



QUESTION:
Is God real?

LESSON 1

Power Phrase

God is real!

Memory Verse

John 20:29, “Jesus said to him, ‘Have you believed because you have seen Me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.’”

Supporting Doctrines

For supporting doctrines, see our Statement of Faith at novoministries.org/statement-of-faith.

Goals

The child will...

- Learn what faith is!
- Understand how to know that God is real!
- Choose to believe that God is real!

Reminders

Our society tries very hard to convince us that God is not real. Some people find ways to put doubt in our minds about what we do believe and make us question the things we read in the Bible. It is very important that the children learn that God is real and are able to defend what they believe.

Acknowledgements

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The stories and photos shared in the Gospel Presentation activities are used with the permission of www.iamsecond.com.

Additional Resources

All Large Group or Small Group activity visuals or supply items followed by an asterisk (*) may be downloaded for printing at www.novoministries.org/resource.

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

(Bible Story - Luke 24:36-46)

Visuals

- Bible Story Visuals*, “Cheer” and “Boo” signs*

Supplies

- Bible, Bible character costumes, Bible Insert for Large Group*

Captivate #1 - Act It Out!

- Have the children dress up or pretend to be characters in the story. Choose a few boys to dress up as Jesus, Thomas, and some other disciples. Have them act out the story as you tell it. You also can have them repeat key sentences after you. Emphasize emotions or actions they can do throughout the story.

Captivate #2 - Cheer!

- Choose one child to hold the “Cheer” and “Boo” signs. Throughout the Bible Story, have the child hold up the sign that fits with what is being said. This will help the children focus on the story and also identify the positive and negative aspects of the story.

Introduction

- Jesus died on the cross with a criminal on either side of Him. He was buried but rose victoriously on the third day! He conquered death and sin for all time. When Jesus returned, He appeared to be different. When He appeared to people who knew Him, they did not recognize Him. On the road to Emmaus, Jesus spoke with two of His followers. They too did not recognize Him. They invited Jesus to stay with them that night. As Jesus took the bread and gave thanks, their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him. Jesus then disappeared from their sight!

Story

- Retell the story from Luke 24:36-49.
- See Bible Story Script.

Conclusion

- Jesus returned just as He promised. Jesus told the disciples He would rise from the dead on the third day; but when He did, they didn't believe their eyes! Jesus showed them His hands and feet because they didn't believe it was He. He proved to them that He was real and truly was Jesus, God the Son! It took more than just seeing for them to believe.

Testimony

- Share about a time you chose to have faith that God was real, even though you could not see Him.
- Share a time you struggled with your faith in God, but He made Himself real to you.

Challenge

Visuals

- Key Point visuals*, Power Phrase visual*, Memory Verse visual*

Supplies

- Bible, Bible Insert for Large Group*

Introduction

- When Jesus rose from the dead and appeared to the disciples, they still didn't believe even though they saw Him with their own eyes. They didn't have faith to believe that He had accomplished what He said He would, even when He was standing right in front of them! Jesus revealed Himself to them so they would believe. Jesus showed the disciples His hands and feet. He also revealed Scripture to them. Just as He did with the disciples, God can reveal Himself to us so we can believe He is real.

Key Points

I can see God through the world around me!

- We have an amazing, complicated world around us that couldn't just have appeared! When we look at what God has created, we have no excuse to not believe in Him (Romans 1:20).
- When we see a house, we know there was a builder who created it. When we look at everything around us, we know there was a Creator!

I can see God through reading the Bible!

- We have the Bible, which tells us all about God!
- The Bible isn't just a book. The Bible is the inspired Word of God! Every word in every part of the Bible comes from God as He inspired men to write it (2 Timothy 3:16-17). There were more than 40 different authors from all different lifestyles: shepherds, farmers, tent-makers, physicians, priests, kings, and philosophers. Despite all their differences and the vast span of time it was written, the Bible is consistent and unified.
- The Bible is historically accurate. If we can trust what the Bible says about accounts in history, we also can trust what it says about God!

I can see God through the Holy Spirit guiding what I experience!

