



Bible Point ▶

Jesus wants us to believe in him.

Bible Verse

Believe in Jesus Christ, and love one another (adapted from 1 John 3:23b).

Growing Closer to Jesus

- Children will
- discover that Jesus gave us a special job to do,
 - hear how Jesus went back to heaven,
 - experience what it's like to be a follower, and
 - share a message about Jesus with other children.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

- **Jesus goes back to heaven.**

**Matthew
28:16-20;
Acts 1:6-11**



In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus placed the future of all he had done on earth into the hands of his disciples. And he commissioned them with a task that has yet to be completely fulfilled: “Make disciples of all the nations.” As Christians we have inherited that commission to reach the world for Christ today. But Jesus didn’t just give a task; he promised support. He told them, and us, that he would be with his people always, even to the end of the age.

Before Jesus physically departed for heaven, he gave his followers a plan to use in reaching the world. First, they were to wait. The power would come when the Holy Spirit came on them. Then they were to move out from Jerusalem step by step, eventually reaching “the ends of the earth.” That plan is a good one for us to follow as well. If we have the Holy Spirit in our lives, he will empower us to reach others for Christ, whether it’s across the street or across the world.






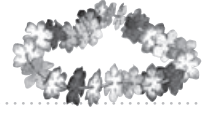



Prayer

- Reread Matthew 28:16-20.
- The disciples still had doubts. What doubts do you still struggle with?
- Pray: Lord, you have personally invited me to be a part of your plan. Please give me confidence in these areas where I still have doubts...

Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed on the chart.
- Make photocopies of the “Today I Learned...” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God’s direction as you teach the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Learning Lab Supplies
Welcome Time	Welcome! —Receive name tags, and be greeted by the teacher.	“Easter Lily Name Tags” (p. 10), scissors, marker, safety pins or tape	
Let’s Get Started Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives.	Option 1: Mountain Makers —Build a mountain with blocks.	Blocks	
	Option 2: Love Soup —Spread Jesus’ love by making soup packets for a local mission.	“Love Soup” handout (p. 114), soup ingredients, and activity supplies (p. 105)	
	Option 3: Heavenly Pictures —Paint their ideas of what heaven is like.	Ice cubes, bowl, several colors of powdered drink mix, newsprint	
	Pick-Up Time —Sing a song as they pick up toys and gather for Bible Story Time.	CD player	
Bible Story Time	Setting the Stage —Give other children a task to complete.		
	Bible Song and Prayer Time —Sing a song, bring out the Bible, and pray together.	Bible, CD player	  
	Hear and Tell the Bible Story —Hear about the special job Jesus gives his followers.	Bible, block mountain from Option 1	 
	Do the Bible Story —Play a game where they become followers.		
	Is Jesus Gone? —Remind Whiskers that Jesus is always with us.	Facial tissue	
	Make Followers —Sing a Bible verse song to another class.	Bible, CD player	

*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

Welcome Time

SUPPLIES: “Easter Lily Name Tags” (p. 10), scissors, marker, safety pins or tape

- Kneel down and make eye contact with children as they arrive.
- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- As children arrive, ask them about what they learned last week. Use questions such as “What did you tell your family about Thomas and his doubts?” or “What kinds of doubts did you have this week?”
- Say: **Today we’re going to learn that ► *Jesus wants us to believe in him.***
- Hand out the Easter lily name tags children made during Lesson 1, and help them attach the name tags to their clothing. If some of the name tags were damaged or if children weren’t in class that week, have them make new name tags using the photocopyable handout.
- Direct children to the Let’s Get Started activities you’ve set up.

teacher tips

It’s important to say the Bible Point just as it’s written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point again and again will help children remember it and apply it to their lives.

◀ BIBLE POINT



Let’s Get Started

Set up one or more of the following activities for children to do as they arrive. After you greet each child, invite him or her to choose an activity.

Circulate between the activities to offer help as needed and direct children’s conversation toward the point of today’s lesson. Ask questions such as “What would it be like to stand on that mountain?” or “What do you think heaven is like?”

■ Option 1: Mountain Makers

SUPPLIES: blocks

Set out blocks, and have children use them to make a large mountain. Encourage them to use all the blocks and work together to make their mountain as high as they can. You may even want to give children special jobs, such as stacking the blocks or adding blocks of a certain size or shape.

As children work, tell them that today’s Bible story is about a time Jesus and his friends went up on a mountain. While they were there, Jesus gave his friends a special job to do.

You’ll use the block mountain later in the lesson.



