



Bible Point

Jesus helps us follow him when we have questions.

Bible Verse

“Follow in his steps” (1 Peter 2:21b).

Growing Closer to Jesus

- Children will
- learn that their questions are important,
 - know that Jesus helps us find the right answers,
 - help Pockets learn that it’s important to believe without always seeing, and
 - realize that faith helps us follow Jesus.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

- **Jesus helps Thomas believe.**

**John
20:24-29**



Hiding in a room with the doors locked “because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders”—that’s where Jesus found his disciples the evening of his resurrection day! It’s easy for us to be hard on them and wonder, “What were they thinking? Shouldn’t they have been out celebrating?” However, we should walk in their sandals before criticizing them. They knew Jesus had been crucified. Some, no doubt, had seen him die. They had heard from the women at the tomb that

Jesus had risen, but they hadn’t seen him. How could it possibly be true? Confusion must have ruled their thoughts. What makes us think we’d have responded any differently?

Having faith wasn’t easy for these first-century disciples. Thomas was really no different from the others. The other disciples demonstrated by their actions that they doubted Jesus’ resurrection until they actually saw him. It’s easy to think that those living in Jesus’ day had an advantage over us in developing faith. But we may have the advantage, as the results of their struggles are recorded for us in the Bible. If one accepts that the Bible comes from God, all the evidence one could possibly need for faith is there.

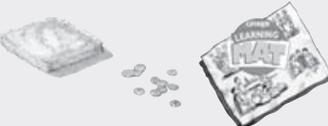
Prayer

- Read Philippians 3:7-9.
- What does it mean to have faith?
- Pray: Lord, help me to trust you for everything and to seek you above everything else. I especially need to trust you with...

Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed on the chart.
- Make photocopies of the “Today I Learned...” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God’s direction as you teach the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Learning Lab Supplies
Welcome Time	Welcome! —Receive name tags, and be greeted by the teacher.	“Cross Name Tags” (p. 14), markers, safety pins or tape	
Let’s Get Started Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives.	Option 1: Seeing Is Believing —Make special eyeglasses to wear.	“See With Your Heart” pattern (p. 113), markers, scissors, medium-weight paper, tape	
	Option 2: Blind Touch —Identify objects using their sense of touch.	Spoon, cotton ball, comb, rubber band, paper clip, crayon, paper bag	
	Option 3: Seeing Small —Look at things in different ways.	Magnifying glass; small objects such as leaves, twigs, flowers and cloth	
	Pick Up Our Toys —Sing a song as they pick up toys, and gather for Bible Story Time.	CD player	
Bible Story Time 	Setting the Stage —Guess what’s in a box.	Box with lid, small boxes of raisins, string, scissors	
	Bible Song and Prayer Time —Sing a song, bring out the Bible, and pray together.	Bible, construction paper, scissors, CD player, basket or box	
	Hear and Tell the Bible Story —Add sensory items to the Learning Mat as they listen to a Bible story from John 20:24-29.	Bible; blue, red, yellow, and green markers or crayons; glue stick; eyeglasses from Option 1	
	Do the Bible Story —Identify friends without seeing them.	Bible, CD player, blindfold	
Closing 	Pockets’ Problem —Help Pockets learn about believing.	Index card	
	Believe! —Praise Jesus, pray, and sing a song.	CD player	

*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

Welcome Time

SUPPLIES: “Cross Name Tags” (p. 14), markers, safety pins or tape

- Bend down and make eye contact with children as they arrive.
- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- As children arrive, ask them about last week’s “Today I Learned…” discussion. Use questions such as “How did you follow Jesus last week?” or “Why is it important to follow Jesus?”
- Say: **Today we’re going to learn that ► Jesus helps us follow him when we have questions.**
- Hand out the cross name tags children made during Lesson 1, and help them attach the name tags to their clothing. If some of the name tags were damaged or if some of the children weren’t in class that week, have them make new name tags using the photocopyable handout.
- Direct children to the Let’s Get Started activities you’ve set up.

teacher tips

It’s important to say the Bible Point just as it’s written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point again and again will help the children remember it and apply it to their lives.

◀ **BIBLE POINT**



Let’s Get Started

Set up one or more of the following activities for children to do as they arrive. After you greet each child, invite him or her to choose an activity.

