

Jesus Is Alive!

Lesson 32a — Easter

Lesson 32b — On the Way to Emmaus

Lesson 32c — Doubting Thomas

Lesson 32d — Jesus Will Come Again!

OVERVIEW

The Easter miracle is the heart of the Christian faith, and the basis for our belief that we, too, will someday be resurrected. This month's unit focuses on the miracle of the risen Christ, tracing the events from His resurrection until His return to Heaven.

In conjunction with the special seasonal activities no doubt planned for this Sunday, the celebration spirit of Easter should be the theme of your first lesson. It stands in direct contrast to the events studied on the previous Sunday. Help your students understand how the sorrow over Jesus' death was changed to joy when those who visited His tomb discovered that He had indeed risen from the dead.

On the second Sunday, one of the notable events following the resurrection of Jesus is studied — His appearance to two men who were walking on the road to Emmaus. The story of how they recognized Him as He broke bread with them should lead into a discussion of

how Jesus reveals Himself to us. Your students should learn that Jesus can be very real to them too.

The focus on the third lesson in this series is on the blessings of believing. The text uses the example of Thomas who doubted the resurrection of Jesus because he had not been present the night Jesus appeared to His disciples. Emphasize that Jesus said we would be blessed if we believe, even though we have not seen Him in the flesh. Your students should understand that this promise is for them too.

Forty days after Jesus' resurrection from the dead, after having been seen by many witnesses, He ascended into Heaven. This is the topic of our concluding lesson for the unit. As you describe how He left this earth in a cloud, help your students realize that someday He will come back again in the same manner. Conclude your lesson and the unit's material by talking about the necessity of being ready for His return.

SPECIAL NOTE FOR THIS UNIT

Refer to Units 7 and 20 for additional ideas concerning the lessons in this unit. Although the specific lesson objectives may be different, the patterns provided and activities suggested will be applicable in many cases.

GAMES FOR REVIEW

Enlarge the figures of the boy and girl speaking (see Patterns) and mount on the two sides of a large board. Write your questions on speech balloons of an appropriate size for the figures. Write the Bible texts which answer the questions on separate pieces of paper. On a different board, tape these pieces of paper. Divide your group into two teams. Post a speech balloon question coming from one of the figures. The first team to determine which Bible verse is the correct answer may go and take that slip of paper and attach it under

the question. The complete verse should then be read aloud. Keep score, and when all of the questions have been answered, the team with the most points wins.

Use overhead transparencies to help your group review the memory verses for this month. Write the verses on the transparency and cut apart into pieces. (You may wish to deal with just one verse at a time.) Mix up the pieces on the overhead for rearranging. Another possibility is to put the words in order but leave out key words to be filled in. Or words can be taken away one by one until the students are reciting from memory.

CONTEST IDEAS

Make a copy of the "Road to Emmaus Contest" pattern for each child (see Patterns). Each Sunday place a "footprint" on succeeding spaces, as the child earns the footprints. Footprints are earned by coming to Sunday

school, bringing Bible, saying memory verse, etc. (Footprints may be cut out from the pattern and glued on, or they may be drawn on the space.) Continue the contest until every child has reached the goal, Emmaus. Each child should get a prize, but the first arrival should be given a special prize.

Explain to your group (class or departmental project) that your goal for the month is to make a long Easter chain. Each loop will represent a specific behavior or accomplishment. Cut loops from pastel colors, and on each loop write what must be done to earn that loop. For instance: a pale blue loop for attendance, pale pink for bringing Bible, pale green for knowing memory verse. Hang the lengthening chains from your ceiling or drape them across a platform area. If there is a special behavior that you especially wish to emphasize, attach a paper flower to the chain for those who do that.

With this Spring Bunny Contest, challenge each child to come regularly, memorize Bible verses, bring his Bible, and bring friends. Cut out a rabbit for each child (see Patterns) and let him put his name on it. Put a numbered trail on your bulletin board with these words: "How Far Can You Hop?" Each time a child does one of the behaviors, let him move his rabbit along the trail one space.

BULLETIN BOARDS

Draw a large cross at the center of the board with a wide-tip brown marker. In each corner place a symbol of one week's lesson. In one corner use a construction paper tomb; in another use three flannelgraph figures to symbolize the "Road to Emmaus"; in another use a plastic or rubber glove to symbolize the hand of Jesus; in another use cotton fiberfill to symbolize the clouds Jesus went to Heaven in (let the children help you glue it on). Decorate borders; use clusters of bright artificial flowers at corners to brighten the board.

Create an Easter bulletin board using paper Easter lilies (see Patterns). For each lily, cut a white 5" square of paper and round off the corners. Overlap the edges about 1/4" and glue together to form a cone shape. Paste a yellow strip of paper about 1" wide and 4" long in the cone to make the stamen of the lily. Cut stems and leaves from green construction paper. Arrange these in the left corner of your board on a blue background. On the right side, cut out letters spelling a favorite Easter verse or message such as "He Is Risen!" In the upper right-hand corner, attach a large, colorful butterfly.

Cover your board with light-blue paper. Across the top in large letters place the words, JESUS WILL COME

AGAIN. Underneath, in smaller letters, put "Are you ready?" Put a large figure of Jesus near the top of your board (see Patterns). Cut clouds from fluffy white batting material, and glue around the figure of Jesus. Across the bottom of your board, make low hills from green paper. Let your students make figures from chenille wires. Shape a 9" piece in the middle to form a round, flat head. Twist the wire for about an inch to form the body. Bend ends to form legs and feet. Twist a shorter piece of chenille wire around the body twice and shape arms and hands (see Patterns). Glue round circles for faces on back. Hats or hair cut from construction paper could also be glued on. Draw in features, and attach figures to the hill on the bottom of the board. Be sure some of them appear to be looking up at Jesus!

