mean, we’re people. We can only see one small piece of the puzzle. But God knows EVERYTHING. God is in control of the bigger picture! That’s really helpful to know when we struggle with something that we don’t quite understand.

SLIDE: BOTTOM LINE

“Whatever happens, remember God is bigger than your questions.

“Think about Thomas. He had a hard time believing that Jesus had come back from the dead. He’d heard about it from his friends, but still . . . he hadn’t seen Jesus with his own eyes. And instead of keeping that to himself, Thomas said it out loud. In the end, Jesus showed up and gave Thomas the proof he looked for.

“We can’t see everything that God can see, but we can trust that God can help us with our questions—or even be okay when we have questions that might not have an answer at all. God knows how many stars are in the sky. God knows how many hairs are on your head. And while there are definitely things we don’t know, we DO know that God is with us, no matter what!

“So if you’re not sure about something and you’re feeling PUZZLED, you don’t have to keep that inside. You can pray and talk to God about it. You can read the Bible or ask an adult to help. You can ask the people God has put in your life—like your family members or your Small Group Leader.

“In fact, right now it’s time for you to hang out with your small group and talk more about this (*point to the screen*). **Whatever happens, remember God is bigger than your questions.** Have fun!”

Dismiss kids to their small groups.

AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS THE KIDS EXIT.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP