

Jesus Appeared to the Disciples

BIBLE PASSAGE: Luke 24:36-49; John 20:19-23

MAIN POINT: Jesus appeared to His disciples.

KEY PASSAGE: 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What is our mission as believers? Our mission as believers is to make disciples of all nations by the power of the Spirit.

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Leader BIBLE STUDY

Only a few days had passed since Jesus was arrested, beaten, and crucified. His followers were undoubtedly afraid and confused. They met together in a house, locking the doors because they were afraid of the Jews. Would the Jews do to them what they had done to Jesus? They had believed that Jesus was the Messiah, but they had abandoned Him and Jesus was killed. How could He save anyone if He was dead?

But now some people were reporting that Jesus was alive! Could it be true? The disciples were talking about these things when Jesus stood among them. They thought they were seeing a ghost.

“Peace to you!” He said. What good news. Imagine how Jesus’ words might have calmed the disciples’ anxious hearts. Their Lord, whom they had deserted, didn’t show up to scold them for their failures or shame them for their lack of faith. He spoke peace to them.

Even though Jesus had foretold His death and resurrection (Matt. 20:17-19), Jesus showed His disciples physical proof that He was alive. He showed them His hands and His side. With His resurrection, Jesus’ mission was accomplished. He paid the debt for sinners, and the transaction cleared. But the disciples’ work was just beginning.

Jesus gave His followers a job to do: “As the Father has sent Me, I also send you” (John 20:21). This verse contains the Gospel of John’s version of the Great Commission. Jesus, the One sent from the Father, sent the disciples to be His messengers and representatives. Jesus equipped the disciples with the Holy Spirit to proclaim the gospel—the good news of what Jesus has done—to the world.

Emphasize to the kids you teach that Jesus is alive today. We haven’t seen Him for ourselves, but we believe this by faith. He sends out all believers to tell others about Him, and He gives us power through the Holy Spirit.



Additional resources for each session are available at gospelproject.com. For free training and session-by-session help, visit www.ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject.

The BIBLE STORY

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Tell the story in a house:** Create a house's perimeter with large blocks or masking tape on the floor. Gather kids inside the "house" and pretend to lock the door. Tell the story.
- **Use emotions:** Tell the story. Pause and ask kids to use their faces to show you how they might have felt if they had been there with Jesus' friends. Would they feel afraid? Amazed? Happy? Determined? Invite them to strike poses showing those emotions.

Jesus Appeared to the Disciples

Luke 24:36-49; John 20:19-23

On the first day of the week, in the evening, the disciples gathered together in a house. They locked the doors because they were afraid of the Jews. They didn't want to be killed like Jesus had been killed.

But wait ... Jesus had appeared to two disciples on the road, and Mary Magdalene had reported seeing Him alive too. Could it be true?

As the disciples talked, Jesus came, stood among them, and said to them, "Peace to you!"

The disciples were afraid! They couldn't believe their eyes! Was this really Jesus? The disciples thought they were seeing a ghost.

"Why are you afraid? It's Me! Why do you doubt?" Jesus said. "Look at Me and touch Me. A ghost does not have flesh and bones, but I do. I'm not a ghost."

Jesus showed His disciples His hands and His side. They saw the holes in His hands and in His side. Jesus was alive? It seemed too good to be true. The disciples rejoiced because they were so happy to see Jesus!

The disciples gave Jesus some fish to eat. **Jesus talked to them and explained the Bible to them.** "The Bible is about Me," Jesus said. **He helped them understand how the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms told about Him. Then Jesus told the disciples that they had a job to do. Jesus had died and was raised from the dead so that people could be forgiven for their sins. The disciples needed to tell other people to repent from their sin and be forgiven.**

"Peace to you!" Jesus said to them again. "God sent Me

to earth, and in the same way, I am sending you.” **Jesus sent out the disciples to be His witnesses and to tell all the people that He is alive.**

Christ Connection: For 40 days, Jesus presented Himself to at least 500 people and proved that He is alive. (1 Corinthians 15:3-8) Jesus is still alive today. He sends out believers to tell others about Him and gives us power through the Holy Spirit.



**WANT TO
DISCOVER
GOD'S WORD?
GET
ADVENTURE!**

Invite kids to check out this week's devotionals to discover how God's Word can help them grow in the gospel. Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out www.lifeway.com/devotionals.

Introduce THE STORY

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BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What is our mission as believers? Our mission as believers is to make disciples of all nations by the power of the Spirit.

Welcome time

- note cards, 1 per kid
- pencils or makers
- voting box

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. As kids arrive, give each a note card. Ask the kids to write or draw a picture of the best surprise they have ever received. Instruct kids to put their note card in a voting box that is sitting in the middle of the room for later use.

SAY • Some surprises are bad, but some are really good. We are going to learn about your favorite surprise today and then we will see a great surprise Jesus had for His followers.

Activity page (5 minutes)

- “Hidden Letters” activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete the “Hidden Letters” activity page. Help them find and unscramble the letters hidden in the picture. Each color corresponds to one word.

