

Jesus Lives (John 20:19-31) Sunday School Lesson on Doubting Thomas

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Jesus Lives (John 20:19-31) Lesson for Kids

Jesus Walks Through the Walls... No Doubt About it! Tell all About it!

He's alive! So now what?? Once the eggs have been found, chocolate consumed, and bonnets put away, it may seem that Easter loses its thrill. But the empty tomb is only the beginning of the story, and there are important lessons to be gained from events immediately after the resurrection as well as further down the road. This lesson focuses on Christ's appearances after resurrection and how disciples perceived Him. Emphasis is on trusting, as well as how we are encouraged to spread the Good News with others.

Lesson focus: We can be certain that Jesus is alive and worthy of our trust; because He takes away sin, we are to spread the news of His work with other people.

Passage: John 20:19-31

Target Audience: K-6th Grade (adaptable)

Materials Needed: Dominoes; paper, glue, and yarn; crayons; reactive materials (vinegar and baking soda; Mentos and Diet Coke); lifesavers candies.

Lesson Opening: Trustworthy? Believable? How do we know if something is valid or not? Begin by inviting students to come up with three statements to share. Two of these should be true stories or facts, with one made up. As each kid shares, have the others in the group guess which statement is false (note: this can be easier with older kids. For younger ones, you may need adults to lead the sentence fabrication.). Mention how even grown-ups often say things that aren't quite true (especially relevant during election season!), but there is one thing we can now with absolute certainty beyond a doubt...Jesus rose from the dead to save us! We are just finishing the Easter celebrations, in which we learned of Christ's death on the cross and coming back to life. How amazing! But what happened after He came back to life? What did His disciples and other people around believe?

Bible Lesson:

Re-cap the Easter events and what took place after the tomb was found empty. Explain that there were still many in town (Jews, soldiers, etc.) who were trying to arrest the followers of Jesus. Imagine how the disciples may have felt...nervous, terrified, still sad and uncertain of the future. They were huddled in hiding when suddenly a change swept into the room:

19 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" 20 After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. -John 20:19-20

Look at that glorious contrast: from fear to faith, from locked doors to the Messiah's unlimited power. The disciples are plunged into joy. And Jesus doesn't stop there...

Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." 22 And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." -John 20:21-23

What does it mean to receive the Holy Spirit? It means we are given power through God's being; and because of that, we are entrusted with the special task of telling others about what Jesus did.

Hold up the dominoes. Have students help to line them up in a long row, and field for predictions of what might happen if one were to fall over...then invite a child to start the chain reaction and watch the dominoes topple in a row...explain how when we accept Christ and share His love, that can start a reaction with others catching on and spreading the Good News. *Note, if feeling extra adventurous, use a more exciting and reactive element to illustrate this: make a baking soda/vinegar spout, or pour a tube of Mentos into a Diet Coke bottle. Explain how we can get so excited about Jesus that we can't help bubbling over to share!

Continue the Bible story by explaining that not all of the disciples encountered Jesus. One of them was not present for some reason...

Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. 25 So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe." -John 20:24-25

We don't know why Thomas missed the meeting, but his absence led to historical infamy. We now associate Thomas with doubt, as he stubbornly refuses to believe what the disciples share in spite of their evident joy. However, Christ comes bounding in again:

A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" 27 Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

28 Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

29 Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." -John 20:26-29

Jesus comes back to make His presence and life absolutely and undeniably evident. He confronts the skeptical twin face to face and allows his doubts to be laid to rest. The most striking detail in this encounter, though, at least for our sake as modern believers, is in verse 29. Jesus says "blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." Who might that be? Us! We have not physically seen Jesus, but we know in whom we believe, and are blessed for it.

Craft: Bookmarks and Good News spreading...Have students create the bookmarks; help them cut and hole punch (glue to cardstock if necessary) and attach string. Then provide paper and note caption. Have students create encouraging Good News cards to pass along to friends, reminding them that Christ is their "life saver"! Attach candy (and maybe eat one, as well...).

Close with prayer and reminder of God's work in our lives. Thank God for the resurrection of Jesus. Thank Him for loving us and ask for help in sharing that love with others.