■ Option 2: Love Soup

SUPPLIES: “Love Soup” handout (p. 114), scissors, dry beans, oregano, thyme, shakers, resealable bags, bowls, scooping utensils, baby wipes

Before class, contact a local mission or service agency such as a homeless shelter, and arrange to deliver packages of dry soup mix. In a large bowl, mix together three bags of dry beans. Use a variety of beans, such as navy beans, black beans, and black-eyed peas. Divide the bean mixture into three smaller bowls. Photocopy the “Love Soup” handout, and cut the recipes apart.



Children may need you to help them picture what heaven looks like. Revelation 21:16-21 talks about a city made of gold and precious jewels. You may want to bring in gold or pearl jewelry and colored sequins to show to the children.



After a few minutes, children's hands will get cold. Provide a clean, dry rag for them to wrap around their hands to warm up. Have children set the ice back in the bowl when they're ready for a warm-up break.

Set out resealable bags, the bowls of beans, scooping utensils, shakers of oregano and thyme, and a stack of soup recipes. Have children clean their hands with baby wipes or at a nearby sink. Have children line up along both sides of the table and help one another assemble bags of Love Soup. Each child can add an ingredient or a copy of the recipe as the bags are passed along. Encourage the children to take turns shaking spices into the bags. Each bag should get two or three "shakes" of each spice.

As children assemble the soup bags, remind them that ► *Jesus wants us to believe in him.* Explain that sharing with others is one way to show we believe in Jesus.

■ Option 3: Heavenly Pictures

SUPPLIES: *ice cubes, bowl, several colors of powdered drink mix, newsprint*

Tell children that today they'll hear how Jesus went to live in heaven. Have children tell you what they think heaven might look like. After you've spent a little time talking about heaven, help children make their own "heavenly pictures."

Give each child a sheet of newsprint, and set out a bowl of ice cubes and several colors of powdered drink mix. Let each child choose two colors to use. Sprinkle the colors on each student's paper. Then show children how to "paint" their pictures by rubbing ice over the drink-mix powder.

When children finish, have them wash their hands. Set the pictures aside to dry.

When everyone has arrived and you're ready to move on to Bible Story Time, encourage the children to finish what they're doing and get ready to clean up.

■ Pick-Up Time

SUPPLIES: *CD player*



Lead children in singing "Come Along With Me" (track 2) with the *CD* to the tune of "Come and Go With Me." Encourage children to sing along as they help clean up the room.



**Come along with me and pick up all our things,
Pick up all our things,
Pick up all our things.
Come along with me and pick up all our things
So our room will be clean.**

(Repeat 2x.)

Bible Story Time

■ *Setting the Stage*

SUPPLIES: none

Tell the children you'll turn the lights off and on to get their attention. Explain that when you flash the lights, the children are to stop what they're doing and be quiet. Encourage children to respond quickly so you'll have time for all the fun activities you've planned.

Ask: • **What did you make or do when you came to class today?** (Made a mountain; put beans in a bag; made ice pictures.)

Say: **Some of you used melting ice to paint pictures of heaven, some of you made soup-mix packages to share, and some of you built a mountain with blocks. You were all learning important things about our Bible story.**

Our Bible story today is about a time Jesus and his friends went up on a mountain. While they were there, Jesus gave his friends a job to do. Let's play a job-giving game to get ready for that story.

I'll choose someone to be the Job-Giver. That person will give the rest of us a job to do and then turn his or her back while we do it. When the Job-Giver turns around, he or she can see how well we've done the job. I'll be the first Job-Giver so that we can practice. When I turn around, your job is to sit down.

Turn around, and let children sit down. After a few seconds, announce that you're going to turn back around. When you turn around, all the children should be seated.

Say: **Wow! You did the job I gave you to do. You're all sitting down so nicely. Let's see if you can do a job from another Job-Giver.**

Select a child to be the Job-Giver, and whisper one of the following jobs in the Job-Giver's ear.

- **Have them cover their ears with their hands.**
- **Have them raise both hands over their heads.**
- **Have them lie down on the floor.**
- **Have them stand in a line.**

Say: [Name of child] **is going to give us a job. [Name], we'll tell you when we've finished the job, and then you can turn back around and see how we did.**

Have the Job-Giver announce the job and then turn his or her back to the class. Encourage and help children as they complete the job. When you're finished, have the Job-Giver turn back around. Show the Job-Giver how you've completed the job. Encourage him or her to congratulate everyone for a job well done.

Allow several other children to be Job-Givers. Then form a circle and ask:

- **What was it like to do the jobs the Job-Giver gave you?** (It was fun to try to do it before the Job-Giver turned around; it was easy.)
- **How did you feel when the Job-Giver said you'd done a good job?** (Good; happy; like I wanted to do another job.)

