

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

John 20:19-31

PPT Title

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

Main Point: Jesus appeared so that people would believe in Him.

Key Verse: *Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen Me but still have believed."* - John 20:29

Props: A piece of sheer fabric, apple with a bite taken out

Teacher: Before class, choose a volunteer to look up Hebrews 11:1, and mark the place until you call on him or her.

BACKGROUND/REVIEW

Say: Jesus had risen VICTORIOUSLY from the grave! He conquered death and sin for all time! Jesus appeared to different people. Several times when He appeared to people who knew Him very well, they didn't recognize Him right away. We wonder how this could be. Okay, who can name a really famous person? **Allow kids to answer. Choose one of the names they have given to use as your example.** Let's say that _____ came to our church one day. He/she was dressed like all the rest of us. There were no security people around, and no one was taking pictures. You might see that person and think that he/she looks like _____, but you wouldn't believe it was really him/her. Why not? Because he/she is famous; because he/she lives in (Hollywood or wherever); because if that really was the famous person, everyone around him/her would be taking pictures. You wouldn't believe it was actually him/her because in your mind everything would not add up. Even more so, all the people who loved Jesus had seen Him die. They KNEW He was dead. In their mind, there was no way He could be standing in front of them three days later. In addition, in at least one case, God purposely kept people from recognizing Jesus.



Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene. She didn't recognize Him at first, but when she did, she ran to tell the disciples. They didn't believe her because they had not seen Him with their own eyes (Mark 16:9-11, Luke 24:10-11). Then Jesus appeared to two of His disciples on the road to Emmaus. He started from the very beginning of the Scriptures and explained that He was the Messiah - God's plan to take away the sin of all who would believe in Him. Jesus wanted them to understand God's plan, and believe in Him. He wants the same for us today.

The two disciples ran back to find the other disciples and tell them that Jesus was alive. Still, the other disciples did not believe because they had not seen Jesus (Mark 16:12-13).

JESUS APPEARS TO THE DISCIPLES (John 20:19-23)



Say: Most of Jesus' original disciples were gathered together. One of the disciples, named Thomas, was not with them, and of course Judas was not there. The disciples had locked themselves in a room to hide. **Ask:** Can anyone guess whom they were hiding from? *The Pharisees, the Jewish leaders* **Say:** They were hiding from the Jewish leaders who had demanded that Jesus be killed. The disciples thought they were in

danger because they were close followers of Jesus. In addition, the Roman guards had lied and said that the disciples had stolen Jesus' body. The disciples were afraid for good reason!



Jesus came in and stood among them. He said, "May peace be with you!" Then He showed them His hands and His side. The disciples were very happy when they saw the Lord. - John 20:19b-20

Say: Wow! Jesus walked in - right through a locked door. Because His friends were afraid, His very first words were words of comfort.

Again Jesus said, "May peace be with you! The Father has sent Me. So now I am sending you." He then breathed on them. He said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven. If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." - John 20:21-23

The book of Matthew tells us that Jesus said: *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. So you must go and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And you can be sure that I am always with you, to the very end."* - Matthew 28:18b-20

Say: Jesus told these men - the very men who deserted Him, who ran in fear, and who were now hiding behind a locked door - that He was going to send them to teach men and women how to be saved from their sins. It is quite amazing that Jesus would send these men. They had already blown it. On their own, they had no strength and no courage. But Jesus was not going to send them out on their own.

Jesus breathed on them as a *symbol* that He was going to send the **Holy Spirit** to them very soon (Acts 2:4). The Holy Spirit would be poured out on them, and it would fill their souls, just like breath fills our lungs. Only the power of the Holy Spirit would give them the strength to go OUT into the world that they were now hiding from.

HOLY SPIRIT PROMISES (John 14:15-27, 16:5-16)

Before this time, God's Holy Spirit filled certain people at certain times for certain tasks (Mark 12:36, Luke 1:35). But this was about to change. Soon, ALL believers would be filled with the Holy Spirit, and He would NEVER leave them. Let's look at the promises Jesus had already made to the disciples about the **Holy Spirit**.



During the Last Supper, right before Jesus was arrested and taken to the cross, He told His disciples that He was about to leave them. They were very sad to hear this, but Jesus told them not to be sad. Jesus said that after He left, He would send the Holy Spirit to them (John 16:5:7).

*I will ask the Father. And he will give you another Friend to help you and to be with you forever. The Friend is the **Spirit of truth**. The world can't accept him. That is because the world does not see him or know him. But you know him. He lives with you, and he will be in you. But the Father will send the Friend in my name to help you. The Friend is the **Holy Spirit**. He will teach you all things. He will remind you of everything I have said to you. - John 14:16-17, 26*

Jesus also said that the Holy Spirit would help lost people see their own sin, and their need for a Savior (John 16:8-11).

And even before the Last Supper, Jesus told His disciples not to worry about what to say when they were telling others about Him, because at the just right time, the Holy Spirit would give them the words they needed (Mark 13:10-11).

