

Day five

We all have doubts and questions and we are all welcome

Bible reading

John 20:24-29



Jesus appears to Thomas

²⁴Thomas (called Didymus) was not with the followers when Jesus came. Thomas was 1 of the 12.

²⁵The other followers told Thomas, 'We saw the Lord.'

But Thomas said, 'I will not believe it until I see the nail marks in his hands. And I will not believe until I put my finger where the nails were and put my hand into his side.'

²⁶A week later the followers were in the house again. Thomas was with them. The doors were locked, but Jesus came in and stood among them. He said, 'Peace be with you!' ²⁷Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here. Look at my hands. Put your hand here in my side. Stop doubting and believe.'

²⁸Thomas said to him, 'My Lord and my God!'

²⁹Then Jesus told him, 'You believe because you see me. Those who believe without seeing me will be truly happy.'

Bible video

youtu.be/A_QcGnwilXI?si=ROT9n8AmJia3qxLG

Saddleback Kids (2:34)

Arrival activity

Come up with questions about the leaders, so the children can guess which leader it may be. For example:

- do you know which leader has lots of animals?
- do you know which leader doesn't like spaghetti?
- which leader fears flying?
- which leader has run a marathon?
- can you match a baby picture to the right leader?



Story

Thomas' Questions

I don't believe this. Honestly, what is going on? The gang (or disciples as they like to be called) have all gone crazy. They're saying he's alive, that Jesus is alive! He's not, he's dead! The Romans killed him, he was buried in a tomb. Dead. Done. Finished. And now they're saying he's alive? I don't believe them, and I told them so. I told them that I wouldn't believe Jesus was alive unless I actually put my fingers into the wounds on his hands and side.



I think that was a bit of a rash statement. Eugh. It makes me feel queasy to think about doing that but... I had to get them to stop. Stop telling lies, stop making out he's still alive. He's just not, he... died. My friend has... gone and he's never coming back: that's how death works. It hurts, so much, and they're just pretending that he's still here, like it doesn't hurt at all. What is up with them?

But what if?... What if he is alive? What if they are telling the truth? What does that mean? Could Jesus be alive? Dare I to hope it? No. That's just nonsense. No one comes back from the dead... apart from Lazarus, but that was different. How was that different? Jesus called him, Jesus can't call himself if he's dead, or can he? We call him the Messiah, so maybe he can...

Could it be? Maybe Jesus didn't actually die, maybe he had passed out or something, and that's how he's alive. Yes, that must be it... hang on a minute, the tomb. Can you breathe in a tomb or do you run out of air? They wrapped him in linen, would that suffocate him? Would the people who buried him not have noticed that he was still breathing or that his heart was still beating? Surely they would have noticed so... he must have been dead?

Anyway, even if they were right, how did he get out of the tomb? He was badly hurt, and it takes more than one healthy person to roll the stone over the tomb. Though they didn't say he looked hurt, just that he had the scars on his hands and side. How does that work? How can you go from being beaten up and so very badly hurt to being OK in just a few days? And how did he get out? Well, I guess if he is the son of God, he can do anything? Maybe God zapped the stone out of the way, or maybe he sent some angels or something?

What if he is alive? What if he did die, was buried and actually came back to life, what does that mean?! I... can't even think! So many more questions! Does it mean Jesus can never die? Do we still have death, and if so, is it different now? Jesus spoke of his father's house having many rooms, do we get to go there when we die? Is it like Jesus had to die to go and fetch the keys to that house, open it up and then come back and make sure we had keys to get in as well?

If he's alive, what happens now? What do we do? Things are going to be crazier than before! I need to go and meet the disciples again, I need to know what's going on. Are they delusional? Is someone pretending to be Jesus? Or could it be... him? Time for some answers.

[Some time later] I can't... I just can't believe it... He. Is. Alive.

Wondering questions

- Who was made welcome in this story?
- Who did the welcoming?
- What does this story say to us?
- Where do you see this story today?



Small group prayer

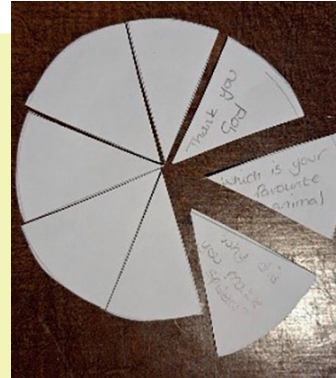
Pizza/Cake Prayers

You will need:

- scissors
- pens/pencils
- a large circle of card or thick paper.

What you do:

1. Print the cake/pizza on card or stiff paper, and cut the pieces beforehand.
2. In the group, hand each child a piece of cake, and ask them to write or draw the one question that they would like to ask God.
3. Once all the children have done this, put the cake pieces together, and say, 'Thank you God that we can ask you anything.'



Activity/craft

Question Headband

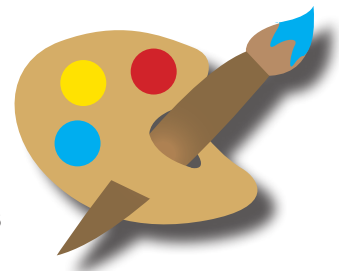
Thomas doubted and questioned whether Jesus had risen from the dead. We all question and sometimes doubt things around us. Jesus encourages us to question, but to ensure we listen carefully for what God might be telling us, and to try to make good decisions based on what we hear.