CHART IDEAS

Make a puzzle chart for your students using the "Jesus Is Alive" poster (see Patterns). Color and laminate one poster for each child or cover with clear plastic contact paper. Decide what activities will be recorded for this month: attendance, bringing Bible, knowing verse, etc. Cut the poster into pieces, making as many pieces as there are total possibilities. Each week give your students the number of pieces he earned for that Sunday. At the end of the unit, those two who have completed their puzzle should receive a prize.

On the first Sunday of this unit, give each of your children a piece of light-green construction paper on which you have written the words, "Look! Jesus Is Alive!" (see Patterns). On each Sunday, let them attach a shape on which they have printed the memory verse of the week. (The shapes are: a tree, a butterfly, a squirrel, and a flower.)

Make a picture wheel chart showing the main events covered in this unit's stories (see Patterns). On the first Sunday, give children the base marked into four quarters and the first picture to color and glue on. On subsequent Sundays, let them attach the other sections. On the last Sunday, give them the 3/4 top circle and help them attach it to the base with a fastener.

SUPPORT MATERIAL

Family Life Institute Series of cassette tapes — Number 60

Life of Christ, Volume 4 — Biblegram, CEF Press
Jesus' Death and Resurrection — Classroom Coloring Activities (4 each of 6 coloring and activity pages), Rainbow Books

Stories of Jesus Activity Book — Level One, ages 3-8, Warner Press

TEXT Matthew 28:1-10

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to describe the events of the Resurrection. They will be able to explain that, though there was sorrow over Jesus' death, there was much joy that first Easter morning when it was discovered that Christ had indeed risen from the dead.

MEMORY VERSE The Lord is risen indeed. . . . — Luke 24:34

Easter

MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

THE LORD — Make an L with thumb and first finger of the right hand. Touch thumb to left shoulder, bring across in front of body, touching right waist.

IS RISEN — Place right index and middle fingers standing in left palm; move right hand up.

INDEED — Touch tip of right index finger to mouth, palm facing left, and move slightly up and forward.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

An angel standing before the empty tomb illustrates this week's memory verse. (See pattern at end of lesson.) Cut apart the sections as indicated by the heavy black lines. Put the arrangement back together one section at a time as your students learn the verse.

BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Give each child a puppet made from the "Jesus Is Alive!" puppet pattern described under In-Class Activities. Explain that these puppets are telling the message that was given on the first Easter day, and also the reason why we celebrate Easter every year.

1. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came early on Sunday morning with sweet spices to anoint the Lord's dead body.

2. The two Marys said, "Who shall roll away the stone?" When they looked the big stone was rolled away.

3. An angel sitting in the tomb said, "Ye seek Jesus . . . he is risen; he is not here."

Climax: The announcement by the angel "He is risen, He is not here" amazed the two Marys. They ran quickly to tell Peter and the disciples.

Conclusion: The resurrection of Jesus caused great joy that erased the grief from the hearts of His believers.

Response: The students will be able to describe the events that took place that first Easter morning. They can tell of the joy that filled the hearts of Christ's followers.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

We do not have many Scriptures in the Old Testament that foretell the Resurrection. In Psalm 16:10 we read "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy one to see corruption." This does not specify the number of days Christ would be in the grave, but it would indicate a short time as bodies start to decompose in three or four days in that climate.

In Matthew 12:40 Jesus plainly told the people that as Jonas was in the whale's belly three days and three nights so would the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth. On other occasions He mentioned rising from the dead, but His disciples and followers didn't grasp what He was saying. When He was placed in the tomb they did not dream that He would rise again. In fact, on the first day of the week, certain women brought spices to anoint His body since there was not time enough to do so when He was placed in the tomb. They were greatly perplexed when they found the stone rolled away and Jesus gone. An angel told them that Jesus was risen as He had said. The women ran and told the disciples, but they refused to believe that He had risen. Peter and John hurried to the tomb and confirmed that it was empty.

Jesus had risen and appeared unto several of His followers, but most of the disciples just couldn't accept the fact that He was alive. He appeared to the eleven as they sat at meat and reprimanded them for their unbelief.

The fact of the Resurrection gives absolute authority to all that Jesus said. The resurrection of Christ is of necessity the central doctrine of the New Testament. "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain" (I Corinthians 15:17). Because of the Resurrection, Jesus is not a vague historical figure, but the living Lord of the present. He is not a religious leader of the past to be talked about, but the living Christ to be met personally.

SPECIAL NOTE FOR THIS LESSON

Refer to Lessons 7e and 20c for additional ideas.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Help your class make “Sonrise” Easter cards for their parents. Gather cans of different sizes. Let the children use these to trace circles, one inside the other, on a piece of construction paper. Then have them draw lines to look like sun’s rays and color the design. Fold the card, and write an Easter message on the inside.

Make an Easter surprise basket to help you teach the truths of the holiday. Fold up the bottom third of a piece of construction paper and staple the sides closed. Out of the top third, cut a handle for your basket. Make up a secret code and then use a felt-tip pen to write this code on the basket. Surround the code with stickers and Easter decorations. Fill your basket envelope with construction paper egg shapes, one for each of your students. On each shape, write a simple Easter message in code such as “Jesus Lives,” “He arose,” or “Jesus Is Alive!” During class time, have students take turns pulling an egg from the basket, figuring out the code, and reading aloud the message.