More Sunday School Activities for Easter

- [Easter Coloring Pages](#)
- [Easter Crafts for Sunday School](#)
- [M&M Poem for Easter](#)
- [Bible Worksheet about Easter](#)
- [Video Easter Story for Kids \(direct download link\)](#)
- [15 Powerful Easter Songs for Children's Worship](#)
- [Easter Game & Object Lesson for Sunday School](#)
- Browse all [101 Easter Resources for children](#)

“Believing the Unseen”

Children’s Sermon Object about Doubting Thomas



Children’s Message: Believing the Unseen

Doubting Thomas and Hope in Times of Fear

Main Objective: This message pairs an ancient story with a current event. The idea is that we do not have to see things in order to know they exist, for better or for worse.

Lately there have been a great many things impacted by the spread of covid-19. This virus is invisible to the eye, but we can certainly notice the effects of it, and can see that it causes fear and death. We take preventative measures to hope that we can be protected from getting sick. In the same way, sin is something that can negatively influence our lives. But we have the hope of knowing God heals our hearts. We cannot see God with our eyes, but we certainly know that He is present, and that brings us joy and comfort. In the Gospel, Thomas refused to believe until He saw Jesus in person. Jesus told Him that those who do not see, and still believe, are blessed. We must have faith to believe and trust God, even when times are uncertain.

Law/Gospel Theme: We are living in unprecedented and uncertain times, as we so frequently hear. Things that we cannot fully know or see can hurt us. This can be frightening. But thanks to the death and resurrection of Jesus, we have ultimate hope and reassurance. We know that Christ cleansed sin, and that even if things are hard in this life, one day we will be with Him in Heaven. God is more powerful than any virus, and He conquered death. We can believe in His goodness and faithfulness to us.

Optional Materials: Cleaning/disinfecting supplies (Clorox, Lysol), hand sanitizer, soap, face mask.

Bible Passage: John 20:19-31

Message Note: As with most messages, the details of how you choose to communicate this are adaptable and should cater to timing as well as to your audience and student needs. Use your judgment and ideas to best serve students.



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Faith Object Lesson on Doubting Thomas

Greet kids, maybe wearing a protective face mask and carrying cleaning supplies.

Hello, children of God! Are you protected? Do you see how I'm keeping safe? I've got my face mask here, and I have my wipes, and my hand sanitizer, and my cleaning supplies... (*Hold up items to demonstrate as you discuss.*)

I'll bet you have seen and heard a lot on the news lately about the virus that is around the world. It can be a little bit scary, can't it? There are many people who have gotten sick and even died. And you know, the virus is something you can't see with your eyes. Some people don't believe that it's a big deal, but it's important to be careful. It is very tiny, and it's possible to spread it without even realizing it. We can't see the virus, but we know what it does because we see the effects it has on people.

So when we do things like keep things clean, wash our hands, or use sanitizer, we are trying to stay safe. We can't see all of the protective things in our cleaning supplies, but we trust that they will kill germs and help us.

You know, our lives are a little bit like that. We do sinful things that can harm us, and we need protection for our hearts. Do you know where we get that? From God, of course! And the great news is that, unlike hand sanitizer, we don't have to worry about how effective God's work is, because we know that in Jesus, we are already made clean.

In the Gospel lesson, one of Christ's disciples, named Thomas, said that he wouldn't believe Jesus had really come back from the dead, unless he could see Him and touch Him physically. Well, Jesus showed up, and there was no more doubting or denying His resurrection. He told Thomas that he was believing after seeing. But Jesus said that people who believe without seeing are especially blessed.

Who might that be, believing without seeing? Well, that's us, right? We haven't seen Jesus on Earth, and we can't see God with our eyes. But we believe that Jesus did come to live, die, and rise again.

And that gives us joy and hope. Even when things are uncertain and we don't know what the future holds, we know Who holds the future. We know that God is in control. We can't see the virus, and that's scary. We can't always see what causes sin, and that's scary. But God is much



greater than sickness, sin, and even death. He loves us enough to send Jesus to die to defeat all of that! We know that our trust in Him will protect us, no matter what.

