
Believe It Before You See It

Children's Sermon on Doubting Thomas

(John 20:19-31)

Children tend to be rather trusting in general. However, they are also literal in their understanding and interpretation of things, and often have a hard time grasping abstract or unseen concepts. This message reminds kids that our faith in Jesus is reliable and true, even though we cannot physically see or touch the Lord. When we believe despite a lack of sight, Jesus says that we are considered “blessed”!

Law/Gospel Theme: Jesus most certainly died and came back to life! He appeared to the disciples, and one of them (Thomas) insisted on having proof to believe He was truly alive. We might not have a lot of scientific “evidence”, but we trust in God’s Word and believe that Jesus died and lived for our sake. We know God loves us and we can trust Him for all things.

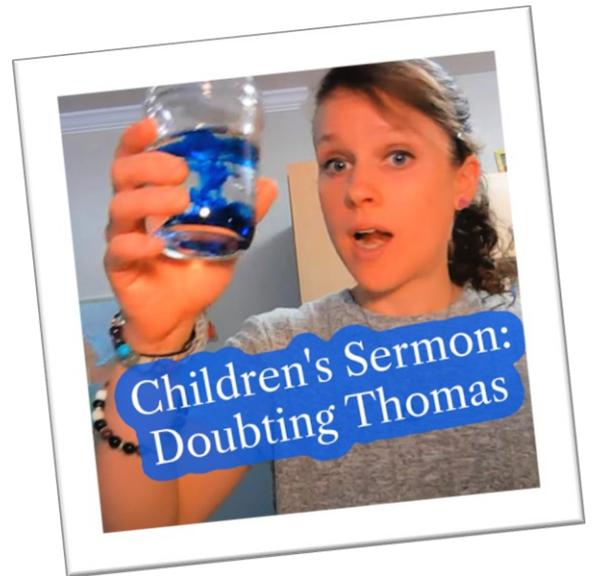
Optional Materials: Pencil, eraser, white board or paper, water, food coloring (varying materials depending on what “tricks” you wish to use).

Bible Passage: John 20:19-31

More Teaching Ideas:

- Watch our video demonstration of this [children’s sermon](#) or the suggested [craft ideas](#)
- Compare our full [Doubting Thomas Sunday School Lesson](#)
- See more [John 20:19-31 ideas on Sunday School Works](#)
- Compare another [object lesson on faith and doubt](#)

Message: Note: This message suggests using “tricks” or optical illusions to communicate the concept of believing things through seeing their reality (or falsehood). Feel free to use your own tools or tricks, or choose one of the suggestions here.



Doubting Thomas Children's Sermon from John 20:19-31

Greet the children, and challenge them to believe some strange assertions...

Hello, children of God!

Have you ever heard a story that sounded too strange to be true? Or maybe you've been told something that was hard to believe? I want to share with you some crazy things that you'll have to see to believe. For instance, what if I told you... (*Choose from two or three of these possibilities. The way to "prove" the statements is in parentheses.*)

- I can erase the future! (*Write the word "future" on a small dry erase board or piece of paper, then erase it.*)
- I can prove to you that I'm not even here... (*This is a bit of a play on words. Tell students that you are not in other places, like Rome or Paris...if you are not there, you must be somewhere else, right? If you're somewhere else, you aren't "here"!*)
- I can turn transform this cup of water and make it seem completely different (*Not as impressive...take an ordinary glass of water and place food coloring or a drink powder inside to make it "something else"*).
- I can make this pencil float in mid-air! (*With this trick, have another pencil tucked inside a watch, or hold it with your other hand...pick up the pencil that will "float" and hold your hand palm-down to create the illusion.*)
- Choose another simple "trick" or word play as desired.

Now, clearly I didn't really do those things...it was sort of a trick of words or slight of hand. However, you certainly would not have believed me if I just told you I could do what I claimed. You had to see it yourself, right? Sometimes people have a hard time trusting in things without physically witnessing them. There's a phrase people often say: "I'll believe it when I see it!" We want proof that something is true. We want to make sure of something before we believe or understand it.

Well, that happened to someone in the Bible. His name was Thomas, and he was one of the twelve disciples that were close friends with Jesus. After Jesus came back to life from the dead, He appeared to many people. He came to His disciples one day when they were gathered in a room, and they were overjoyed to see the Lord. However...Thomas wasn't there. Maybe he was on an errand or something,

the Bible doesn't specify. But he missed seeing Jesus. When the other disciples told him about it, he refused to believe them! He said that unless he could put his fingers in the nail marks in the hands of Jesus and see Him with his own eyes, he wouldn't believe it. Well, later on, that's just what happened! Jesus came again, and this time Thomas was there. Jesus had him put his hands in the nail marks, and Thomas certainly believed then! He said "My Lord and my God!" because he realized the truth of the Resurrection. But Jesus told him that he had believed because he saw him...Jesus said "blessed are those who have not seen and still believe."

And you know what? That means US! We haven't seen Jesus physically with our eyes. We haven't had the opportunity to touch His body or see Him in the flesh. But we trust in God's word, the Bible. We believe in Him and believe the Holy Spirit gives us faith to believe even when we don't see or fully understand. So we are those that Jesus called "blessed." We know His words are true, and we know He died and rose again. Because of that, we can trust that we will spend eternity with Him someday. What a wonderful and hopeful promise that is...and it's no trick! We should thank God every day for that beautiful truth.

Why don't we say a prayer of thanks right now?

Children's Prayer:

(Have kids repeat each line)

Dear God,

Thank you for sending Jesus to live and die for us

We know your words are true and real

Help us to have faith and trust you

Even though we can't always see or understand.

Thank you for your love

We love you, God!

In Jesus's name, Amen!

Bible Verses/story to Reference: John 20:19-31

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews,^[c] Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.”²⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.²¹ Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.”²² And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.”

²⁴ Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin,^[d] was not with them when Jesus came.²⁵ So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe.”

²⁶ Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although 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, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.”²⁸ Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!”²⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book;³¹ 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.

-John 20:19-31



Thank you for downloading these free materials. Our team is grateful for your trust and pray that God will bless your ministry.

This resource was prepared by [Kristin Schmidt](#) (pictured right). She 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.

My name is Tony Kummer (pictured below). I started Ministry-To-Children.com in 2007 as a free resource for anyone sharing Jesus with kids. It is my personal honor to share these resources with churches around the world.



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If you enjoy our material, be sure to [sign-up for my free email newsletter](#) called "Sunday School Works!" Every Tuesday, I send the latest new lessons, crafts, and coloring pages in print-friendly format to make your lesson planning easy.

May God continue to bless your ministry!

Tony Kummer