Say: **In our Bible story today, we're going to learn about a special job that Jesus wants us to do. Remember, ► Jesus wants us to believe in him. And we need to believe in Jesus to do the job that he has for us. Right now, though, I have a job for you. I want you to walk quietly to our story area and sit down.**

Turn around and allow children to follow your instructions; then join them in the story area.



◀ **BIBLE POINT**

■ Bible Song and Prayer Time

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player



tracks 3, 4

Say: **Now it's time to choose a Bible person to bring me the Bible marked with today's Bible story. We'll sing our Bible song and pass around our special Bible. The person with the Bible when the music stops will be our Bible person today.**

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad for the Bible" (track 3) with the *CD* to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp." As you sing, pass around the special Bible.



SING

**I'm so glad for the Bible,
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
I'm so glad for God's book today.
I'm so glad for the Bible,
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'—
Keep me learnin' all about his way.**

**Let me hear 'bout God's love—
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
Let me hear 'bout God's love for me.
Let me hear 'bout God's love—
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
Let's shine the light for all to see.**

(Repeat first verse.)

When the music stops, invite the child who's holding the Bible to bring it to you. Stamp the child's hand with the *cloud stamp*, and thank the child for bringing you the Bible. Then stamp the other children's hands. Return the *cloud stamp* and *ink pad* to the Learning Lab.

Say: **I'm thankful for [name of child who brought the Bible], and I'm thankful for everyone in class today. Let's all thank God for our friends in this class.**

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad We're Together" (track 4) with the *CD* to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp."



SING

**I'm so glad we're together:
Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'.
I'm so glad we're all here today.
I'm so glad we're together:
Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'—
Prayin' for each other every day.**

Lead children in folding their hands and bowing their heads as you continue to sing.

**Thank you, Lord, for each one.
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful.
Thank you for everyone who's here.
Thank you, Lord, for each one.
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful—
Thankful for our friends both far and near.**

■ Hear and Tell the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, block mountain from Option 1



Before this activity, have each child hold on to a flower from the *flower lei*.

Open the Bible to **Matthew 28**, and show it to the children.

Say: **Our Bible story comes from the books of Matthew and Acts in the Bible. Our Bible Big Book shows us pictures of our Bible story. Today in our story, we'll**

learn how Jesus went back to heaven. You'll have to listen carefully because each time I say "Jesus," I want you to hold out your flower and raise it up slowly as if it's going up to heaven. Let's practice that once. Jesus.

Let children practice slowly raising their flowers. Then bring out the *Bible Big Book: Jesus Appears to His Followers*. Show children the picture on pages 6-7 as you read the corresponding text from the back cover. Each time you say "Jesus," pause for children to raise their flowers.

After you finish the story, collect the *flower lei* and put the *Bible Big Book* away.

Ask: • **Why do you think Jesus wanted his friends to tell everyone about him?** (Because he wanted everyone to know about him; because he wants us to believe in him; because he was going back to heaven.)

• **How do you think Jesus' friends felt about the important job Jesus gave them?** (Good; scared; happy; excited.)

Say: ► **Jesus wants us to believe in him. When we believe in Jesus, we can help other people believe, too. We can tell others about Jesus the way Jesus' friends did.** Point to the block mountain.

When Jesus was up on the mountain, he asked his friends to tell others about him. Jesus wants us to do that job, too. As we clean up our block mountain, let's each think of one person who we can tell about Jesus.

Have each child take a couple of blocks. As children put the blocks away, have each child name someone who they can talk to about Jesus.

■ Do the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: none

Say: **Let's play a game. I'll be the leader. As I walk around the room, I'll tap someone on the head. When I do, that person must follow me wherever I go and do whatever I do. I'll keep tapping people on the head until everyone has joined our line of followers. Ready? Let's start.**

Tap a child on the head, and have him or her follow you. As you walk, do fun motions, such as putting your hands on your head, walking on tiptoe, hopping, or clapping. After a few moments, tap another child. Each time you tap a child, have the child join your line. Continue walking, doing fun motions, and tapping children until everyone has joined the line.

After all the children have become followers, select a child to be the new leader. Have everyone else sit down, and start the game over again. Repeat as time allows. When you're ready for the last round, have the leader lead his or her followers to sit down.

Ask: • **What was fun about following the leader?** (We got to do silly things; watching everyone do the same thing; it was fun to be with my friends.)

This Bible story is featured in *My First Hands-On Bible™*. Order several now for your ministry at group.com.



If you didn't build a block mountain during Let's Get Started, have children build the mountain now. They can name people they'd like to talk to about Jesus as they add blocks. Then have them quickly clean up together.