God's love conquers and casts out fear. We can still be careful and keep ourselves clean and safe. But we trust that God is in control. We haven't seen Jesus, but we know the effect His work has on us. And we know it gives us life. Clorox wipes may dry out, but God's love and power never fail. Believe it!

Children's Prayer Moment

(Have kids repeat each line)

Dear God,

Thank you for the life of Jesus

And thank you for your promises

We believe in you and trust you

Even when we can't see you

Help us not to be afraid

And to remember that you watch over us

Thank you for your love

We love you, God!

In Jesus name, Amen!

More Teaching Ideas for Doubting Thomas

- [Children's Message on Doubting Thomas](#)
- [Jesus Lives \(John 20:19-31\) Sunday School Lesson](#)
- [Doubting Thomas Coloring Page](#)



John 20:19-31 New International Version

(NIV) Jesus Appears to His Disciples

¹⁹ On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

²¹ Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone’s sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”

Jesus Appears to Thomas

²⁴ Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!”

But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”

²⁶ A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.”

²⁸ Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”

²⁹ Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

The Purpose of John’s Gospel

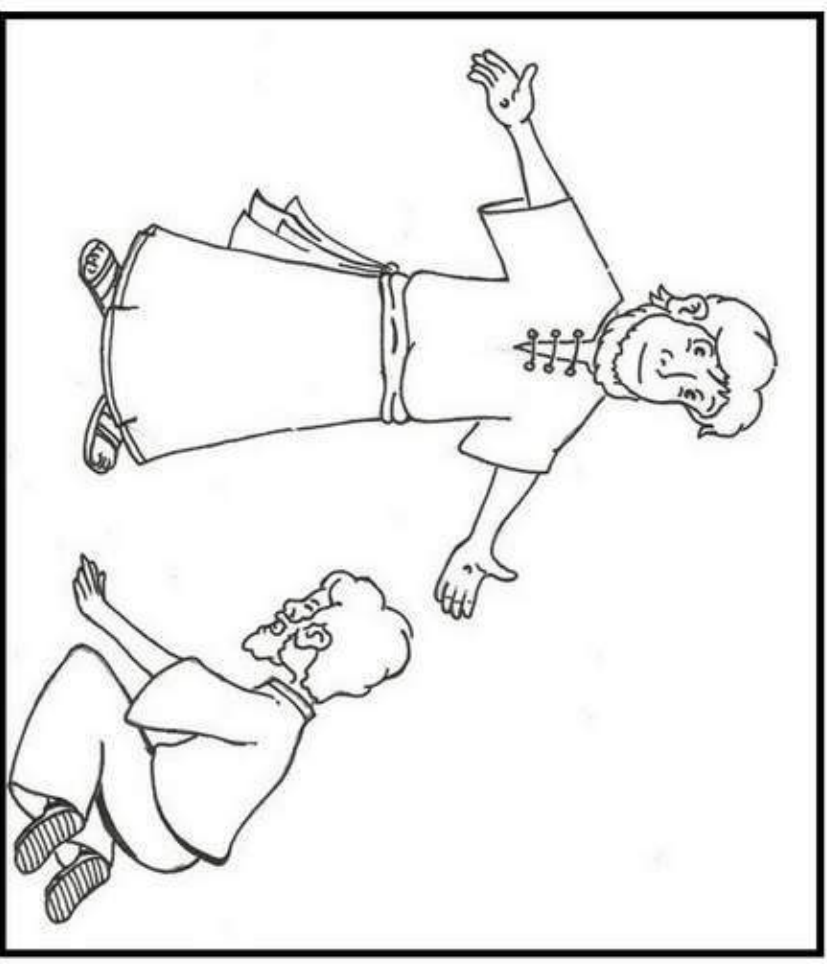
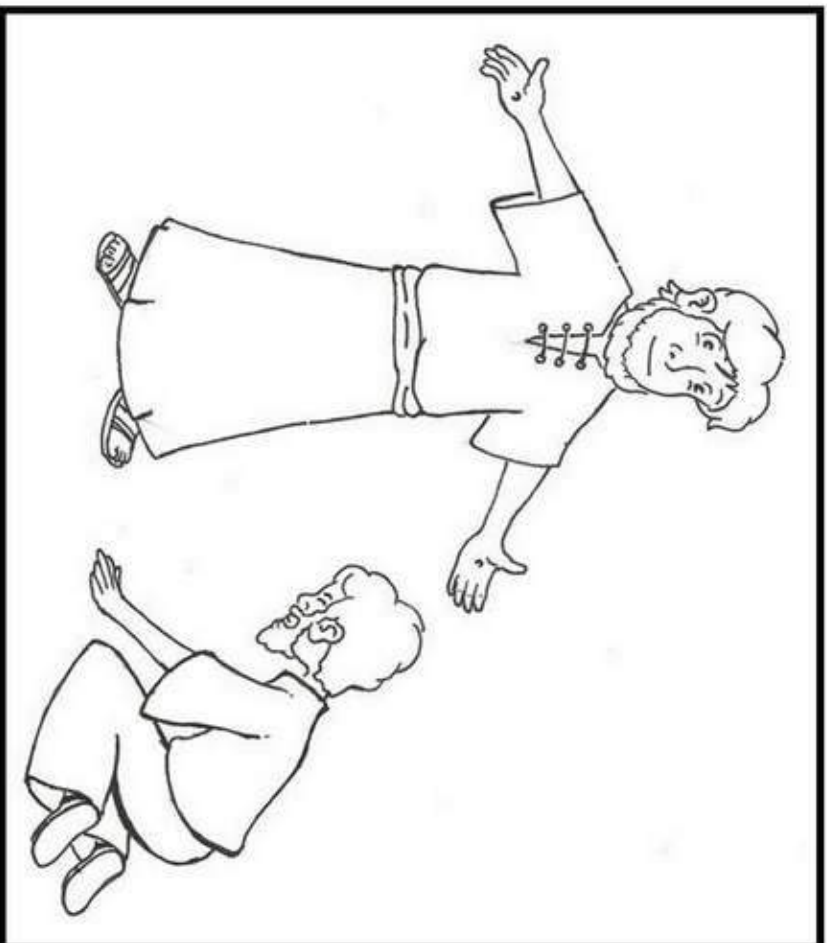
³⁰ Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