SAY • Jesus brought a message to His disciples because He didn’t want them to be afraid. He was alive and said to them, “Peace to you.”

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Surprise voting box

Guide children to sit in a circle around the voting box that is in the middle of the room. Open the voting box and share what kids wrote or drew on their note card. Ask kids to guess whose card you are sharing. After kids guess, allow the kid who experienced that surprise to raise her hand to show who guessed correctly.

SAY • Wow, you all had many great surprises to share today.

What does your face look like when you get a good surprise? [*Allow the children to make faces to show they are happy, excited, surprised, and so forth.*] Today we are going to learn about the best surprise the disciples ever received.

OPTION 2: Which surprise is best?

Share with the kids that you are going to give them two choices of surprises they may receive, surprise A or surprise B. Assign one side of the room for surprise A and the opposite side of the room for surprise B. Ask kids to vote for which surprise they think is best by running to one side of the room. After each choice, call on a child or two to share why they picked that surprise.

SAY • Sometimes it can be hard to choose which surprise you like most, but we love good surprises. Today we are going to learn about how the disciples received the best surprise ever.

Transition to teach the story



- voting box
- note cards

Surprise choices:

- a kitten or a new puppy?
- a trip to an amusement park or a trip to the beach?
- a new bike or a new video game?
- extra dessert in your lunch box or ice cream after school?
- your grandparents' coming to visit or going to your grandparents' house to visit?

Teach THE STORY

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- room decorations
- Theme Background Slide (optional)

Suggested Theme Decorating Ideas: Decorate your room to create a school hallway in the midst of class elections. Paint foam board to look like a bank of lockers. Hang patriotic banners around the stage and post several fliers that say things like *Amir for Treasurer, Vote 4 Jordan, or Greta for Class Prez*. Consider using names of kids in your ministry. You may also display the theme background slide.

Countdown

- countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as the session begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

- leader attire

[Leader enters wearing a solid-colored polo shirt and khakis, perhaps in the colors of a local school your students attend.]

LEADER • Hi, kids. As you can see, we are in the middle of a class election. I love voting! Whether it's voting where we eat after church, what color shirt I want to wear, or who will be class president, I love to vote! Quick vote: how many of you like to vote? Show me your hands. *[Pause and await responses.]* Awesome! I also love talking about surprises. I heard that you

may have voted for the best surprises earlier today. Even though we heard some amazing surprises today, there is one surprise that tops all the others as the best ever. Jesus' disciples experienced this surprise. This best surprise involves Jesus and He had a great message to share with us.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • As believers and followers of Jesus, we have a mission. This mission comes from Jesus Himself, and He gave it to His disciples after He rose from the dead on the third day. This mission is also our big picture question. Our big picture question is, *What is our mission as believers? Our mission as believers is to make disciples of all nations by the power of the Spirit.*

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline or big story circle.

LEADER • We are at a really cool part of God's big story. Now remember, Jesus had been crucified and buried in a tomb, but we know that Jesus rose from the dead on the third day. Jesus appeared to Mary, and that same day, Jesus explained to two of His disciples how all of the Scriptures point to Him. Jesus was really busy after He raised from the dead! Listen to our Bible story to learn what Jesus did next. Our story this week is called "Jesus Appeared to the Disciples."

• Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Luke 24:36-49; John 20:19-23. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you

• Bibles
• "Jesus Appeared to the Disciples" video
• Big Picture Question Poster
• Bible Story Picture Poster

tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Appeared to the Disciples.”

LEADER • When you have a great surprise, what do you want to do after getting it? [*Allow kids to answer, but make sure to point out that we usually want to share that great surprise with others.*]

Jesus’ appearing to the disciples was an amazing surprise. Although Mary and some of Jesus’ other followers had told the disciples that they had seen Jesus alive, the disciples were confused. They were hiding in a locked room, trying to make sense of what had happened, when suddenly **Jesus appeared to His disciples!**

The disciples were afraid at first, but Jesus calmed their fears. Jesus showed them His hands and His side, and He also ate fish to show that He was not a ghost. Jesus was really, truly, physically alive! Jesus’ disciples were so happy, they rejoiced. Then Jesus told them they had a job to do. He said that they were to tell everyone that He was alive.

Christ connection

LEADER • Jesus, who had the power to defeat death, didn’t just give the disciples a job to do in their own power. Jesus gave them power through the Holy Spirit so they could tell the world He is alive. Jesus is still alive today. As Christians, our job is to tell everyone that He is alive so that other people can believe the truth about Jesus and become His followers, or disciples.

What is our mission as believers? Our mission as believers is to make disciples of all nations by the power of the Holy Spirit. We do that by telling

Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

people who Jesus is and what He has done to rescue us from sin and death. Then we wait to see the Holy Spirit move. Only God can change a person's heart, but we spread the gospel so everyone has a chance to hear.