Help each of your students make a stained-glass window display (see Patterns). Cut out a copy of the pattern, lay it on the folded edge of a sheet of construction paper. Trace the pattern onto the paper. Then staple the loose edges of the construction paper together so that it won’t slip when the child is cutting it. The paper can then be opened. Put a small bit of glue along the edges of the sides, tomb, and Jesus. Let the children choose a piece of colored tissue paper and place it on the glued side of the design, thus making a small stained-glass look. When the glue is dry trim the excess tissue around the edges. These would look pretty if all the children chose to hang them in your classroom window to give a stained-glass effect.

QUESTIONS

What is the true meaning of Easter?

Why were the women going to Jesus’ grave?

Why were they worried when they saw the stone rolled away?

How do you think the stone was rolled away?

Who was the man sitting on the stone? (See Matthew 28:2.)

Jesus wasn’t there. Where was He?

Where is Jesus now?

Jesus had told His disciples what was going to happen. Why didn’t they understand when they saw the empty tomb?

PRESCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Make tiny Easter basket treats for your children using large gumdrops. With the wide end at the top, hollow out a little bit of the gumdrop. Use a piece of chenille wire for a handle, insert it in the sides by bending the tips of the handle at right angles. Attach a tiny bow on the top of the handle and put tiny candies in the hollowed-out spot.

Give each of your children one of the “Jesus Is Alive!” hand puppets (see Patterns). Let them color the child. Help them fold on the line indicated, then staple or tape the sides of each puppet together. The children may put their fingers between the front and back sections. Let them make their puppets “talk” about the good news that Jesus is alive.

Fold a 6½” by 8” piece of heavy paper in half so it becomes 6½” by 4”. Lay the butterfly shape (see Patterns) next to the folded edge, and cut out the shape. Unfold both pieces and use them as stencils. Make one set of butterfly stencils for each of your children to use. Supply the children with paper on which they may color their stencil design. They may trace around the outside of the butterfly shape or trace inside the hole from which the shape was cut. Tell the children that their butterfly represents new life. Aren’t we glad to know that Jesus arose and now lives in Heaven?

REVIEW IDEAS

Use pictures from someone who has been to the Holy Land in recent years, and show your group how Jerusalem looks today. Emphasize areas related to the Easter story, such as Jerusalem, the Garden of Gethsemane, Golgotha, the Garden tomb.

Plan an Easter celebration for your whole group. Inflate pastel-colored balloons, and let the students draw Easter symbols or messages on them and hang them around your meeting area. Bring Easter sugar cookies cut in the shape of flowers or butterflies and sprinkled with multi-colored sugar. Play Easter songs as background music. Have a bare tree branch in a bucket of sand, and let each child cut out a butterfly, flower, or bird to put on the tree (see Patterns). Recite your Easter verse together, and sing the memory verse song.

COORDINATING SONGS

“This Is Happy Easter”

“Rolled Away, Rolled Away”

“Countdown” — 2nd verse is Easter — CEF

“All of My Burdens Went Rolling Away”

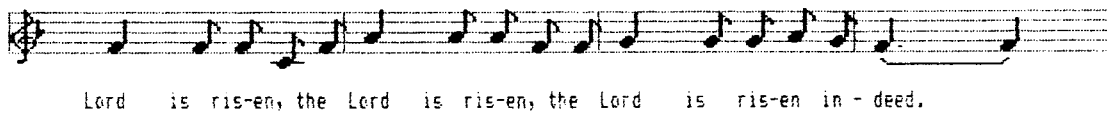
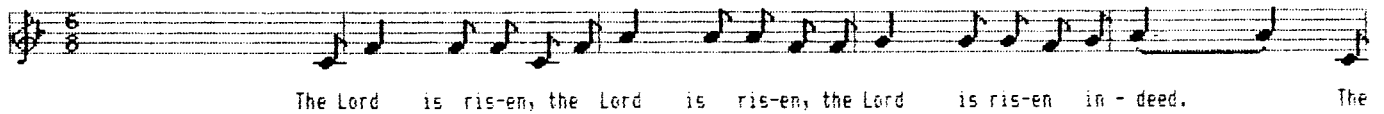
"Be Glad and Sing" — Primaries Sing, page 39, 1-3 grades
"Easter Day" — Primaries Sing in Home and Church, Page 62
"Christ Arose"
"Jesus Rose on Easter Day"

"Because He Lives"
"He Lives"

