

April 27, 2014

Lesson 28: Thomas



John 20:19-31

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said to them, 'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.'

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were

shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.' Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.'

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

Thomas

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The Big Story Truth: Jesus gives what is needed for faith.

About This Scripture Passage: This scripture passage recounts two different days and appearances of Jesus and how these appearances lead to the gift of faith. In the first appearance, Jesus shows up to a group of disciples gathered together in a locked room. They are fearful, but Jesus shows up with the gift of peace. They rejoice at the sight of him. They are able to believe (finally) the words of Mary who had already seen Jesus risen. Jesus breathes on them and in that breath of new life gives them the gift of the Holy Spirit. But reading a little further, we find out that one of the disciples wasn't there that night. Thomas was absent. Thomas, like the other disciples, can't believe the good news without seeing Jesus for himself. And so Jesus gives what Thomas needs in order to believe. Jesus shows up in person to Thomas and shows him his wounds.

Jesus provides the physical sight and touch that Thomas needs. The scripture passage acknowledges that we too need help in order to believe the good news. In fact, that is the reason we are given for the Gospel of John having been written in the first place.

“But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.”



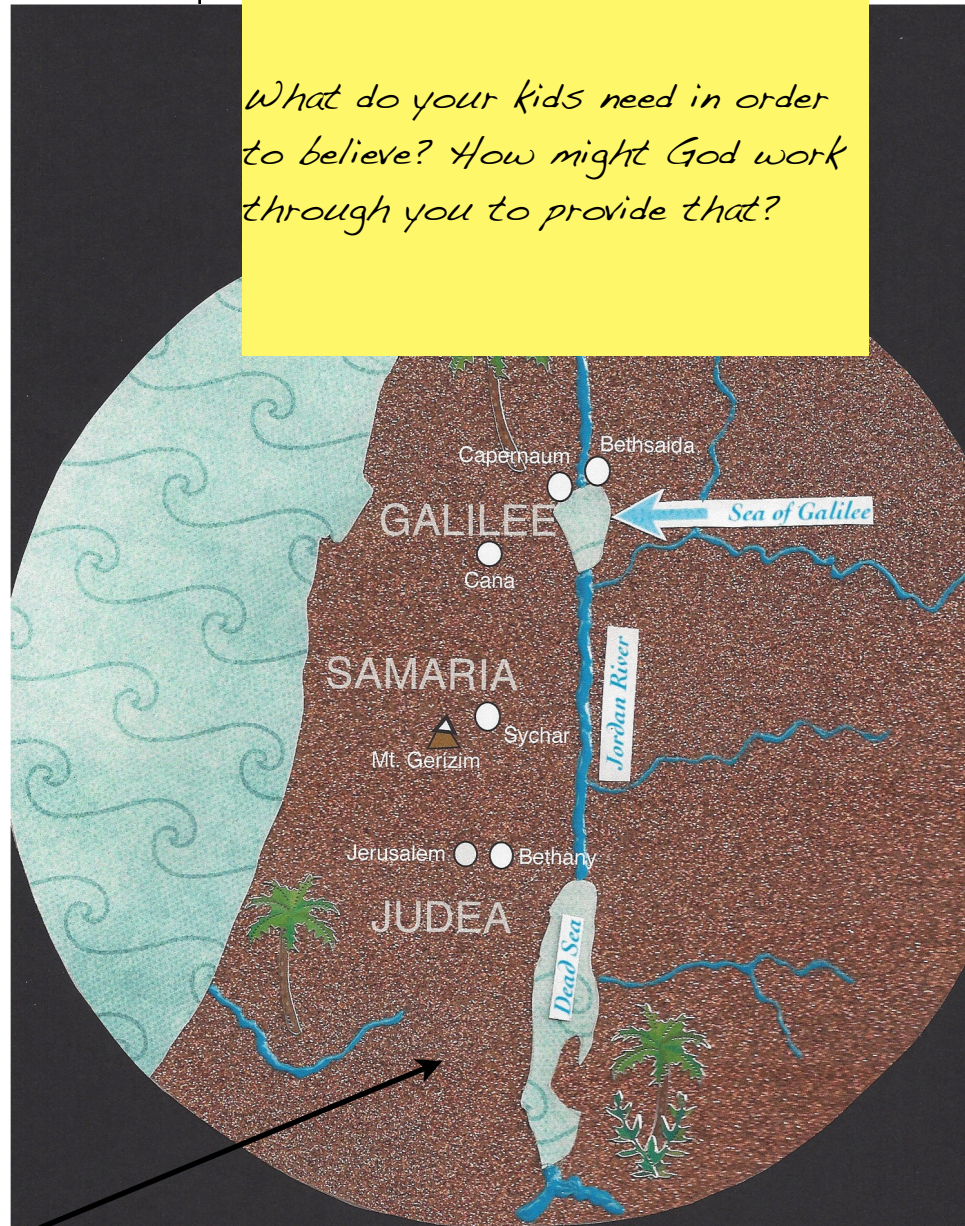
Making the Connection: This story raises the question... what do we need in order to be able to believe the Good News of Jesus? Is it hearing these Gospel stories? Is it experiencing the love and care of a church community who will patiently learn with us about God's love? Is it the gift of the Holy Spirit given to us in baptism? When we study the Apostle's Creed, Luther's explanation to the third article says, "I believe that I cannot by my own understanding or effort believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, or come to him. But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, and sanctified and kept me in true faith. In the same way he calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth and keeps it united with Jesus Christ in the one true faith." If the point of John's Gospel is to reveal Jesus so that we can be brought to faith, than we can see ourselves in this passage too. Those who are given joy and blessing in believing without seeing are us. Those for whom this Gospel and all its stories are written are us. How cool it is to be able to show our children that they have a part in this story. This was written for them! May the Holy Spirit reveal that to us and to our classes today!