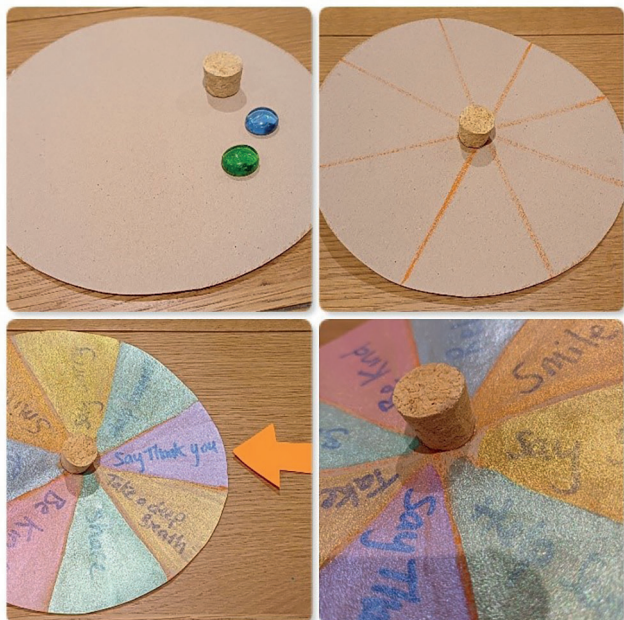
You will need:

- two different colours of card
- scissors.

What you do:

1. Create a headband using one colour card; measure it, and secure with sticky tape or staples.
2. Cut a question mark out of the same card. This could either be decorated first, or you could cut a slightly smaller question mark out of the other colour card on it, as in the picture, and stick that on top.
3. Then stick that onto a piece of card of the contrasting colour.
4. Staple the card to the headband.





- Relax
- Take a deep breath
- Smile
- Help someone
- Stay positive
- Say sorry
- Thank you
- Be kind
- Share.

Recipe



STEM activity

Positive Spinner

You will need:

- a circle of card (recycled packaging)
- glass beads
- cork or milk bottle top
- Blu-Tack/glue dots/strong glue.

What you do:

1. Divide the circle up into sections and paint or colour in each section. When the paint or pen is dry, write or draw a positive suggestion or decision in each section.
2. Use strong glue, a glue dot or Blu-Tack to secure a glass bead in the centre on the back. This will enable the circle to spin.
3. On the front of the card, fix either a milk bottle top or a piece of cork to make the spinner.
4. Make an arrow to place on the floor or table; this will be the marker for the section the spinner lands on. Take it in turns to spin and give each other positive suggestions.
5. Here are some ideas for the sections to get you started. Encourage everyone to come up with their own ideas, too!

Hidden Treasure Cakes

You will need:

- ready-made cupcakes/fairy cakes
- ready-to-roll icing or spreadable buttercream icing
- small sweets/chocolates/jam/chocolate spread.

What you do:

1. Take a cupcake and a round-ended knife or spoon, and cut out a piece from the centre to leave a hollow. Try to keep the piece you cut out intact.
2. Place something in the centre – a small sweet or chocolate, or a little dollop of jam or chocolate spread (check for allergies in your group to ensure that they can eat these, or you may need to designate a specific cake for any child with an allergy).
3. Use the top of the piece of cake you scooped out to make a lid, removing any excess sponge to let the lid sit on smoothly.

- Now either coat the top of the cake with butter icing or spread a little jam on it and cover with a circle of ready to roll icing so that the hole in the cake is completely hidden. You could decorate it with a question mark on top.
- Mix the cakes up, and then pick one each. You never know what might be in it!

Games



Two Truths And A Lie

Thomas was not sure that his fellow disciples were telling the truth as what they said about Jesus being alive didn't seem likely to him. This game is about deciding whether something is likely to be true or not.

You will need:

- leaders need to prepare two truths about themselves and one lie.

What you do:

- The children gather in small groups. Each leader takes it in turns to present two truths and one lie about themselves.
- The groups then have a few moments to discuss which one they think is least likely to be true.
- Points can be given to the groups who guess the lie correctly.

True or False Runaround Game

Another game about deciding whether you think something is likely to be true or not.

You will need:

- the list of questions below (or make your own)
- a large letter T
- a large letter F, on separate pieces of card.

What you do:

- Children stand in the centre of the room. A leader reads out each fact one at a time.

- The children then run to either T for True or F for False.
- Once the children have all decided, the leader can shout 'Runaround' to give them chance to change their minds before revealing whether the answer is True or False.
- You can play it that children who guessed wrong are out each time.

FACTS

- Dung beetles are the strongest creature relative to their size** – TRUE
- Tomatoes are a fruit** – TRUE
- Buzz Lightyear's original name was Lunar Larry** – TRUE
- In a whole lifetime you spend 45 years sleeping** – FALSE, it's 25 years
- Human teeth are as strong as shark teeth** – TRUE
- All fruit have seeds inside** – FALSE, strawberries have them on the outside
- There is no butter in peanut butter** – TRUE
- Tug of War used to be an Olympic sport** – TRUE
- Snakes cannot smell** – FALSE, they smell with their tongues
- A camel's hump is full of water** – FALSE, it is full of fat that is used for nourishment when the food is scarce.

Feelie Bag Game

Thomas needed to touch in order to believe. This game is about using your sense of touch.

You will need:

- a selection of pillowcases that have different items inside, with the pillowcases tied and labelled
- choose some items to hide in the pillowcases that would be easy to identify, and some that are more difficult to guess.

What you do:

1. The children pass the pillowcases round and try to guess what is in each one.
2. They could write their answers on an answer sheet, and then have the answers revealed at the end.

Large group prayer

Wear the question headband made in the craft session earlier.



Find a comfortable position (for example sitting, lying down or walking in a set space) and invite people, in silence, to think of questions they have for God or perhaps to thank God for answers they have had to prayers previously asked. Some children will struggle with this so set a timer – a minute is probably long enough.

End with this prayer:

God of knowledge, we have lots of questions about you and the world. Help us remember we don't need to have all the answers for you to love us. Help us listen, and say thank you when you help us know you a little bit more. Amen