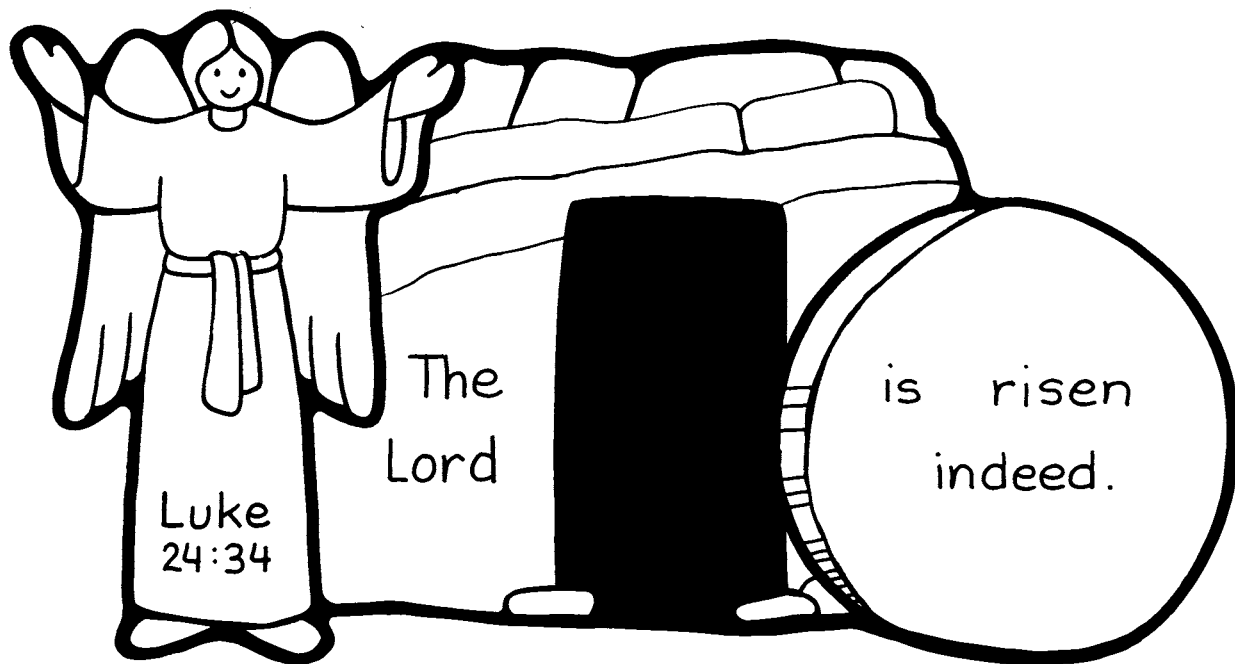
SUPPORT MATERIAL

The Easter Women — Arch Books
Kiri and the First Easter — Arch Books

MEMORY VERSE SONG



MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED



TEXT Luke 24:13-35

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to explain that Jesus walked with the two on the road to Emmaus and later that day revealed Himself to them. They will realize when Jesus speaks to us He lets us know that He is real and that we can trust in what He says.

MEMORY VERSE Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. — Psalm 119:105

On the Way to Emmaus

MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

THY WORD — Hold hands before body like an open book.

IS A LAMP — Cup hands together as though hiding something inside, move hands up and to the sides, ending with both palms facing out expressing the number five on each hand.

UNTO MY FEET — Point to feet.

AND A LIGHT — Cup hands together as though hiding something inside, move hands up and to the sides, ending with both palms facing out expressing the number five on each hand.

UNTO MY PATH — Point to floor, move finger up along an imagined path before you.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

This week's memory verse is illustrated by a boy who is studying a Bible by the light of a candle. (See pattern at end of lesson.) Cut the sections apart as indicated by the heavy black lines. Assemble them a piece at a time as the students learn the verse.

BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Begin your class session by having each of your children cover their eyes with their hands. Tell your group that you are going to touch one of them and that student should say a few words. The others must try to guess who is speaking. They will not be able to recognize the speaker by sight because their eyes are covered. Then explain that today's story is about some men who didn't recognize Jesus, even though their eyes were physically open.

1. As Cleopas and a friend were on their way to Emmaus, Jesus walked with them but they didn't recognize Him.
2. As they walked with Jesus the two friends expressed their grief regarding recent events concerning the Lord.
3. He expounded the Scriptures to them concerning Himself.

Climax: As they ate bread together at Emmaus, Jesus revealed Himself and they knew Him.

Conclusion: Just as the two at Emmaus did not recognize Christ, we know Him personally only after He reveals Himself to our hearts.

Response: The students will be able to explain that Jesus walked with the two on the road to Emmaus and later revealed Himself to them. They can explain that when Jesus speaks to us He lets us know that He is real.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Jesus appeared to several people on the day of His resurrection. He first appeared unto Mary. He also appeared to the women who came to anoint His body (Matthew 28:9). He appeared unto Peter and to the eleven in the evening as they sat at meat. Our text is about the two who talked with Him on the way to Emmaus. No one can be sure who these two were. There is no evidence to prove that the Cleopas mentioned here is the same as Cleophas of John 19:25. Some Biblical scholars think the unnamed disciple might have been Luke himself. The account sounds as though the writer was there in person.

It is not known for certain where Emmaus was. The text says it was about threescore furlongs from Jerusalem, but gives no direction. It is thought that it was located near the village of El Kubiebeh which is seven miles northwest of Jerusalem.

Emmaus was evidently the home of these disciples and they were returning there following a visit to Jerusalem. They were talking of the events of the day when Jesus overtook them. They did not recognize Him as His appearance had changed (Mark 16:12). After questioning them about their conversation, He reproved them for their unbelief, but went on to expound the Scriptures concerning Himself.

When they came to their village they asked the

Stranger to come in with them as the day was far spent. They sat down to eat and as Christ blessed the food they recognized Him as the Lord. He vanished from their sight and they hurried back to Jerusalem to tell the news that they had seen Jesus.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Use finger puppets portraying Jesus and the two disciples to tell the story (see Patterns).

Have all your class close their eyes. Tell them you have invited someone to visit your class, but they are not to look to see who it is. Have another teacher, parent or guest step in and say a few words to your class. After they have opened their eyes, explain that this was much like the disciples who were with Jesus on the road to Emmaus. It was like their eyes were closed. They could hear Jesus, but somehow they didn't recognize Him.

Take a variety of books to class — a cookbook, songbook, dictionary, etc. Explain that each of these books teaches us something. But there is only one Book that teaches us how to get to Heaven, and that is the Bible. It is a "light to our feet" because it shows us the way we should go.

Explain to your group that today you are going to talk about opposites. Show some examples: black and white paper, a hard rock and a soft piece of cotton, a big car and a little one. Show a sad face stick puppet. (See patterns given for Lesson 8a and 17b, and Unit 18.) Ask your class what the opposite of being sad is. Go into the story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus feeling very sad. Then, at the proper point in the story, reverse the stick puppet and show the happy face. The disciples now had an opposite feeling from the one they started the day with, because they knew that Jesus really was alive!