Circulate among children to offer help as needed and to direct their conversation toward today’s lesson. Ask questions such as “Who helps you answer hard questions?” or “What can you do if you have questions?”

■ Option 1: Seeing Is Believing

SUPPLIES: “See With Your Heart” pattern (p. 113), medium-weight paper, scissors, markers, tape



Before class, photocopy the “See With Your Heart” pattern. Make one copy per person on medium-weight paper. Cut out eyeglasses for each child and adult in class. To save time, cut out two or three pairs at once.

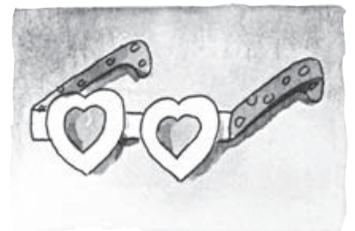
Set out markers and the *flame stamp* and *ink pad* from the Learning Lab. Hand each child a pair of heart-shaped eyeglasses. Invite children to decorate their glasses using markers and the *flame stamp*. Help children tape the ear pieces to the eyeglasses at the dotted lines. Then show children how to fold their glasses on the dotted lines and fit them over their ears.

Circulate and offer help as needed. As children work, ask questions such as “Do we need to see with our eyes to know something’s real?” and “Besides using our eyes, how else do we learn about things?” Explain that today’s Bible story is about a man who wanted to see and touch Jesus to know he was alive. Point out that ► Jesus helps us follow him when we have questions and that sometimes we can’t see answers with our eyes.

When children are finished, let them model their glasses and look at different items in the room. You’ll use the eyeglasses with the Bible story later.

teacher tips

If not all children in class chose to do Option 1, ask volunteers to decorate extra pairs of eyeglasses to share. You could also make several extra pairs before class.



◀ **BIBLE POINT**



■ Option 2: Blind Touch

SUPPLIES: paper bag, spoon, cotton ball, comb, rubber band, paper clip, crayon

Before class, collect one of each of the following items, and place them in a paper bag: a spoon, a cotton ball, a comb, a rubber band, a paper clip, and a crayon.

As children arrive, invite them to reach in the sack and identify the objects by touch alone. Ask children questions such as “How can touching something help us ‘see’ it?” and “Can touching something help you know it’s real?” Tell children that sometimes we have questions that can’t be answered by what we see or touch. Explain that the Bible story is about a man who wanted to see and touch all the answers to his questions.

Point out that ► Jesus helps us follow him when we have questions, and he’ll help us find the right answers with or without seeing them.



■ Option 3: Seeing Small

SUPPLIES: magnifying glass; small objects such as leaves, cloth, twigs, and flowers

Set out a magnifying glass and small objects such as leaves, cloth, twigs, and flowers to view. Encourage children to explore each object without the magnifying glass, with the magnifying glass, and with their hands. Encourage children to ask questions about what they see. Point out that there are many ways to see things and discover that they’re real. Tell children that today’s Bible story is about a man who had a big question about what was real. Explain that ► Jesus helps us follow him when we have questions, and Jesus helped the man see the right answers to his questions.



When everyone has arrived and you’re ready to move on to the Bible Story Time, encourage the children to finish what they’re doing and get ready to clean up.

■ Pick Up Our Toys

SUPPLIES: CD player



Lead children in singing “Pick Up Our Toys” (track 2) with the CD to the tune of “Skip to My Lou.” Encourage children to sing along as they help clean up the room.

If you want to include the names of all the children in the class, sing the song without the CD, and repeat the naming section. If you choose to use the CD, vary the names you use each week.



**We will pick up our toys.
We will pick up our toys.
We will pick up our toys,
And put them all away.**

**There’s [name] picking up toys.
There’s [name] picking up toys.
There’s [name] picking up toys,
Putting them all away.**

(Repeat.)

Bible Story Time

■ Setting the Stage

SUPPLIES: box with lid, small boxes of raisins, string, scissors

Tell the children you'll clap your hands to get their attention. Explain that when you clap, the children are to stop what they're doing, raise their hands, and focus on you. Encourage children to respond quickly so you'll have time for all the fun activities you've planned.

Before the children arrive, put a treat-sized box of raisins for each child in a box with a lid. Loosely knot one piece of string per child around the large box.