The **HOLY SPIRIT** would:

- come after Jesus left them
- be their Friend
- teach them
- help them
- remind them of what Jesus taught
- give them the right words to speak
- show lost people that they are sinners that need a Savior

Let's list Jesus' awesome promises about the Holy Spirit:

- God would send the Holy Spirit after Jesus left them
- He would be their Friend
- He would teach the disciples
- He would help the disciples
- He would remind the disciples of what Jesus said
- He would show people that they are sinners that need a Savior
- He would give them the right words to speak

Jesus did not ask His disciples to go make disciples on their own. God would never ask us to do something without giving us the power to do it.

Application: It should encourage each one of us that Jesus' plan included the men who had made very big mistakes. These were not special men. They were regular people. At times they were weak; at times they lacked faith; at times they thought only of themselves. Come to think of it, that sounds a bit like me sometimes. I am so thankful that it is NOT about what I have to offer God! God sends the Holy Spirit to live inside of ALL believers (1 Corinthians 6:19). He will use me - and you - when we allow the Holy Spirit to guide our steps. *He has the power, not us!*

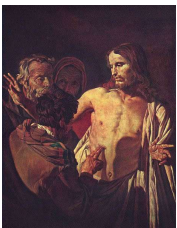
JESUS APPEARS TO THOMAS (John 20:24-31)



Say: *Thomas was one of the Twelve. He was called Didymus. He was not with the other disciples when Jesus came. So they told him, "We have seen the Lord!"*

But he said to them, "First I must see the nail marks in His hands. I must put my finger where the nails were. I must put my hand into His side. Only then will I believe what you say." - John 20:24-25

Thomas said he had to see Jesus with His own eyes, and feel the scars with his own hands, to believe that He was alive. We don't hear much about the disciple Thomas. In fact, because this is one of the only times he is mentioned, he has become known throughout history as "Doubting Thomas." Even today, if a person doubts something, he might be called a "Doubting Thomas." We know that Jesus can read peoples' thoughts (Matthew 9:4), so let's see what Jesus will do.



A week later, Jesus' disciples were in the house again. Thomas was with them. Even though the doors were locked, Jesus came in and stood among them.

He said, "May peace be with you!" Then He said to Thomas, "Put your finger here. See My hands. Reach out your hand and put it into My side. Stop doubting and believe."

Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!" - John 20:26-28

When Jesus appeared again, He spoke directly to Thomas. He told him to touch the scars in His hands and side. We don't know if Thomas actually did touch Jesus' scars. He may have believed the moment he saw Jesus and heard His voice.

**"My Lord
and my
God!"**

Notice Thomas' words. He didn't just say, "Now I believe You are alive." He said much more than that. Thomas said, "My Lord and my God!" When Thomas saw that Jesus had been raised from the dead, it proved to him that Jesus was who He claimed to be.

Before He was crucified, Jesus told the disciples over and over what was going to happen (Matthew 17:9, Luke 9:22, 24:7). He said the chief priests would reject Him, He would be killed, and He would rise to life on the third day (Matthew 16:21). But, the Bible says Jesus spoke figuratively and the disciples didn't fully understand Him (John 16:17-18, 25). They heard His words, but the meaning was not clear to them. It's sort of like seeing through a veil. **Teacher: Hold up your apple, with the sheer fabric in front of it. Say:** You can see through this a little. You know there is something

here, and you might even know what it is, but you can't tell the details. You may not know the color, or that there is a bite taken out of it. **Reveal the bitten apple. Say:** The disciples understood some, but not all, of what Jesus had told them.

It was only after Thomas saw Jesus alive that he everything became clear to him. At that moment Thomas confessed that Jesus was Lord.

PPT Key Verse

Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen Me but still have believed." - John 20:29

Ask: Who is Jesus talking about here? *Listen for answers.* Has anyone in this room actually seen Jesus in His body? **No. Say:** No, we haven't seen Him because He is in heaven now (Acts 1:9). Jesus is talking about all the people throughout history - from the time He left the earth until now - who have believed in Him. That includes you and me. It was good for Thomas and the disciples to believe in Jesus after they saw Him raised from the dead, but it is even BETTER for us to believe even though we have not seen Him.

Say: There is a word for believing in what you have not seen. **Call on your volunteer to read Hebrews 11:1 aloud. Ask:** What is the word? **Faith. Say:** The Bible says **without faith it is impossible to please God** (Hebrews 1:6).

So, how do we believe something that we have never seen? We read the words of the people who did see Him. The disciple John wrote:

PPT Verse

*Jesus did many other miraculous signs in front of His disciples. They are not written down in this book. But these (miracles) are written down so that **you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. If you believe this, you will have life because you belong to Him.** - John 20:30-31*

The Bible was written to US - to you and me. John makes it clear that he wrote the book of John in order to explain that Jesus was the Messiah, sent by God to take away the sins of the world. By all the amazing miracles He did, He *proved* that He was who he said He was. Yes, it takes faith to believe something we have never seen. But God will give you the faith you need (Ephesians 2:8). Jesus said we would be blessed because we have faith in what we did not see.

PPT Main Point

Main Point: Jesus appeared so that people would believe in Him.