QUESTIONS

What happened when the two men were walking to Emmaus?

What did Jesus tell them?

What do you think happened when the two men went back to Jerusalem?

Why didn't Cleopas and his friend know Jesus when He walked with them?

How do you think they felt when they realized it was Jesus who was with them?

Why did they go back to Jerusalem to tell the disciples?

Don't you think they were too tired after their long journey?

Has Jesus ever talked to you? How did you know it was Jesus?

After you met Jesus (got saved), were you so excited you wanted to tell others right away?

PRESCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Give your children an especially large Jesus sticker for their Bibles. Explain that God's Book tells about Jesus and how Jesus wants us to live.

Show pictures of friends going for a walk together. Talk about how much fun it is to be with a friend. Ask how they would like to take a walk with Jesus. Lead into your story of the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, and how they met and talked with Jesus. When they sit down to eat together, pass out a small snack for your children.

Show a sad heart with tears, and explain that all of Jesus' friends felt sad when they thought He wouldn't be with them anymore. But when they met Jesus on the road, and knew He was truly alive, then they felt happy! Show happy heart with a big smile.

REVIEW IDEAS

Build your review around the message of the memory verse. Have a large basket or container with a big question mark on it in front of your group. Explain that lots of times we have questions about what is right or what we should do. God's Word has the answers! In the basket place a number of questions that can be answered by a Bible verse. Have students come up and pull out a question and read it aloud. Other students should be prepared ahead of time with a Bible and the answers. When they hear their question read, they can come up and read the answer out of the Bible.

Focus your review on the memory verse for this week. Bring supplies for a camping trip such as a sleeping bag or backpack. Include a lantern in your supplies. Describe how dark it gets at night, and turn out the lights in your assembly area. Tell the children you can't see to do the things you need to do, and ask what you need. When they say, "A light," light your lantern. Then parallel this to the Bible. It is our "light" to tell us what to do. But it will do us no good unless we read it, just like your lantern did no good until you lit it.

COORDINATING SONGS

"This Little Light of Mine"

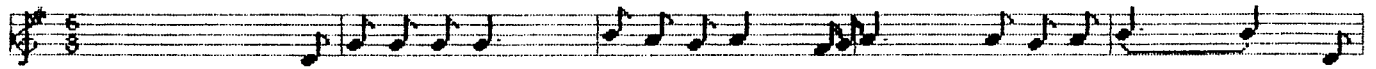
"Give Me Oil in My Lamp"

"When We All Get to Heaven" — Sunbeam Songs, Vol. 1, Page 27

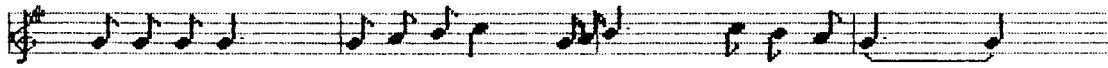
"Away Far Over Jordan" — Choruses, Vol. 3 by Zondervan
"A Sunbeam"
"Thy Word Have I Hid in My Heart"

"Read Your Bible, Pray Every Day"
"Stop and Let Me Tell You"
"I Just Keep Trusting My Lord"
"Every Promise in the Book is Mine"