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together 1 Corinthians 15:3-4.

LEADER • This key passage tells us that the good news is most important. Jesus' dying for our sins and raising from the dead is the best news ever, and it was God's plan to rescue people from sin long ago. Let's sing this truth together now.

Lead boys and girls in singing "On the Third Day."

- Key Passage Poster
- "On the Third Day" song

Discussion starter video (4 minutes)

LEADER • Can you think of a time you weren't sure what you had seen? Think about that as you watch this clip.

Show the "Unit 27, Session 1" discussion starter video. Discuss with kids how soon they felt confident they knew what the picture was. Did they tell anyone before they were sure? Did they say anything when they were sure?

LEADER • At first, the disciples thought Jesus was a ghost. They soon realized that Jesus was truly alive and standing in the room with them. Jesus called them to go out and tell others of what they knew was true: Jesus had risen from the grave. Jesus promised to give them power to fulfill their mission. We have the same mission and the same power to fulfill it today!

- "Unit 27, Session 1" discussion starter video

• “The Glory” song

Sing (4 minutes)

LEADER • Jesus’ rising from the dead is the best news and can bring us much hope and joy. Let’s praise Him now as we sing.
Sing together “The Glory.”

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

LEADER • God, we thank You for the best news ever. Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to die for our sins on the cross. We praise You because You have power over death and You raised Jesus to life on the third day as You promised in the Old Testament. Help us to share this amazing news with many other people. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Dismiss to apply the story

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

Apply THE STORY

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Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- foam ball

Display the key passage poster where kids can see it. Read the key passage together twice. Invite kids to stand in a circle. Give a foam ball to a child and guide him to say the first word to the key passage. He will then toss the ball to another child who will say the next word. Kids will keep tossing the ball and saying the next word until the key passage is complete. Kids will say the verse reference together. If time allows, play several rounds.

SAY • What great news our key passage shares! Let's work hard to memorize it so it will remind us of our job to share this great news with others.

Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Main Point Poster

Help kids practice finding the Gospel of Luke in their Bibles. Guide them to the New Testament. Point kids to Luke 24:36-49.

SAY • Luke was a follower of Jesus who wrote down eyewitness testimony about Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Luke wrote that the disciples were surprised that Jesus came back from the dead, even though Jesus had told them He would not stay dead.

Let's go over some questions from our Bible story.

Questions:

1. What did the disciples think Jesus was when He first appeared to them? (*a ghost, Luke 24:37*)
2. How did Jesus show that He is alive? (*He told the disciples to touch and see His hands and feet. He also ate fish with them; Luke 24:39-43*)
3. What job did Jesus give His disciples? (*tell other people that Jesus died to rescue them from sin and God raised Jesus from the dead on the third day, Luke 24:46-49*)
4. Who at your school, on your sports team, or in your family needs to hear that Jesus died on the cross to rescue people from sin and is alive today?
5. How would you tell that person about Jesus in your own words?
6. How do you feel when you think of sharing the good news of Jesus with others?

Allow kids to be honest. If they are excited, affirm them. If they are scared or worried to share, still affirm them and help them understand that Jesus gives His followers a Helper, the Holy Spirit. It is OK to be afraid, and they can ask for help from the Holy Spirit.

Activity choice (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Surprise masks

Pass out paper or paper plates and encourage kids to draw a face that shows how they might have responded if they were in the room when Jesus appeared alive. After they complete their masks, allow them to share why they drew what they drew.

SAY • Your faces drawings are great! We often react

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

LOW PREP

- paper or paper plates, 1 per kid
- crayons and markers

differently to different situations because no two people are exactly alike. But there are some situations where most of us will react in very similar ways. **Jesus appeared to His disciples.** Remember the disciples were afraid at first, but Jesus helped calm them down. Seeing Him alive after He had been crucified definitely caused a strong reaction! The disciples had a new mission from Jesus, and it's the same mission we share today. ***What is our mission as believers? Our mission as believers is to make disciples of all nations by the power of the Holy Spirit.***

OPTION 2: Reverse charades

Assign one child to be the guesser. This child will step out of earshot with an adult helper. While the guesser's is gone, whisper to the rest of the class a job title (police officer, firefighter, doctor, teacher, veterinarian, chef) and explain they will silently act out the kind of work that person would do. When the kids are ready, the guesser will return and face them. The kids will act out the tasks, and the guesser will identify who would perform those tasks.

SAY • Sometimes it can be easy to guess the type of work certain people do, but sometimes it can be hard. In today's lesson, **Jesus appeared to His disciples** to tell them they had a job to do. Their job was to tell others about Him. Jesus is still alive today and His followers still have the job to tell other about Him.

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute each child's journal. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or about the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Whom can I tell about this story?

Make sure each child secures this week's sheet in the journal, and then collect them. Keep the journals in the classroom so they will be available every week or as often as you wish to use them.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page provided with this session. Pray for your group.

- pencils and crayons
- Journal Page
- Bible Story Coloring Page, 1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.