Where in the World Are We?
They are in a house, most likely in Jerusalem, but we don't know

For Your Reflection:

What is needed in order for you to believe? What's already been given? Is there anything still missing?

What do your kids need in order to believe? How might God work through you to provide that?



Intergenerational Event

This is Holy Humor Sunday and will be a joint intergenerational Sunday School day. For this Sunday, adults, families, and kids of all ages will be invited to be together for the Sunday School lesson.

Begin with doing Faith 5 as a large group. This will be the last time that we do Faith 5 together during the Sunday School hour. Encourage parents/grandparents and other adults to continue to incorporate Faith 5 into their family's activities at supper or bed time.

Use this gathering as an opportunity for the kids to lead the adults in practicing the Apostles' Creed and meanings for articles 1 and 2. Ask the adults if they remember learning the creed when they were in Sunday School or confirmation. You may even talk to one or two older adults who would be willing to share their memory. Then tell the kids that there is one last section of the Apostles' Creed to learn and it has to do with the Holy Spirit. Today in worship and in the coming weeks we will be hearing more about the Holy Spirit. Lead everyone in practicing the third article and its meaning (Luther's Small Catechism pages 14 and 15). This third article talks about how important the Spirit's work is in the whole church! Today, with those from our congregation of all ages, we'll celebrate all that we have learned this year in a fun way!

The idea for today's lesson is to host a comical review of the year's lessons in game show format!

In advance of today's lesson, get together with the other Sunday School superintendents/teachers to think of someone that you might ask to be an especially funny character to host the show. Encourage that person to be as humorous and creative as possible when coming up with their persona as a game show host!

Get a few tap on lights from the dollar store. These will be the game "buzzers."

Divide the kids and all of the adults into two or more groups. These will be the “teams” that will be competing for a grand prize! (Choose something to be especially funny!)

Give everyone a Laffy Taffy candy after the game to celebrate!

Variations: In addition to or instead of the questions listed below, you may invite teachers to submit questions unique to their individual classes and particularly funny or memorable moments that happened during the year. You might choose to have kids act out or draw (Pictionary style) characters from the year’s lessons for the others to guess or kids themselves might take turns asking questions of one another.

Sample Game Show Questions:

1. Who said, "Let there be light!" (God)
2. Abraham and Sarah had a baby boy. His name was..... (Isaac)
3. True or False, when he was an old man, Isaac was tricked by one of his sons. (True)
4. Moses asked God what his name was. What name did God say? (I Am who I Am)
5. What white, fluffy food did God provide for the Israelites while they wandered in the desert? (Manna)
6. Samuel got woken up three times in the night by who? (God)
7. True or False, David was the oldest and best looking of his brothers. (False, he was the youngest.)
8. True or False, you could die by touching the Ark of the Covenant. (True)
9. True or False, Elijah heard God speak in an earthquake. (False, it was in the sound of sheer silence.)
10. Amos said, "Let justice roll down like..." what? (Water)
11. This next point goes to the team who can hum the tune of Handel's Messiah that corresponds to this passage from Isaiah 9: For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.
12. What craft project did you make to represent the Israelites going into exile. Hint: It's a long shot! (Star Splongee Shooters)
13. Jesus said, Come and..... what? (See)
14. How many gallons of water did Jesus turn into wine? (Approximately 180)
15. True or False, the temple was destroyed and rebuilt in three days. (True)
16. Who came to Jesus at night to ask questions? (Nicodemus)
17. True or False, Samaritans and Jews were normally friends.
18. In what city did Jesus turn water into wine and meet a royal official whose son was sick? (Cana)
19. Jesus said, "I am the _____ of life." (Bread)
20. Jesus said, "Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living _____." (Water)
21. Jesus told a man to go wash in the pool of _____ for healing. (Siloam)
22. Which character of the Bible is best portrayed by someone wrapped in toilet paper? (Lazarus)

23. What humbling act did Jesus do to teach his followers how to love one another? (Wash their feet)
24. Who denied Jesus three times? (Peter)
25. Who did Pilate release instead of Jesus? (Barabbas)
26. Jesus was given what two symbols of kingship in mockery? (Crown of thorns, purple robe)
27. What did the little children throw on the road in front of Jesus as he rode into Jerusalem? (Palm Branches)
28. Who died and rose from the dead giving life eternal to all believers? (JESUS!!!)

Family Faith 5

April 27, 2013

1. Each person shares their high and low (the best and worst things that happened this week.)
2. Read together this Bible Verse:

“But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.”
3. Talk about how the Bible verse relates to your highs and lows.
4. Pray aloud for one another's highs and lows.
5. Bless one another. Make the sign of the cross on each other's heads and say these words: _____, Rejoice! Your life is in Christ!