MEMORY VERSE SONG

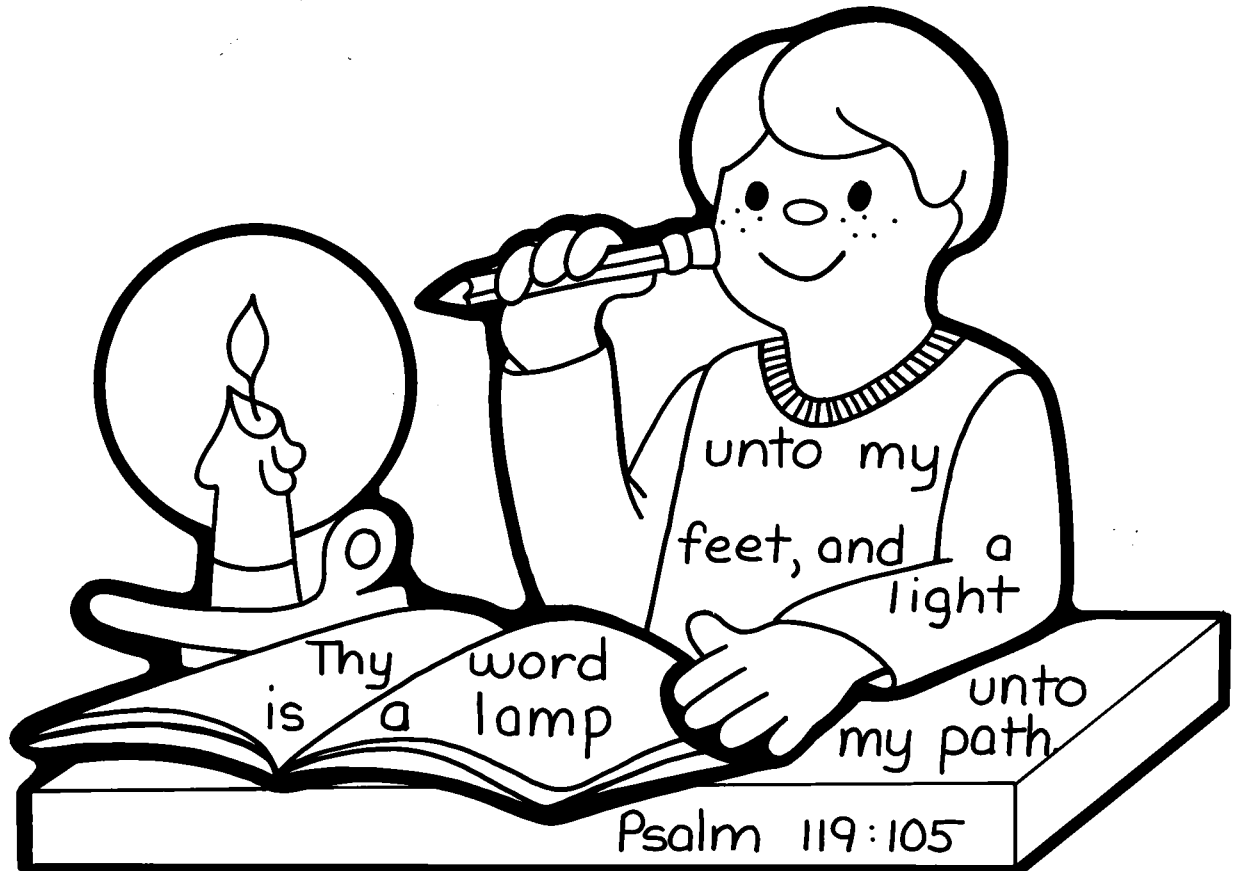


Thy word is a lamp un-to my feet, and a light un-to my path. Thy



word is a lamp un-to my feet, and a light un-to my path.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED



TEXT John 20:24-31

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to explain that when Thomas saw Jesus he believed, but Jesus said we would be blessed if we believed even though we have not seen Him.

MEMORY VERSE Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. — John 20:29

Doubting Thomas

MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

BLESSED — With thumbs of fists touching lips, move hands down and away from body, opening fingers.

ARE THEY — Point to others.

THAT HAVE NOT SEEN — Place hand over eyebrows, close eyes, shake head no.

AND YET HAVE BELIEVED — At eye level, hold fists on top of each other as though holding to an imaginary rope.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

Our memory verse for this week focuses on believing without seeing. It portrays a small boy covering his eyes. (See pattern at end of lesson.) Cut apart the sections as indicated by the heavy black lines, and put the pieces up one at a time as your students learn the verse.

BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Open your class by showing your students the set of flashcards described under In-Class Activities. Talk to them about which things they believe in, and which they do not believe in. Explain that the most important thing to believe in is Jesus. The Bible story today is about one of Jesus' helpers who learned a lesson about that.

1. Thomas, one of the twelve disciples, was not with them when Jesus appeared to them the first time, so they told him, "We have seen the Lord."

2. Doubting Thomas said that he would not believe except he could see the prints of the nails and put his hand into Christ's side.

3. Christ appeared again to the disciples, Thomas being present. He told Thomas to behold His hands, and put his hand into His side. Thomas answered, "My Lord and my God."

Climax: Thomas believed in Christ's resurrection after the Lord revealed His wounds to him.

Conclusion: When Thomas saw Jesus he believed, but we are blessed for believing even though we have not seen Him.

Response: The students will be able to tell how Thomas learned to believe, and will be able to explain why it is important for us to believe even though we have not seen Him.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Quite often when we speak of Thomas we call him "Doubting Thomas." Of course many people know the story of his failing to believe the report that Jesus had risen from the dead. But we must remember that the others didn't believe the women who told them that Jesus had arisen. In fact, they were terrified when Jesus appeared in their midst and Jesus had some trouble convincing them He was not a spirit (Luke 24:36-45).

We do not wish in any way to minimize the gravity of doubt and unbelief. In Revelation 21:8 we find that the fearful and unbelieving head the list of those who will be cast into the lake of fire. Our only hope of finding God is to believe that He is, and our only hope of receiving from God is to believe His promises.

Unbelief was among the first sins introduced to mankind. Satan persuaded Eve to disbelieve God, and then it was easy for him to get her to disobey God. From that time on mankind has been filled with unbelief. With the exception of Noah and his family, the entire antediluvian world perished because of unbelief.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Bring a box of cereal to class — also some napkins. Show the class the cereal box (Kix, Cheerios, etc.). Tell them that they can see the box and that it says it has a certain cereal in it. We have to believe the message on the box even though we can't see inside until we open the box. Open the box and put the cereal on each napkin for the children. Now you can see the cereal and you can feel them and you can taste them, and now you really know that the cereal was truly in the box. Then show your Bible to the class. In the Bible are all

kinds of things Jesus wants us to know. We can see the printed words and read them and believe them. It tells that Thomas, Jesus' disciple, did not believe that Jesus had risen from the grave until he actually saw with his own eyes the nail prints in Jesus' hands and feet. When Jesus showed him the nail prints then Thomas believed. Jesus wants us to believe Him all the time, even if we can't see Him.

Talk to your class about things they believe or don't believe in. Show them a series of Do You Believe flashcards and let them tell you whether or not they believe in those things (see Patterns). Bring out that the most important thing to believe in is the Bible, God's Word.

Ask your class if they believe in things they haven't seen. Ask how many have been to Disneyland. If possible have some pictures, posters, and souvenirs of Disneyland (or any other place the children would know about). Ask the children who have been to Disneyland to tell the others about their favorite thing there. Bring out that even though we haven't been to Disneyland, we can believe in it because others have told us about it. In our Bible story today, Thomas didn't believe because he hadn't seen Jesus, even though others told him about Jesus' being alive. Ask your class to imagine that someone offered to give you tickets to Disneyland. You wouldn't even be interested in them if you didn't believe that Disneyland exists. In the same way, we could miss Heaven if we refuse to accept the offer Jesus made. We must believe in Him, to be ready for Heaven.

Blindfold one student. Tell him that you have a treat in your hand. Ask if he believes you. If he says yes, give him the treat. Explain that in our lesson today, Thomas did not see Jesus so he felt he could not believe.

