

big faith

SESSION 9

Unit 2: Seeds of Faith

Faith Focus: Jesus helps us grow in our faith.

Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 3:18)

GROW IN FAITH

Grow Through Grace—John 20:19-31

Today's story tells of Jesus appearing to the disciples after the Resurrection. But it is all so hard to believe, especially for Thomas. Since Thomas has not yet seen the risen Lord, the other disciples are telling him about their experience. Thomas, who witnessed Jesus' arrest and death on the cross, is not sure that he can believe what the other disciples say. Thomas wants to see Jesus for himself.

When Jesus appears to Thomas, he offers to let Thomas touch his wounds and tells Thomas to believe. Jesus is not upset with Thomas, but instead meets Thomas where he is and gives him what he needs in order to have faith. Thomas shows us that it is okay to have questions about our faith. Jesus will always provide us with love and grace so we too can grow to believe.

- Retell the Easter story.
- Encourage asking questions.
- Demonstrate examples of faith.

SUPPLIES

crayons

scissors

glue

blank seed packets or small manila envelopes

several kinds of flower seeds

CEB Bible storybook

TV and DVD player or streaming device

permanent markers

plain paper or foam cups

grass seed

soil

markerboard and dry-erase markers or posterboard and markers

SESSION OUTLINE

COME TOGETHER

Prepare to Learn

Faith Focus—Jesus Helps Us Grow in Our Faith

Seed Packet (Science)

FUN WITH FAITH

Grass Seed Friends (Art/Science)

Think Like Thomas (Critical Thinking)

FAITH CONNECTIONS

Read the Story

Big Faith Video

Faith Response

SHARE YOUR FAITH

Big Faith Idea—Faith in Jesus

COME TOGETHER

Prepare to Learn

Supplies: All-Ages Class Pack, Activity Sheets, Activity Stickers

Prepare Ahead: Set up your area with the supplies and activity pages needed for today's session. Display the Unit 2 Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 12 & 13), Unit 2 Faith Focus Poster (Class Pack—pp. 6 & 19), and Unit 2 Faith Response Poster (Class Pack—pp. 8 & 17) to use later in the session.

- As children arrive, invite them to join you in a circle.
- Give each child a copy of the "Spring Sticker Page" (Activity Sheets—p. 29) and their own set of Activity Stickers. Have children place the hands sticker on the Session 9 space.

SAY: We are hearing stories about how Jesus helps us grow in our faith. The stories of Jesus' life show us how God loves us.

ASK: How do you know God loves you?

Faith Focus—Jesus Helps Us Grow in Our Faith

Supplies: All-Ages Class Pack, crayons

Prepare Ahead: Display the Unit 2 Faith Focus Poster (Class Pack—pp. 6 & 19). Photocopy "Thomas Believes" (Leader Guide—p. 64) for each child.

- Give each child a copy of the "Thomas Believes" coloring page.

SAY: Today we will learn that God shows us grace. In our Bible story, we will hear how Jesus showed care and understanding to a friend named Thomas. Thomas was surprised to see Jesus again and had a lot of questions.

ASK: Have you ever been surprised?

- Give children time and space to color the sheet.

Seed Packet

Supplies: Activity Sheets, scissors, glue, blank seed packets or small manila envelopes, several kinds of flower seeds, crayons

Prepare Ahead: Tear out "Seed Packet" (Session 9 Activity Sheet) for each child.

SAY: In the springtime, we pay attention to how plants grow. Growing plants remind us how our faith can grow.

ASK: What do plants need to grow? What do you think we need for our faith in God to grow?

- Show the children the flower seeds.

SAY: These small seeds will grow into flowers one day. It may be hard to believe that such a small seed grows into something so beautiful!

- Give each child a copy of the activity sheet and instruct the children to cut out their seed packet label. Help the children choose a kind of seed to take home and write the name of their seeds on the label.
- Give each child a plain seed packet or manila envelope. Let the children glue the seed packet label to the packet/envelope.
- Have them take a few pinches of their chosen seeds and put them in the packet/envelope.
- Direct the children to take their seed packets home and plant the seeds.