Gather children in a circle on the floor. Say: **I have a mystery box. What's inside?** Pause to allow children to guess. **The only way to find the answer is to ask questions. We'll pass the box around the circle. When it's your turn, untie one string and ask a "yes" or "no" question about what's inside the box. I'll answer the questions.**

After each child has asked a question and the strings are untied, hold up the box and ask:

- **How do you know there's really something in the box?** (You said there was; I heard it rattle.)

Say: **You've asked good questions about the box. Now we'll see what's inside.** Open the box, and show children the treats. Pass the box, and let each child choose a small box of raisins. As children eat their treats, ask:

- **Why is it important to ask questions?** (It helps you learn things; so you can figure things out.)

- **Who helps you when you have questions?** (Parents; teachers; Jesus; God.)

Say: **Asking questions helps us learn and understand. Our questions are important to Jesus, and he always helps us find answers. ► Jesus helps us follow him when we have questions. Let's find out about a man who had some questions and how Jesus helped him find the right answers.** Have children throw their empty raisin boxes away. Set the strings aside until later.



■ Bible Song and Prayer Time

SUPPLIES: Bible, construction paper, scissors, CD player, basket or box



Before class, make surprise cards for this activity by cutting construction paper into 2x6-inch strips. Prepare a surprise card for each child plus a few extras for visitors. Fold the cards in half, and stamp the *flame stamp* inside one of the surprise cards. Place a marker at **John**

20:24-29 in the Bible you'll be using.

Have children sit in a circle. Say: **Now it's time to choose a Bible person to bring me the Bible marked with today's Bible story. As we sing our Bible song, I'll pass out the surprise cards. Don't look inside your card until the song is over.**

Lead children in singing "Read God's Book" (track 3) with the CD to the tune of "The Muffin Man." As you sing, hand out the folded surprise cards.



SING

Now it's time to read God's book,
Read God's book, read God's book.
Now it's time to read God's book.
Let's hear a Bible story.

(Repeat 3x.)

After the song, say: **You may look inside your surprise cards. The person who has the fire flame stamped inside his or her card will be our Bible person for today.**

Identify the Bible person. Ask the Bible person to bring you the Bible. Lead the class in clapping for the Bible person, cheering, and making fun applause sound effects by slapping your thighs with your palms. Help the Bible person open the Bible to the marked place, and show children where your story comes from. Then have the Bible person sit down.

Say: [Name] **was our special Bible person today. Each week we'll have only one special Bible person, but each one of you is a special part of our class! Today we're all learning that ► Jesus helps us follow him when we have questions.**

Let's say a special prayer now and ask God to help us learn that ► Jesus helps us follow him when we have questions. I'll pass around this basket. When the basket comes to you, put your surprise card in it and say, "God, please help us follow Jesus."

Pass around the basket or box. After you've collected all the surprise cards, set the basket aside, and pick up the Bible. Lead children in this prayer: **God, thank you for the Bible and for all the stories in it. Teach us today that ► Jesus helps us follow him when we have questions. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.**



Choose children to be the surprise-card collector, the Bible replacer (to put the Bible away), and the cheerleader. Just be sure to keep track of who fills your roles each week so each child gets a chance to feel special.



BIBLE POINT ►



BIBLE POINT ►

■ Hear and Tell the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: Bible; glue stick; blue, red, yellow, and green markers or crayons; eyeglasses from Option 1



Set out a gauze square and some of the sequins from the Learning Lab. Also set out a glue stick and blue, red, yellow, and green markers or crayons. Gather children around the *Learning Mat: Follow Jesus* on the floor.

Have the children hold their heart-shaped eyeglasses from Option 1. If you chose not to do Option 1, have children use their hands and fingers as pretend eyeglasses.

Say: **Some people wear glasses to help them see. Let's use our heart glasses to help us see if we know the answers to some questions. I'll ask a question about our story. If you know the answer, put on your glasses. I'll call on someone to tell the answer, and then color a footprint on the *Learning Mat*.** Ask the following review questions. After each child answers, let him or her choose a marker or crayon and color a footprint on the *Learning Mat*. Point to the picture showing the road to Emmaus.