[John 20:19-31 NIV](#)



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CAN YOU SPOT THE DIFFERENCE?



Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." John 20:28-29 NIV



Doubting Thomas Craft Ideas

Craft Ideas for Thomas and the Resurrection

The story of Thomas is an important one to emphasize how as Christians, we put our trust in Jesus despite the fact we cannot see Him physically. It's a significant Scripture passage, but can seem challenging when translating into crafts. Here are a couple of simple items that are geared toward remembering Christ's sacrifice, as well as the importance of faith and prayer.

Bible Verses or Craft Captions to Consider...

Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." -John 20:31

We look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal. -2 Corinthians 4:18

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. -Hebrews 11:1

I may not see...but I still believe!

Faith is blessed assurance that brings HOPE!

I may not see Jesus, but His presence gives me life!

More Teaching Ideas for Doubting Thomas

- [Children's Message on Doubting Thomas](#)
- [Jesus Lives \(John 20:19-31\) Sunday School Lesson](#)
- [Doubting Thomas Coloring Page](#)



Craft one: “Handy Prayer”

You will need:

- Scissors
- Construction paper (any color)
- Markers or decorating materials
- Glue or tape
- Popsicle sticks (optional)

Procedure:

1. Trace a hand onto paper or cardstock.
2. Add a round “nail scar” in the center, if desired.
3. Cut the hand out of the paper.
4. On each finger, write a person or topic to pray for.
5. If desired, place the praying hand on a stick or string for display.



Craft Two: “Pierced Kaleidoscope”

You will need:

- Construction Paper or tissue paper
- Glue, tape, or staples
- Empty container (tissue box, oats container, etc.)
- Scissors
- Small scraps of paper or beads (optional)
- Markers, crayons, or decorative supplies
- Stickers or pipe cleaners (optional)



Procedure:

1. On one side of the container, poke holes into a design, using scissors or a sharp pencil. On the other side, cut a hole in the lid to create an eye hole.
2. Decorate your container by covering it with paper, inside and out if desired.
3. Add verse captions, notes, pictures, and stickers, as desired.
4. If desired, add extra flair with papers, beads, or glitter. If using this strategy, cover the eye hole with some plastic.
5. Hold your tool up to the light, peek through the hole, and admire your design!