QUESTIONS

What proof did Thomas want?

When Jesus saw Thomas what did He have Thomas do?

What did Jesus say about people who could believe even if they did not see Him?

Do you believe Jesus can be with you each day? How do you know?

Why didn't Thomas believe the other disciples when they told him they had seen Jesus?

Why did Thomas believe when he saw Jesus?

Do we always have to see things before we believe?

How do you feel when you tell your friends about Jesus and they don't believe in Him too?

PRESCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Tell each child you have a penny in your hand for them. Ask them to hold out their hand and you will give it to them. When they hold out their hand, explain that this means they believe you. Repeat this several times, using stickers, animal cookies, etc., to reinforce the meaning of the word "believe." Tell them we believe in Jesus. Show a picture of Him. We believe He loves us and He takes care of us.

The thrust of this lesson for preschoolers should be "Jesus makes us happy." Even little ones can understand that Jesus does many good things for us. Talk about the word "blessed" and show objects representing things that make them happy. Some suggestions: a cuddly blanket, a soft puppy, a picture of a mommy or daddy, a doll bed, a favorite food to eat.

Make a set of the Thomas Story pictures (see Patterns). Show the pictures in the correct order as you teach your lesson. After you have completed your story time, mix up the pictures on your table and ask the children if they can tell you which picture was first, second, etc. They might enjoy having a little set of their own with which to "teach" their parents.

REVIEW IDEAS

Adapt the In-Class activity regarding Disneyland as a review, stressing the importance of believing.

Begin your review by summarizing Thomas's doubts, and focusing on the memory verse which tells us that those who believe even though they haven't seen Christ will be blessed. Tell your group that you have invited some people to share with them proof that this statement is true. Ask several volunteers to come to the front and relate a portion of their testimony, emphasizing some special blessings the Lord has given them, even though they have not seen Him. To make the review more visual, you might wish to have each volunteer carry a colorful one-word sign naming the blessing, or a picture representing this.

Attach a large piece of butcher paper to a board in front of your classroom. Divide it into six equal sections. Explain to your group that what we believe is very important. Thomas missed a blessing because he did not believe, and we can miss Heaven if we do not believe certain things. Discuss things Christians should believe and have a symbol prepared for each: God is Creator, Jesus is God's Son, all have sinned, Jesus died and rose again, we can be forgiven by Jesus, Heaven is prepared for those who believe. Display the symbols for each belief as you discuss them, and then mount them on the butcher paper.

COORDINATING SONGS

"Why Worry When You Can Pray?"

"I Do Believe, I Now Believe" — Salvation Songs for Children No. 3

"He That Believeth"

"Only Believe"

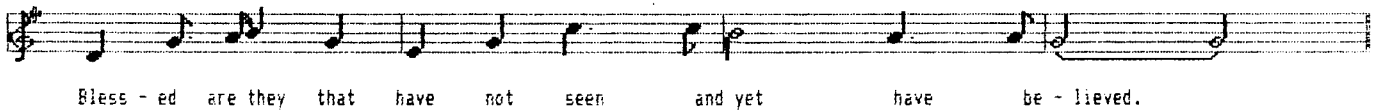
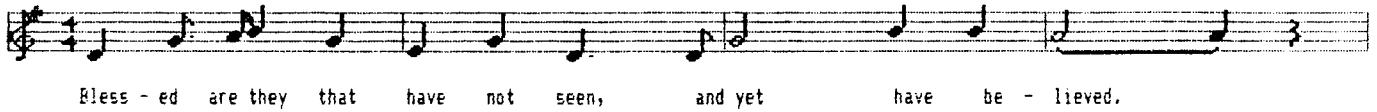
"Lord, I Want to be a Christian"

"Into My Heart"

SUPPORT MATERIAL

Doubting Thomas — Arch Book

MEMORY VERSE SONG



MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED



TEXT Acts 1:9-12; John 14:1-6

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to tell that Jesus will return to earth someday in the same way He left — in a cloud. They will be able to describe how they can be ready to meet Him and go to Heaven with Him.

MEMORY VERSE For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels. — Matthew 16:27

Jesus Will Come Again!

MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

FOR THE SON OF MAN — Move right middle finger to left palm, left middle finger to right palm.

SHALL COME — Use both arms with beckoning motion.

IN THE GLORY — Extend left palm facing up, right finger tips touching left palm; raise right hand wiggling fingers.

OF HIS FATHER — Point up.

WITH HIS ANGELS — Raise hands to shoulders pointing out; flutter like wings.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

Our memory verse for this week focuses on the second coming of Christ, and is illustrated by two angels and a cloud. (See pattern at end of lesson.) Cut apart the sections as indicated by the heavy black lines, and assemble the pieces in the proper order as your students recite each section of the verse.

BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Pack a suitcase as described under In-Class Activities. Open your session by asking your students “When do we pack a suitcase?” They will answer that we do this when we are planning to go somewhere. Tell them that if we have Jesus in our hearts, we are planning to go somewhere very special, but we have to be ready.

1. While the disciples looked, Jesus ascended into the heavens, disappearing in a cloud.
2. Two men in white apparel told them that Jesus would come again in the same manner.
3. We can be ready for His return by believing in Him. He is “the way, the truth, and the life.”

Climax: Just as Christ ascended into the heavens, the angels declared that He would come again.

Conclusion: Jesus will return someday to receive those who are ready to meet Him, and take them to Heaven. It is vital for us to prepare for that day.