- Ask: • **Who was walking on the road?** (Two friends; Jesus' friends.)
- **Why were the men sad and confused?** (They didn't know why Jesus died; they didn't know if Jesus was alive.)

This Bible story is featured in *My First Hands-On Bible™*. Order several now for your ministry at group.com.



- **Who did they meet on the road to Emmaus?** (A man; Jesus.)
- **Did they know the man was Jesus?** (No.)
- **What did Jesus tell them?** (Jesus explained why he had to die.)
- **What happened when Jesus broke bread at dinner?** (The men knew it was Jesus; Jesus showed who he was.)
- **What did the men do then?** (They ran to tell others about Jesus.)

Say: **Thanks for those answers! Did your glasses help you? I think you knew the answers because you learned so much last week!** Hold up the Bible. **Our Bible story today comes from the book of John.** Point to the *Learning Mat*. **Our Learning Mat shows pictures of the story. Today we'll learn how Jesus helps us follow him. When you hear the word *Thomas*, remove your glasses and say, "I doubt it." When I say the word *Jesus*, put your glasses on and say, "I see!"**

Read: **All the disciples knew that Jesus ("I see!") is alive—all but one, that is. Thomas ("I doubt it") wasn't sure that Jesus ("I see!") was alive. Do you know why? Thomas ("I doubt it") didn't think anything was real unless he saw it or touched it. Thomas ("I doubt it") was a doubter. "I won't believe until I see Jesus' ("I see!") hands and touch his side."**

The disciples and Thomas ("I doubt it") were in a house with the doors locked. Guess who came in? Jesus! ("I see!") Thomas ("I doubt it") saw him but still didn't believe. Jesus ("I see!") said, "Look at my hands. Touch my side. Stop doubting and believe!" Do you think he believed? Pause for children to respond.

Thomas ("I doubt it") bowed before Jesus ("I see!"). "My Lord and my God!" he said. He finally believed that Jesus ("I see!") was alive. Then Jesus ("I see!") said, "You believe because you see me. People who believe without seeing are truly blessed and special." Have children put their glasses on the floor behind them.

Ask: • **Why did Thomas want to see and touch Jesus?** (To know Jesus was alive; so he would believe.)

Say: **Thomas had to see with his eyes to believe, but Jesus wanted him to have faith and believe in his heart, even without seeing. Let's make a sequin heart on Thomas to remind us that Jesus wants us to believe with our hearts.** Help children glue *sequins* in the shape of a small heart on the picture of Thomas on the *Learning Mat*.

Ask: • **Did the other disciples want to touch Jesus to believe he was alive? Explain.** (No, because they had seen him; no, they just believed.)

Say: **Let's add Jesus' robe to the picture.** Have children glue the *gauze square* to Jesus.

Ask: **Why did Jesus say it was special for people to believe without seeing?** (Because it's good to believe with our hearts; we can't see Jesus with our eyes but we know he's alive.)

Say: **Jesus knows it's hard to follow him when we have questions. But Jesus wants us to have faith in him. He answers our questions so we can follow him better. Let's color a happy yellow glow around Jesus to remind us that ► Jesus helps us follow him when we have questions.** Have children color yellow around Jesus. Set the *Learning Mat* aside.





■ Do the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player, blindfold



track 12

Gather children in a group. Say: **Jesus wanted to help Thomas believe, and Jesus wants us to believe in him even if we can't see him. Let's play a fun game to see if you can tell who a person is without seeing him or her. I'll choose someone to be Thomas and wear a blindfold. Then I'll tap one of you to stand beside Thomas. Thomas will try to guess who you are by touching your head and face and asking you questions such as "Do you have red hair?" or "Are you a boy or a girl?"** Play until everyone's had a turn.

Ask: • **What are some ways to discover who a person is without seeing?** (By touching; by hearing someone's voice.)



• **How can you believe in Jesus without seeing him?**

(Because the Bible tells me about him; because I feel his love.)

• **Why is it important to believe in Jesus?** (So we can go to heaven; so we can follow him; so we can tell others about Jesus.)

• **How can you help someone else believe in Jesus this week?** (Tell them about Jesus; invite them to church; give them a Bible.)

Open your Bible to **1 Peter 2:21b**, and say: **The Bible is God's Word. Our Bible verse today is 1 Peter 2:21b, which says ►"Follow in his steps."** Let's say that together. Have children repeat the verse after you.