BIBLE POINT ▶



Say: ▶ ***Jesus wants us to believe in him.*** When we believe in Jesus, he is our leader and we are his followers. What do you think might be fun about following Jesus? (He can do anything; he'll help us; he'll take good care of us; we'll get to go to heaven.)

Let's pray and ask Jesus to help us follow him. Pray: Dear Jesus, thank you for being such a good leader and loving us so much. Thank you for being our friend.

Help us to be good followers. Help us to tell other people about you so they can believe in you, too. In your name, amen.

Closing

■ Is Jesus Gone?

SUPPLIES: facial tissue

Say: **Hey, what's that noise? Do you hear it? Let's listen.** Pause for a moment while children listen, and then continue: **Why, I think I hear someone crying! It sounds like Whiskers! I'll go get him and see if he'll tell us what's wrong.**

Bring out Whiskers, and go through the following puppet script. When you finish the script, put Whiskers away and out of sight.



- **Teacher:** Whiskers? What's the matter?
- **Whiskers:** *(Sobbing)* I just heard the news. Isn't it sad?
- **Teacher:** What news? It must be really sad—you look like you've been crying all morning. Let me help you blow your nose so you can talk. *(Get out a tissue, and pretend to blow Whiskers' nose.)* Now, that's better.
- **Whiskers:** *(Sniffing)* Better? It's not better! It's terrible! I'm just so sad... *(Starts to cry again.)*
- **Teacher:** Whiskers, try to stop crying so you can tell us what's wrong. Maybe your friends can cheer you up.
- **Whiskers:** Well, I heard you telling the story about Jesus going back to heaven. And I started thinking that...*(sniffs)* there won't be any more stories about Jesus.
- **Teacher:** Why not?
- **Whiskers:** Because Jesus is gone now. We can't hear any more stories about all the great things he did. I really liked the story about Jesus coming back to life. But now I won't ever hear it again.
- **Teacher:** Whiskers, we can still hear those stories!

Whiskers: *(Stops sniffing.)* We can? How?

Teacher: Children, how we can hear stories about Jesus? *(Children might respond that we can read them in the Bible, talk about them in church, or hear them from our parents.)* See, Whiskers, we still have the Bible, and we have lots of grown-ups who can tell us the stories.

Whiskers: *(Cheering up a little)* Oh, I guess I forgot about that.

Teacher: Plus, we can help tell stories about Jesus, too. In the story we heard today, Jesus gave us a special job. Can anyone tell Whiskers what our special job is? *(To be followers; to tell people about Jesus; to help people believe in Jesus.)*

Whiskers: Oh, yeah! I remember that part of the story! I better get busy on that job. I want to tell lots of people about Jesus! Let's see...I can tell my brother, and my cousin Joey, and my mommy and daddy, and...I better go start telling them. Goodbye, friends. Thanks for cheering me up!

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■ Make Followers

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player



Before class, arrange to sing a song for another class.

Say: **Jesus wants us to help other people believe in him.**

Let's practice our Bible verse song to help us tell people about Jesus. Open your Bible to **1 John 3:23**. Say: **The words to this song are from the Bible verse 1 John 3:23, which says to**

to ► believe in Jesus Christ, and love one another.

Lead children in singing "Believe" (1 John 3:23) with the CD (track 13) to the tune of "A-Tisket, A-Tasket." You may want to practice singing the song together several times.



SING

Believe, believe, believe in Jesus Christ.

Believe, believe in Jesus Christ

And love one another.

(Repeat.)

After children have become familiar with the song, say: **Let's practice telling other people about Jesus by singing our song for another class.**

Lead children to the class you've planned to visit. Have them sing "Believe" once or twice, and then invite the other class to sing it with them. After you're done singing, return to your classroom. Gather children in a circle and ask:

- **What was it like to tell other people about Jesus?** (Fun; scary; good.)
- **Singing our song is one way to tell people about Jesus. What are other ways to tell people about Jesus?** (Tell them Bible stories; tell them that Jesus loves them; sing other songs; bring them to church.)

Say: **► Jesus wants us to believe in him. He wants us to help others believe in him, too. That's a very special job that he's given to each one of us. Let's all try to do that job and tell others about Jesus this week.**

◀ **BIBLE VERSE**

◀ **BIBLE POINT**





Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the "Today I Learned..." handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with the children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this week's topic.



For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

■ **Lively Learning: We Believe!**

Have children sit in a circle on the floor. Invite one child to join you as you walk around the circle singing “Believe” to the tune of “A-Tisket, A-Tasket.” When you sing, “And love one another,” tap the head of a child near you. Invite that child to stand up and join you as you sing. Repeat the song until everyone has joined you.



