

Alley SG—April 24th, 2022

Today's Bible Story: All I Ask (Jesus Appears to Thomas) • *John 20:19-29*

Today's Key Question: What questions do you have for God?

Today's Bottom Line: Whatever happens, remember God is bigger than your questions.

Monthly Memory Verse: "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." *John 16:33b NIV*

1. Bible Story Extension

What You Need: Bible, paper, markers

What You Do:

- Give each kid a sheet of paper and marker.
- Ask everyone to draw a large Tic-Tac-Toe grid that fills their paper.
- Invite kids to write (without letting others see) a different word in each of the Tic-Tac-Toe squares. The words must be about the people, places, or events from today's story.
- When finished, let kids take turns calling out one of their words they wrote. If anyone else has that word, they can each X it out.
- If no one else has that word, it remains uncrossed.
- Continue until as many kids as possible have crossed out three words in a row (vertically, horizontally, or diagonally—just like Tic-Tac-Toe).
- Discuss the story together.
 - Why do you think Thomas had a hard time believing the disciples when they said Jesus was alive?
 - When did Thomas' doubt turn to faith?
 - Jesus didn't get upset with Thomas for doubting. What does that tell you about Jesus' love for Thomas as well as for us?
 - What are some doubts or questions you have had about God?
 - What can we do when we have questions that don't have answers or questions that are hard to figure out?
- Encourage kids to not ignore their doubts or questions. God is bigger than even their hardest questions. Because God wants them to know and believe, God will help them continue to develop their faith if they keep learning and growing.

2. Take a Snapshot

What You Need: "Puzzlers" Pages (2 Sets of the 3 Puzzles per Group), sticky notes, pens

What You Do:

- Say, "We're going to put together some puzzles now, but we'll make it a competition!"
- Split your group into 2 Teams.
- Give each team the mixed-up pieces from "Puzzlers" Activity Page.
- Challenge teams to race to spread out the pieces and assemble them into three separate puzzles.
- Give no clues other than that the pieces create three individual puzzles.
- Add another challenge to the game by telling teams they must work together without speaking.

- Tell kids to shout out, “DONE!” when their team completes all three puzzles, then wait for the others to finish.
- Invite teams to come up with one or more doubts or questions people often have about GOD, the BIBLE, or PROBLEMS they face.
- The questions can be about anything they find confusing, something they find hard to believe, something they don’t understand, etc.
- Give teams a sticky note and pen to write their questions, and place note on whichever puzzle word fits the question best.
- As time allows, engage kids in conversation about their questions.
- If a question is asked that you are not sure how to answer, let kids know that we don’t have answers to all of our questions, but you will try to find out more or direct them to someone you can trust who will help.
- Take their questions seriously and follow up where needed.

3. Discussion Questions

- Do you think having doubts or questions means you’re not following Jesus? Why or why not?
- What are some reasons people doubt God?
- “Doubts and questions about God are good because it means you’re thinking through really important stuff about life.” Do you agree or disagree with that statement?
- What’s the BEST thing you can do when you have questions and doubts about God? What’s the WORST thing you can do?

4. True or False?

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Tell kids that you’ll read some facts and statements.
 - If they believe what you’re saying is true, they should stand.
 - If they don’t think it’s true, they should say, “I doubt it,” then sit down.
- Let them know that there is no pressure to be right or wrong and that most of the statements you will read contain information they would not be expected to know.
 - Do you believe that penguins can smell toothpaste from several miles away? *(False)*
 - Do you believe that in Tokyo, Japan, a bicycle is faster than a car for trips of less than 50 minutes? *(True)*
 - Do you believe every day, on average, 20 banks are robbed in the world? *(True)*
 - Do you believe 50 years ago, M&Ms were candy-coated jelly beans during a chocolate shortage? *(False)*
 - Do you believe you are more likely to be stung by a bee in windy weather? *(False)*
 - Do you believe when glass breaks, the cracks move faster than 932 miles per hour. To photograph the event, a camera must shoot at a millionth of a second! *(True)*
 - Do you believe a violin contains about 70 pieces of wood? *(True)*
 - Do you believe that people in parts of Ireland like Thomas the Tank Engine so much that they have put faces on all their trains? *(False)*

- Do you believe that elastic in your underwear will last twice as long if you freeze it after washing it? (*False*)
- Do you believe Japan has square watermelons because they're stackable? (*True*)
- Do you believe Jesus died and rose again? (*True*)

What You Say:

“Even some of the things I read to you that were true, were a little hard to believe. Sometimes we feel like we need to actually SEE something in order to believe it's really true, right? That's how Thomas felt in our Bible Story right? It's ok to have doubts and questions. God invites them! He wants you to know Him, and for Him to know you!”

5. Make it Personal with Prayer

“Dear God, YOU are the reason we don't have to live with doubts and questions. You have given us many answers to life's hard questions in the Bible. And You've given us Jesus to show us how to live with faith and hope. You created us to have a relationship with You and made a way for that to happen through Jesus' death and resurrection. You help us when we doubt, and You never stop working in our lives. Help us to anchor our hope in YOU—no matter what. In Jesus' name, amen.”