Say: **Jesus knows we have questions about God and about him. And ►Jesus helps us follow him when we have questions. Let's sing a song about how good it is to follow Jesus. It's a song about our Bible verse. Then we'll see what our friend Pockets is up to!**

BIBLE VERSE ►

BIBLE POINT ►



Lead the children in singing "Follow in His Steps" (1 Peter 2:21b) (track 12) with the CD to the tune of "London Bridge."



**Jesus helps us follow in his steps,
Follow in his steps,
Follow in his steps.
Jesus helps us follow in his steps,
Because he loves us!**

(Repeat.)

Closing

■ Pockets' Problem

SUPPLIES: index card



Have children sit in a circle. Bring out Pockets the Kangaroo, the flame stamp and ink pad, and an index card. Go through the following script. After you finish, put Pockets out of sight.



- Teacher:** Hi, Pockets! What's new?
- Pockets:** You won't believe what's happened! I can't believe it!
- Teacher:** Believe what, Pockets?
- Pockets:** Well, I have a really neat sticker collection. *(Looking at children)* Do you have sticker collections? *(Pause for response.)* I've got 581 stickers! Well, I told my friend Sarah about my collection, but she doesn't *believe* me. She said she won't believe it until she sees it!
- Teacher:** Sarah sounds like doubting Thomas, doesn't she?
- Pockets:** Who?
- Teacher:** Thomas, the man in our Bible story who doubted that Jesus is alive. Children, let's tell Pockets about Thomas and how he found out that Jesus is alive. *(Have children retell the Bible story. Encourage them to point out how Jesus helped Thomas by letting Thomas see.)* ► Jesus helps us follow him when we have questions. Jesus helped Thomas by letting him see the scars in his hands. Maybe it will help Sarah if she sees your collection. Then next time she'll be able to believe without seeing.
- Pockets:** Good idea. I'll invite Sarah over. Then she can see my collection and believe me. It's important to believe without seeing, but when we do have questions, I'm glad that ► Jesus helps us follow him when we have questions.
- Teacher:** Let's add to Pockets' collection. *(Let children make a new kind of sticker by stamping the index card with the flame stamp.)* Here, Pockets. This will remind you that ► Jesus helps us follow him when we have questions.
- Pockets:** Thank you! Now I have 582 stickers! Can I stamp your hands so you'll remember, too? *(Have Pockets stamp each child's hand with the flame stamp.)* Goodbye, everyone!



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■ Believe!

SUPPLIES: CD player



Seat children in a circle. Say: **We've been learning today that ► Jesus helps us follow him when we have questions. Thomas had questions. Sometimes we have questions about Jesus, too. I know I**

have. Share an example of something kids can relate to that you've wondered about concerning Jesus. **Think of a question you've always wondered about Jesus. Maybe some of you would like to share your questions with us.** Give kids time to share.

Bring out the *scratch-and-sniff flower sticker* from the Learning Lab. Then say: **Even though we might not have answers to all our questions, it makes Jesus happy when we believe without seeing. Listen to what Jesus said to Thomas: "Blessed are those who believe without seeing me." Jesus is talking about you and me, because we believe without seeing Jesus!**

I have a special *scratch-and-sniff flower sticker* here. Let each child scratch and smell the sticker. **Can you see the good smell? Can you touch the good smell? Of course not, but it's still there, isn't it? It's like that with Jesus. He's there even if we can't see him or touch him. Let's use our sticker to praise Jesus in a fun way. When the sticker comes to you, smell it; then finish this sentence, "I praise you, Jesus, because..."** Then pass the sticker to the person next to you.

Encourage children to think of as many reasons as they can to praise Jesus. For example, they might say, "I praise you, Jesus, because you're God" or "because you love me" or "because you died for me." After everyone has finished the sentence, collect the sticker and return it to the Learning Lab. Encourage children to praise Jesus every day during the coming week.



Say: **It's good to believe in Jesus, even though we can't see him. And it's OK to have questions about Jesus sometimes. Remember, ► Jesus helps us follow him when we have questions. Let's pray. Pray: **Dear God, we thank you for sending Jesus. Help us have faith to believe in Jesus even if we can't see him with our eyes. In Jesus' name, amen.****

Before children leave, lead them in singing "Follow in His Steps" (1 Peter 2:21b) (track 12) with the CD to the tune of "London Bridge."