FAITH CONNECTIONS

Read the Story

Supplies: CEB Bible storybook

- Invite the children to join you in a circle.
- Read the story of Jesus and Thomas (John 20:19–31) from your favorite CEB Bible storybook.

ASK: How do you think Thomas felt when he saw Jesus alive again? How do you think Jesus felt when Thomas asked questions?

SAY: Thomas cared about Jesus and was so glad to see his friend. He also had a lot of questions! Jesus loved Thomas and was OK with Thomas's questions.

Big Faith Video

Supplies: Big Faith DVD, TV, DVD player or streaming device

- Watch the Session 9 video on the Big Faith DVD or via your Amplify Media subscription.
- Share the questions on the screen with the children. You may also choose to add your own questions. Give children time to share their responses and ideas.

ASK: What was your favorite part of the video?

Faith Response

Supplies: All-Ages Class Pack, permanent markers

Prepare Ahead: Display the Unit 2 Faith Response Poster (Class Pack—pp. 8 & 17) and Unit 2 Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 12 & 13) if you haven't already.

- Invite children to wonder about the images on the posters.
- Encourage children to say the Bible verse with you: "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18).

SAY: Humans can have a lot of different emotions. We can be happy, sad, scared, worried, joyful, tired, angry, silly, confused, and more.

SAY: When Jesus visited the disciples, Jesus was ready to accept whatever emotions they were feeling. When Thomas was confused, Jesus accepted Thomas. When we accept our friends with whatever they are feeling, we are showing them grace.

- Lay the Faith Response Poster on the floor or a table and invite the children to gather around it.

ASK: Who accepts you and shows you grace?

- As the children share, invite them to use a permanent marker to draw someone who accepts them on the poster.

Tip: If you have a large group, you might consider laminating your poster and letting children use a dry-erase marker to respond so that you can use it week to week. You may also choose to let children respond on sticky notes and place those on the poster.

FUN WITH FAITH

Grass Seed Friends

Supplies: plain paper or foam cups, crayons, grass seed, soil

ASK: When you are having big feelings, what do your friends do? When your friends are having big feelings, what do you do?

SAY: We can choose to accept our friends' feelings with grace. Our friends can grow when we show them grace, and our faith grows when God shows us grace.

- Give each child a cup. Direct them to draw a face on the cup, but without hair.
- Have each child add soil to the cup, then plant grass seed in the soil.
- Direct the children to take their grass seed home and give it plenty of water and sunlight so it will grow.

Think Like Thomas

Supplies: CEB Bible Storybook, markerboard and dry-erase markers or posterboard and markers

Prepare Ahead: On a markerboard or posterboard, draw three columns. Title the first column “Know,” the second “Want to Know,” the third “Learned.”

ASK: How did Thomas react when he saw Jesus? What did he do? What did he say?

SAY: Thomas asked questions because he loved Jesus. When we love our friends, we want to know about them. So it is normal to ask questions!

- Invite children to share what they know about Jesus and record it in the “Know” column.
- Invite children to share what they wonder about Jesus and record it in the “Want to Know” column.
- Read the Bible story again from a Bible storybook. Then invite children to share what they learned about Jesus from the story and record it in the “Learned” column.

SHARE YOUR FAITH

Big Faith Idea—Faith in Jesus

Supplies: All-Ages Class Pack

Prepare Ahead: Display the Spring Big Faith Idea Poster (Class Pack—pp. 4 & 21). Photocopy the Unit 2 Family Faith Letter (Leader Guide—pp. 93–94) as needed.

- Show children the Big Faith Idea Poster.

SAY: Hearing stories about Jesus’ life helps grow our faith because we learn more about God and God’s love for us. In our Bible story today, we learned that Jesus accepted Thomas’s questions. That shows us that God accepts us and helps us with our questions.

