

Bible Stories for Adults

Jesus Appears to the Apostles and to Thomas

John 20:19-31

Opening

Gathering: Give examples of when someone was blamed for something while others were just as guilty.

Today's Focus: All of Jesus' apostles were slow to believe He had risen, but Jesus forgave them.

Key Verses: *Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.* John 20:29

Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written 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 20:30-31

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Jesus First Appears Easter Morning (*John 20:10-18*)

Who did Jesus appear to first after He rose?

Mark 16:9

Did she recognize Jesus as soon as she saw Him?

John 20:10-15

How did she come to realize who He really was?

John 20:16

What did Mary do when she realized her Lord was really alive?

John 20:17-18

How did the disciples react to this terrific news?

Mark 16:10-11

Jesus Appears Again Easter Morning (*Matthew 28:8-10*)

Who did He appear to next?

Matthew 28:8-9

What did Jesus say to them?

Matthew 28:10

How did the disciples react to this amazing confirmation of Mary's earlier report?

Luke 24:9-11

Jesus Appears Easter Afternoon (*Luke 24:13-32*)

What happened as a couple of believers walked back home to Emmaus that afternoon?

Luke 24:13-15

Were they more observant than Mary and recognize Jesus when He caught up with them?

Luke 24:16-18

How did they explain Jesus' story to this stranger?

Luke 24:19-24

How did Jesus answer their confusion?

Luke 24:25-27

How did they finally recognize who this stranger really was?

Luke 24:28-32

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The Response of Believers (*Luke 24:33-35*)

Although it was dark and dangerous outside, what did these disciples do?

Luke 24:33

Had anything else happened since these men had left Jerusalem?

Luke 24:34 (1 Corinthians 15:5)

After hearing this update from the apostles, what did the two do?

Luke 24:35

After four appearances, did the apostles finally believe and understand?

Mark 16:12-13

Jesus' Fifth Appearance (*Luke 24:36-43*)

What amazing thing then happened that helped them believe?

Luke 24:36

Did Jesus just sneak through the door and walk in?

John 20:19

With this new strong evidence, did the disciples finally believe and understand?

Luke 24:37

The Resurrected Body (*1 Corinthians 15:35-50*)

How does Paul help explain why Jesus wasn't recognized and could appear behind doors?

1 Corinthians 15:35, 39-40

How is the resurrected body different than the earthly body?

1 Corinthians 15:41-44

What analogy does Paul give us to help understand that we don't keep our earthly bodies?

1 Corinthians 15:36-38

How does Paul describe the resurrected Jesus?

1 Corinthians 15:45-47

What does this mean for us?

1 Corinthians 15:48-50

No Need For Ghostbusters (*Luke 24:38-41*)

How did Jesus try to prove that He wasn't just a ghost?

Luke 24:38-39

Why didn't He say "flesh and blood"?

Leviticus 17:11 (10-14)

Genesis 9:4

John 19:34

Hebrews 9:12-15

Now, did these doubting disciples finally believe and understand?

Luke 24:40-41a

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Let's Try Another Approach (*Luke 24:41-43*)

- What else did Jesus do to prove it was really Him in the flesh?
Luke 24:41b-43
- Did this help convince these skeptical disciples?
John 20:20
- How did Mark record Jesus' appearance to the doubting and scared apostles?
Mark 16:14
- Note: Luke 24:44-49 is understood to have occurred weeks later, after time in Galilee (v49)

His Peace (*John 20:21*)

- What words did Jesus repeat that He first said when He appeared to the disciples?
John 20:21a
- What was He saying more than just *Hello*?
John 14: 27
- Did this Peace mean that they would be freed from troubles?
John 16:33
- Are Christ's disciples to avoid the world and Peacefully await His return?
John 20:21
- How can we Peacefully be of this world?
John 17:14-18

The Office of the Keys (*John 20:22-23*)

- How did Jesus give His Peace to the apostles?
John 20:22
- How could Jesus give His Spirit just by breathing on them?
Genesis 2:7
- What privilege and responsibility came with this giving of the Spirit?
John 20:23
- Why is this called the *Office of the Keys*?
Matthew 16:19

When to Forgive (*1 Corinthians 5*)

- How do we Christians know which sins God forgives and He does not forgive?
1 John 1:8-10
- What are we to do with those who do not confess and repent?
Matthew 18:15-17
- What does this mean? Shouldn't we be proud of freely forgiving sins of fellow Christians?
1 Corinthians 5:1-2, 6-7, 12-13
- What are we to do when the excommunicated finally sees his sin and repents?
2 Corinthians 2:6-8

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Doubting Thomas (*John 20:24-26*)

- Was Jesus' appearance to the apostles enough proof for other disciples that He was alive?
John 20:24-25
- Was Thomas known for having a slow and doubting faith?
John 11:7-8, 16
John 14:2, 4-5
- When was Thomas given this special opportunity to personally see and feel Jesus alive?
John 20:26

Thomas' Great Confession (*John 20:27-29*)

- Did Jesus know what Thomas had said?
John 20:27
- Did Thomas put his finger into Jesus' hands and his hand into His side as he said?
John 20:28
- What message did Jesus leave for those of us who weren't around to physically see Him?
John 20:29
- How are we blessed for believing in Him who we have not seen?
1 Peter 1:8-9

Other Appearances (*John 20:30-31*)

- Was this the last appearance Jesus made before ascending?
Acts 1:3
- What appearances did Paul list?
1 Corinthians 15:5-8
- Did John try to record all of Jesus' appearances?
John 20:30
- Why did John give us the stories that he did?
John 20:31

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. Why is it important to me that Jesus truly rose physically in the flesh?
(*Luke 24:26-27; John 20:24-25; Acts 26:8; 1 Corinthians 15; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18*)
2. When has my faith been weak with doubt?
(*Mark 16:9-14; 9:23-24; Luke 24:11, 19-27, 36-38; John 20:24-25, 29; 1 Timothy 1:12-14*)
3. How have I felt the peace of Christ?
(*John 20:19-21; 14:27; 16:33; Numbers 6:24-26; Psalm 85:7-8; Luke 2:13-14; Phil 4:4-7; Col 3:15*)
4. When have I especially recognized Jesus as my Lord and my God?
(*John 20:28-31; 11:25-27; 13:13; Matthew 7:21; Luke 6:46-49; Romans 10:9-13; Philippians 2:9-11*)
5. What witnesses and events have strengthened my faith?
(*John 20:30-31; Matthew 4:4; Acts 19:1-6; 1 Cor. 12:3; Ephesians 2:19-22; 6:10-18; 1 John 4:2*)