These craft ideas were prepared by [Kristin Schmidt](#), who serves at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, CO.

She has shared her teaching gifts through *Ministry-To-Children* since 2014 and now serves as our lead curriculum writer.

Kristin has a professional background in elementary and pre-school education. A graduate of Biola University, she holds a Master of Education and will receive the Master of Theology degree from Concordia University, Irvine, California, in May

2020. Kristin grew up in southern California and lived the past 10 years in Georgia. She is a long-distance runner and voracious reader.

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Jesus & Doubting Thomas

John 20:19-31 Children's Message

He's alive...no doubt! Believing the unseen

Written by [Kristin Schmidt](#) for [Ministry-To-Children.com](#)

Main Objective: It can sometimes be difficult to understand and explain how we know that God's word is true. Kids and adults all wrestle with doubts. This message uses the story of Thomas to remind children that if we believe in Jesus we are called blessed. We cannot always know things beyond a shadow of a doubt, but through faith and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we trust the reality of the Bible.



Law/Gospel Theme: The world sometimes tells us to be skeptical and hunt for evidence to support whatever we might consider. There are plenty of things that are difficult to verify, especially in the life of a Christian and the story of the resurrection. But we know from the Bible that Jesus rose, and that He appeared to His disciples. He also told them that those who believe without sight are especially blessed.

Optional Materials: Paper bags or boxes; items to show (stuffed animal, ball, flower, etc.)

Message: Note: All elements are open to adjustment. Cater to the needs of your group.

Greet children and introduce the "guessing game" of the message.

Good morning!

Today we are going to talk about trust, and how we can know that something is true...what if I told you that I have climbed Mount Everest? Would you believe that? (*Take responses...hey, maybe you have climbed Mount Everest!*)

Why or why not? What if I told you I brushed my teeth this morning? That might be a little more believable, but you still didn't watch me do it, so you would have to take my word for it. Well, look at this bag. Would you believe me if I told you I had a ball in this bag? How do you know?

Have one child come up to look. (child's name), is it a ball? Ask other children do you believe her? Do you believe me? Hold it up. Now we can know for sure, right? Okay, well, here's another bag. What do you think is in here?

This time, I want (another child) to come up, but you can't look at the inside of the bag. You may only touch the item. What do you think it is? Can you know for sure without seeing it? It might be a little trickier... (Address the group again) Would you believe him/her if you didn't see what this was?

Well, in our gospel lesson today, someone had a hard time believing what others tried to tell him. The story of Jesus appearing to his disciples after Easter is so exciting. Imagine watching Him die, and feeling so upset, and then seeing Him alive again! But one disciple missed out.

He wasn't there in the room when Jesus came, and didn't see him personally. He did not believe what his friends told him about witnessing Jesus, and promised that he wouldn't believe it until he saw Jesus face to face. When Jesus did show up later, and showed His wounds, Thomas must have felt embarrassed. But the neat thing is that Jesus said "blessed are those who have not seen, and yet still believe."

He commended people who believed in Him without witnessing face to face. Do you know who that is? That's us! We haven't physically seen Jesus, but we can still believe in Him.

How? How do we know about Jesus? (*Hopefully someone pipes up with "the Bible" answer*). That's right! We might hear about Jesus from other people, and that is great. But we have the word of GOD, most importantly.

We have the stories of the Bible, and we know what God's word says is true. In order to trust someone or something, we have to know that it is trustworthy. God has most definitely proved Himself trustworthy. He does what He says He'll do. His promises are real and are true.

The Bible gives us great hope. We can't see God necessarily, but we see His evidence and know He gives us life. The Bible is God's word, given to us so that we can know and believe!

Prayer: Offer thanks that we can trust God, and ask for help in doing so:

(Have kids repeat each line, if desired)

Dear God,

Thank you for saving us

Thank you for your love

Help us to believe

Even in what we cannot see.

Thank you for Jesus!