**Jesus helps us follow in his steps,
Follow in his steps,
Follow in his steps.
Jesus helps us follow in his steps,
Because he loves us!**

(Repeat.)



Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the "Today I Learned..." handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with your children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this week's topic.



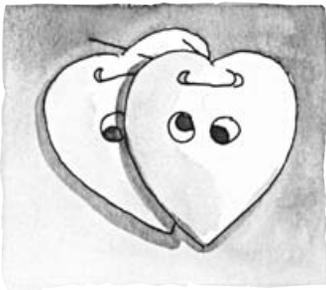
For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

■ Lively Learning: Is It Really You?

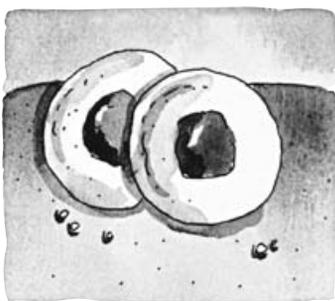
Gather children in a group on the floor. Choose three children to be Tappers, and have them stand at the front of the room. Tell the rest of the children to hide their eyes. The Tappers tiptoe among the children, and each taps a child on the head. Then the Tappers return to the front of the room. Children who were tapped stand up. Each child gets one guess as to who tapped him or her. If the guess is correct, he or she trades places with that Tapper. Play until everyone has been tapped at least once. Tell children that Thomas didn't have to guess who Jesus was because ► Jesus helps us follow him when we have questions, and Jesus helped Thomas know he was alive.

■ Make to Take: Seeing Heart Pins



Before this activity, make a 4-inch heart pattern for children to trace. Set out red poster board, scissors, pencils, glue, and tape. Hand each child a pair of wiggly craft eyes and a safety pin. Tell children to use the heart pattern to trace a heart on red poster board and then cut out the heart. Glue on the wiggly eyes. Then tape the safety pin to the back of the heart. Help children pin their seeing hearts on their clothing and model them. Explain that we can't see Jesus with our eyes, but we can believe in him with our hearts. Remind children that ► Jesus helps us follow him when we have questions. Encourage children to touch their seeing hearts and tell one way they can follow Jesus this week.

■ Treat to Eat: Believe It Cookies



Make Believe It cookies for a special treat. Have children help slice refrigerator sugar-cookie dough into ¼-inch thick circles. Let each child press his or her thumb into the center and then drop in a teaspoon of jam. Bake on a greased cookie sheet at 350 degrees until the cookies are golden brown. As you're preparing the cookies, talk about how Thomas wanted to see the marks in Jesus' hands to believe that Jesus was alive. Remind children that Jesus says we're special if we believe in him without seeing and that ► Jesus helps us follow him when we have questions.



■ Story Picture: Jesus Helps Thomas Believe

Hand each child a photocopy of the "Today I Learned..." handout. Set out crayons, white tissue paper, and a glue stick. Have children color the picture of Jesus talking with Thomas. Then let children glue white tissue paper to Jesus' robe. As children work, remind them that ► Jesus helps us follow him when we have questions and that no question is too hard for Jesus—he wants to help us find the right answers.

See With Your Heart

Photocopy this page. Cut out the eyeglasses and ear pieces.
Tape the ear pieces to the hearts on the dotted lines, and then fold back.



Today I learned...

Jesus helps us follow him when we have questions.

Today your child learned that Jesus helps us follow him when we have questions. Children learned that Jesus helped Thomas believe when he questioned if Jesus was alive. They talked about asking for Jesus' help with their questions.

Verse to Learn

"Follow in his steps" (1 Peter 2:21b).

Ask Me...

- How did Jesus help Thomas believe?
- Who can help when you have questions?
- What are some things we believe in even though we can't see them?

Family Fun

- Play a game of I Spy with your child. Take turns giving clues about an item in the room. Use clues such as "I spy something red. It gives light in a dark room. What do I spy?" The other person has three tries to guess the item. Remind your child that even though we can't "spy" Jesus with our eyes, we can believe in him with our hearts.

Jesus Helps Thomas Believe (John 20:24-29)