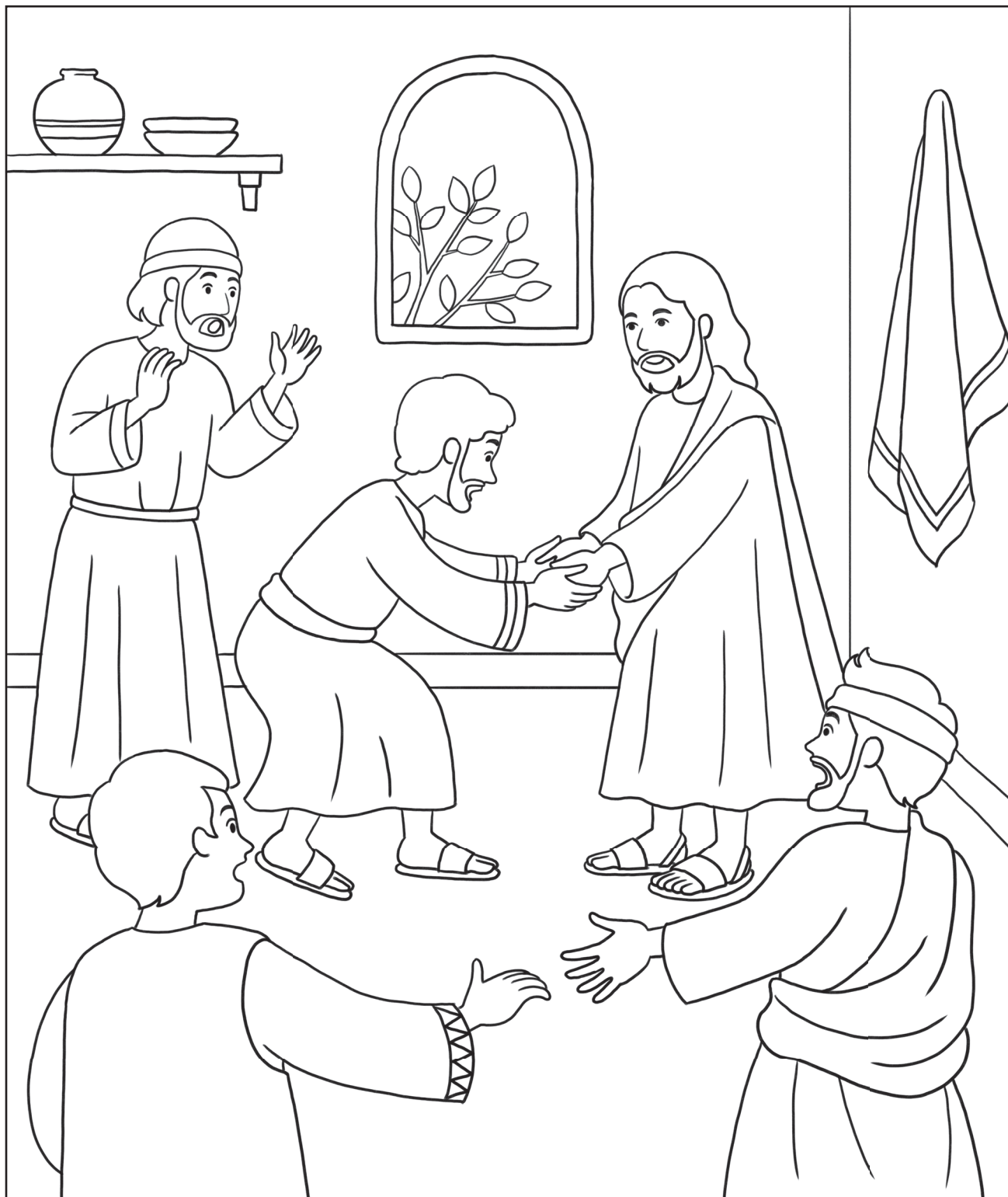
ASK: How do you show that you accept someone? How do you feel when someone accepts you?

- Gather children in a circle. Have them turn to their neighbors and shake hands saying, “I show you grace because you are my friend.”
- Invite the children to pray with you.

PRAY: God, thank you for showing us grace. Thank you for sending Jesus to show us how we can show grace to others. We have faith that you love us all the time. We praise you for your love. Amen.

- Send the Unit 2 Family Faith Letter and activity home with each child who has not yet received them.
- Also send home any activities or items made during today’s session.

Color the picture of Thomas meeting the risen Jesus. How did Thomas feel?



Art: Naoko Matsunaga/Illustration Online LLC