In His name, amen

Bible Verses to Reference:

[John 20:19-31 \(NIV\) Jesus Appears to His Disciples](#)

¹⁹ On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

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²⁹ Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

The Purpose of John’s Gospel

³⁰ Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But these are written that you may believe^[b] that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Footnotes:

[John 20:24](#) Thomas (Aramaic) and Didymus (Greek) both mean twin.

[John 20:31](#) Or may continue to believe

[New International Version \(NIV\)](#)

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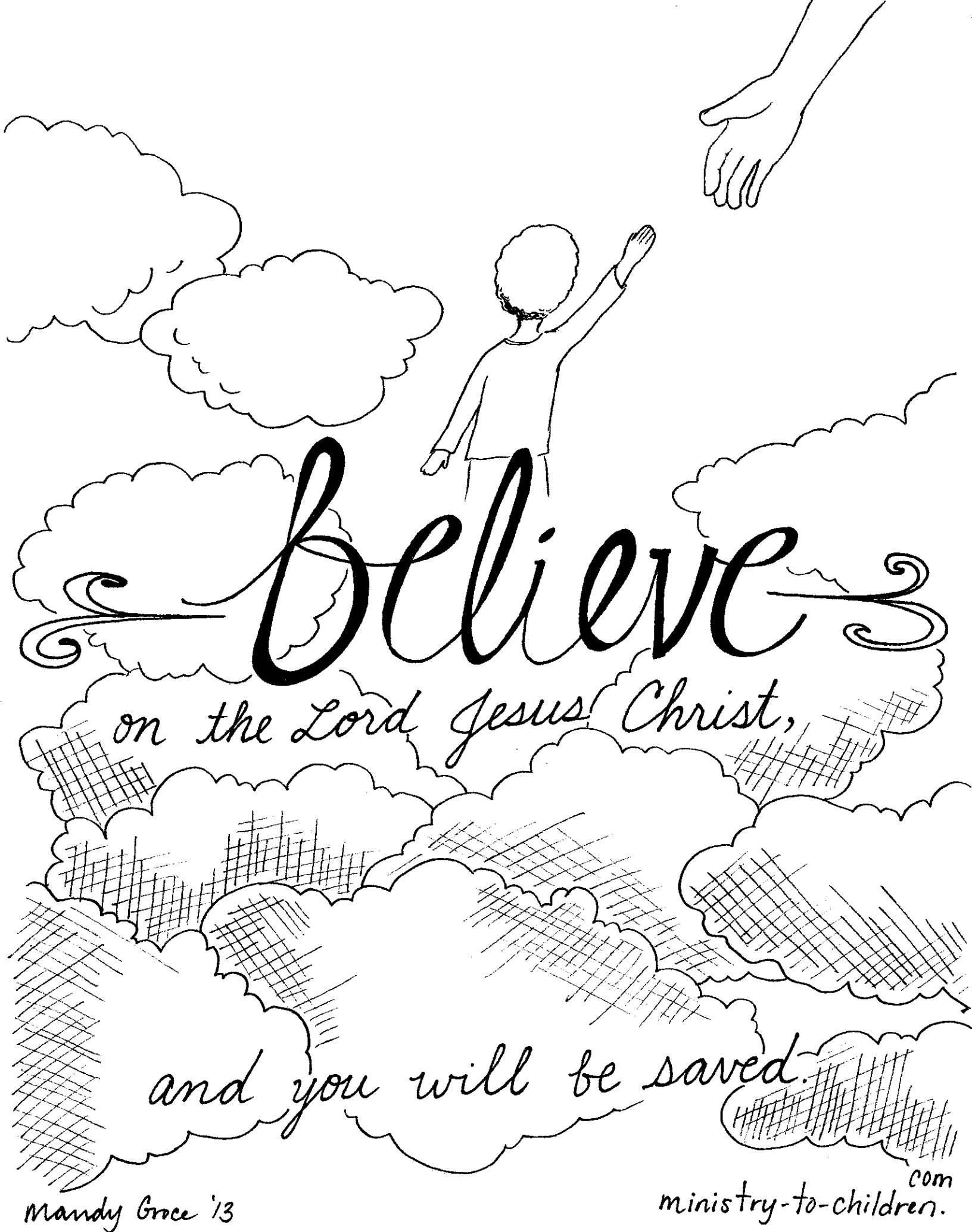
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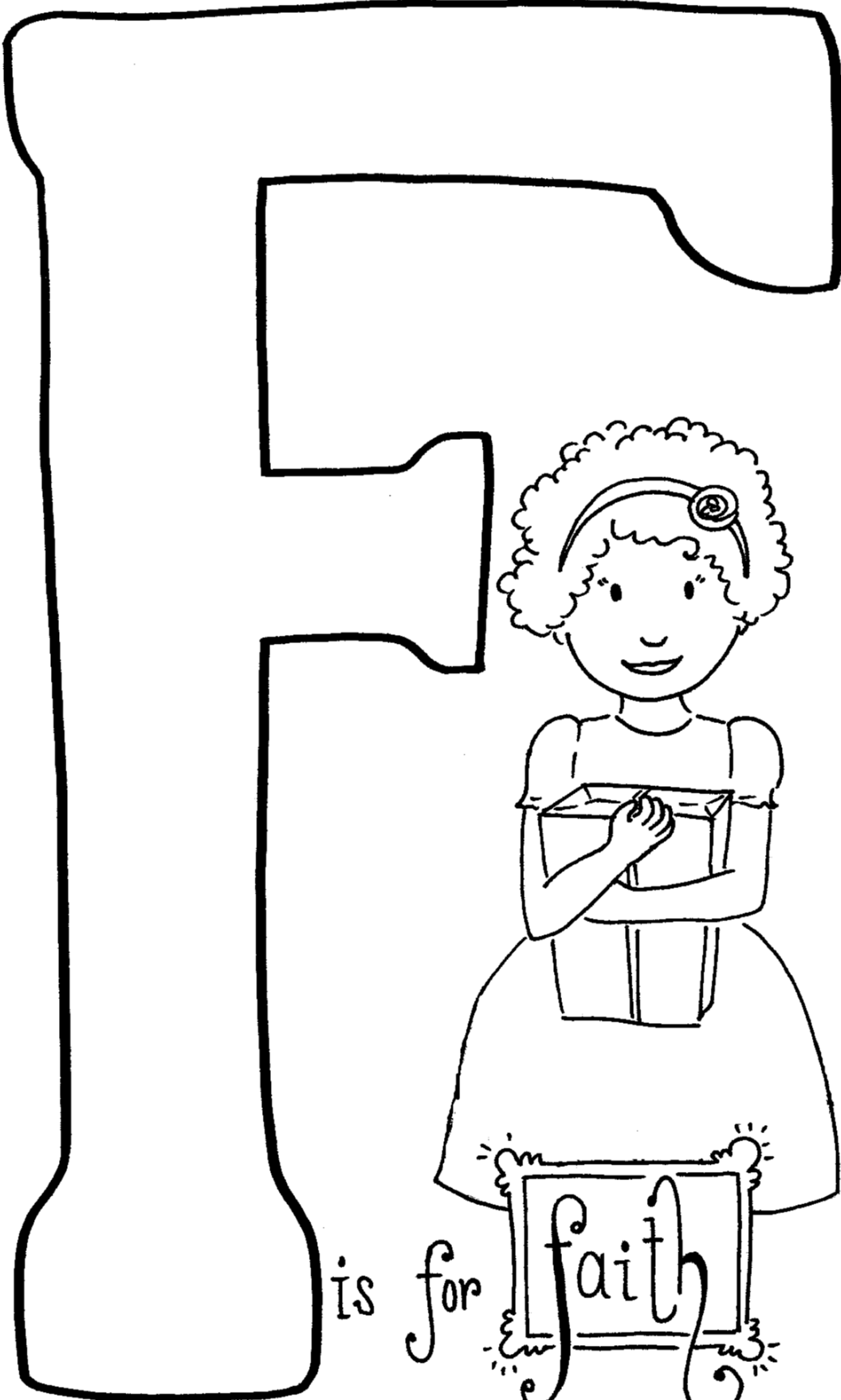
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Believe

on the Lord Jesus Christ,

and you will be saved.



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