Response: The students will know that Jesus will re-

turn some day. They will be able to tell what we must do to be ready to meet the Lord in the air.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

There are many Scriptures that pertain to the second coming of Christ. They need to be studied carefully as it is very clear that there are two phases to His second coming. The first phase is the rapture of the saints. This is detailed in I Thessalonians 4:16-18, “The dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” In I Corinthians 15:52,53 we read that our mortal bodies will be changed to immortal in the twinkling of an eye. We are warned to be ready because Jesus will come as a thief in the night, and those who are not prepared will be left. Jesus spoke about two sleeping in a bed, the one taken and the other left; two women grinding at the mill, one taken and the other left; two in a field, the one taken, the other left.

The second phase is when Jesus comes as King of kings, and every eye shall see Him. He will overthrow the armies of the Antichrist, bind the Devil and cast him into the bottomless pit, and reign upon the throne of David. (See Isaiah 9:6,7; Daniel 7:14; Zechariah 14:9.) The Jews will realize that Jesus, whom they spurned two thousand years before, is indeed the promised Messiah.

SPECIAL NOTE FOR THIS LESSON

Refer to Lesson 21e for additional ideas.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Use a metal baking sheet as a backdrop for your lesson. Use double-stick tape to make a green hill (from felt or construction paper) at the bottom of your scene. Attach cotton-covered clouds at the top. Cut out figures representing Jesus and His disciples (see Patterns). Have a small metal strip attached to the back of the

Jesus figure. At the proper time in the story, move Him upward by using a magnet against the back of the metal baking sheet.

Give each child a copy of the prayer (see Patterns). Let them cut out the circles at the bottom of the page, and finish the prayer by pasting the circles in the right places on the prayer.

Give each child a copy of the Getting Ready List page (see Patterns). Help them complete the list as you talk about different things we should do to make sure we are ready when Jesus comes back.

Have a suitcase packed with items representative of things we should do to be sure we are ready for Jesus' return. Some possibilities: a clean heart, a Bible (for instructions), a church paper or invitation (working for Jesus), a clock (using your time right until Jesus comes).

Give each child a copy of the angel blowing a trumpet with a crossword grid inside (see Patterns). Write out Matthew 16:27, Matthew 24:31, and I Thessalonians 4:17 as clues. Let them work the crossword grid using the Bible verses to help them.

QUESTIONS

How did Jesus leave this earth?

Jesus **will** come again. The New Testament mentions His second coming over 300 times! What must we do to be ready for the second coming of Jesus?

How do we know Jesus will come again?

Who were the two men in white apparel that the people saw when Jesus went up into Heaven?

What was their message?

How will Jesus come back again? Like another baby? In the clouds? What does the Bible say?

What is Jesus doing now?

Talk about Heaven. What will be there? What will not?

PRESCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Jesus returns in a cloud (see Patterns). Cut a slit on the dark line under the cloud and insert the pull-tab with the figure of Jesus. Some masking tape on the back of the pull-tab will strengthen it, or you may cut the figure and tab from heavy paper or cardboard. As you tell of Jesus' return move the figure down.

Use angel finger puppets for Lesson 4a or angels given for Lessons 16b and 28a. Give one to each child as you talk about how Jesus will come back again with His angels.

Give each child a copy of the cloud with windows cut as indicated by dotted lines (see Patterns). Cut windows and paste picture of Jesus in one window and one of His angels in each remaining space.

Give each child the coloring picture of Jesus coming in the cloud (see Patterns). Children could color the sky and glue cotton on the cloud. As an alternative, color the picture yourself and cover it with clear plastic contact paper or have it laminated. Cut apart into pieces and let your little ones put the puzzle together.

REVIEW IDEAS

Open your review by explaining that God has given us some instructions regarding things we must do in order to be ready when He comes. Tell your group that you are going to give them a set of instructions, and whoever has finished it by the time a preset alarm goes off will get a small treat. Give them a list of several things to do: write out their memory verse, turn to a certain verse in the Bible and read it to their teacher, etc. (Adjust the instructions and time length according to the ability of your group.) When the timer goes off and treats have been awarded, liken this to the rewards that will be received by those who are ready when Jesus comes back.

Dramatize a short skit beginning with receiving a letter announcing the arrival of relatives. You are not sure of the time when they will come but it will be soon. Make a number of preparations such as putting on good clothes, fixing a nice dinner, being sure the house is clean, calling others to tell of the expected arrival. Compare this to our anticipation because Jesus will soon be coming, even though we don't know the exact time. What kind of preparation are we making for His return?

COORDINATING SONGS

"Countdown"

"I'm Going to Heaven Some Day"

"Heaven Is a Happy Place"

"Do Lord"

"For God So Loved the World"

"When He Cometh"

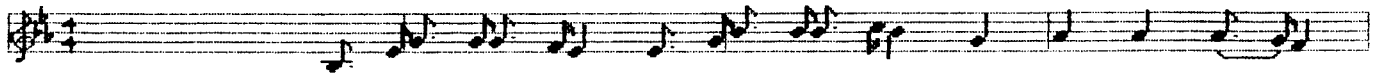
"Come and Go With Me to My Father's House"

"Jesus Is Coming Again"

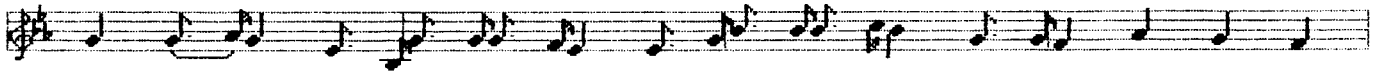
"Say, Will You Be Ready?"

"This Little Light of Mine"

MEMORY VERSE SONG



For the Son of man shall come in the glo-ry of his Fa - ther with his an - gels;



with his an - gels; The Son of man shall come in the glo-ry of his Fa - ther the Son of man shall



come.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