**Believe, believe, believe in Jesus Christ.
Believe, believe in Jesus Christ
And love one another.**

■ **Make to Take: Cloud Bracelets**



Before class, cut white construction paper into strips. Cut slits in the ends of the strips, as shown in the picture. Give each child a construction paper strip, and set out glue sticks and cotton balls. Help each child glue the cotton to the strip. Then place the strips around each child’s wrist, slipping the slits into each other to form a bracelet. Remind children that just as their hands are “through the clouds,” Jesus went up into the clouds when he went back to heaven.

■ **Treat to Eat: In the Clouds**

Help children clean their hands at a nearby sink or with baby wipes. Give each child a spoonful of vanilla pudding on a graham cracker square. Hand out spoons, and let children use their spoons to form their pudding into cloud shapes. As children make their clouds, review how Jesus went up into the clouds when he went back to heaven. Remind children that ► Jesus wants us to believe in him.



■ **Story Picture: Jesus Returns to Heaven**

Set out crayons or markers, cotton balls, and glue sticks. Give each child a copy of the “Today I Learned...” handout. Have children glue cotton balls to the clouds and then color their pictures. As they work, review how Jesus went up into the clouds and back to heaven. Remind children that ► Jesus wants us to believe in him and to help others believe in him, too.

Love Soup

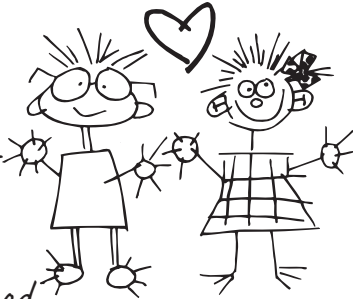
1 package Love Soup

6-8 cups water

1 large can tomatoes

1 onion, chopped

1 clove garlic, chopped



Cook for 3-4 hours or until beans are tender.

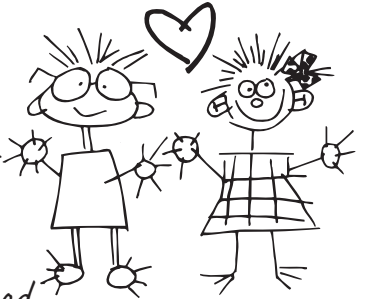
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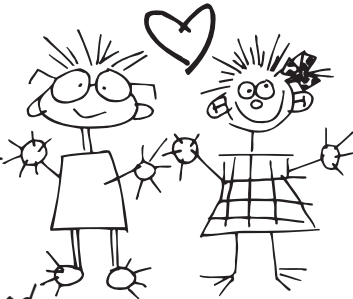
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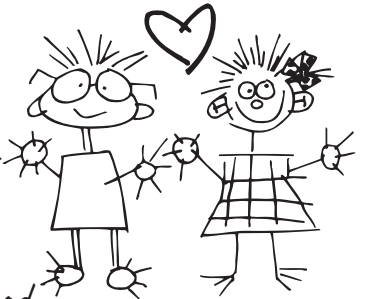
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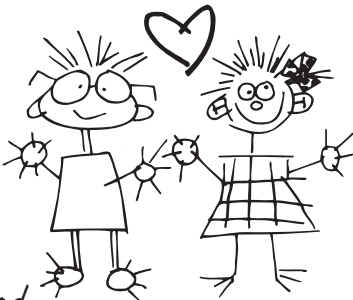
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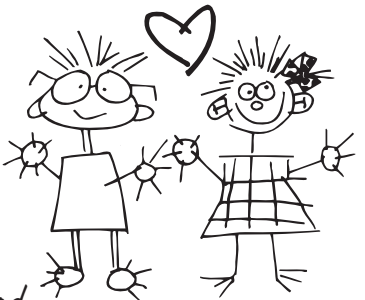
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1 onion, chopped

1 clove garlic, chopped



Cook for 3-4 hours or until beans are tender.

Today I learned...

Jesus wants us to believe in him.

Lesson 8

Today your child learned that **JESUS WANTS US TO BELIEVE IN HIM.** Children heard how Jesus asked his followers to tell others about him. They visited another class and sang a song about believing in Jesus.

Help me learn this:

Believe in Jesus Christ, and love one another (adapted from 1 John 3:23b).

Ask me:

- What special job did Jesus ask his friends to do?
- How can you do that special job for Jesus, too?
- Who can our family tell about Jesus?

Family Fun

- Go to a park or other area with a wide open view of the sky. Lie on the grass and look at the clouds. As you look, think about what heaven will be like. Share your thoughts with other family members.
- Pray together for someone who doesn't know Jesus. Remember to pray for them each day!