- We can know God personally! When we ask Him to forgive our sins and be the Lord of our lives, He gives us the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:32).
- The Holy Spirit reveals to us that God is real (1 Corinthians 2:6-12).
- The Holy Spirit gives us strength (Acts 1:8).
- The Holy Spirit guides us in truth to know how to make the right decisions (John 16:13).
- The work of the Holy Spirit in our lives can let us know daily that God is real and very much a part of our lives!

Challenge (Continued)

Conclusion

- God shows us that He is real in so many different ways! He shows that He is real through all of His incredible creations in the world around us, through the Bible which is the inspired Word of God, and by speaking to us through the Holy Spirit. It is then our choice to believe that God is who He says He is.

Invitation

For the unsaved child:

- Do you believe that God is real? If you do, God wants you to know that He loves you and sent His Son to die for your sins (John 3:16). You can be forgiven for your sins and ask Jesus to be the Lord of your life. You can make that choice today!
- Invite the children to stay behind and talk to a leader if they have any questions or would like to ask Jesus to forgive their sins and be the Lord of their lives.

For the saved child:

- Challenge the saved child to boldly share with others that God is real! God has called him to go into all the world and tell people about Jesus (Mark 16:15).
- Encourage children if they have any questions to stay behind and talk to a leader.



Wind (Arriving Activity)

Visuals

- Picture of wind blowing through the trees*

Supplies

- Wind Pinwheel

Instruction and Application

- As the children arrive, ask them what the wind looks like. They may stumble on trying to describe it because they can't actually see wind. Wind is air (which we also can't see) in motion. It is produced by the uneven heating of the earth's surface by the sun. There are two factors that are necessary to specify wind: speed and direction. When we talk about seeing the wind, we are actually describing the effects wind has on other things, such as leaves moving in a tree or dust flying through the air. Have the children blow into the air. Ask them if they can see the air coming out of their mouths. They can't! So how do we know it is there? Take out the wind pinwheel and blow on it. Remind them that we can know it exists because we can see the effects it has. We see the pinwheel move!
 - Some people say God isn't real because we can't see Him, but in our lesson today we are going to learn that He is real! He shows us in so many different ways that He is real. We don't have to see something to believe it is real. Jesus said, "Have you believed because you have seen Me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed" (John 20:29).
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Columbus (Memory Verse)

Visuals

- Memory Verse Visual*, Sketch of Christopher Columbus*

Supplies

- Bible

A.G.A.I.N. Acrostic

A — Attention Grabber (Grab their attention with an interesting introduction, and don't let go!)

Show the sketch of Christopher Columbus and ask the children who he is. He was a famous Italian explorer who discovered the “New World” in 1492. Ask the children how many of them have learned about him in school. Tell them that no portraits of Columbus are known to exist that were drawn or painted during his life. But there are many images that portray what he was like and document his activities. We cannot know Columbus personally because he died in 1506. We only have documents of what was written about him. Based on these documents, we choose to believe that Columbus was a real man and that what was written about him is true. With God, not only do we have the Bible that tells us about Him, but we can see the effects of what He does all around us. We can experience His love and presence in our lives every day through the Holy Spirit.

G — God's Word (Show them that the concept you are teaching them comes from the Bible.)

John 20:29, “Jesus said to him, ‘Have you believed because you have seen Me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.’”

A — Awareness (Make them “aware” of the words and concepts.)

Believed – to think to be true, have confidence, faith

Blessed – satisfied with life, content

I — In Their Lives (Teach them to apply the lesson “in their lives.”)

Unsaved child (questions to ask an unsaved child)

Is it easier for you to believe that Columbus was real than that God is real? What makes you believe? Will you choose to believe in God even though you have not seen Him?

Saved child (questions to ask a saved child)

You are blessed because you have not seen God but choose to believe in Him! What can you do to build your faith? How can you share what you know and believe with others?

N — Number of Times (Repeat the content again and again until the children understand it.)

Read from Scripture. Repeat after me. Play the Memory Game three or four times.

Memory Game

Play Me Then You. Review the Memory Verse together a couple times. Explain to the children that while your hands are up, you say the words. When your hands are down, they say the words.

Priorities (Gospel Presentation)

Visuals

- “What’s the Problem?” and “What’s Your Choice?” Foundational Gospel Truths Visuals*, Picture of Stephen Baldwin*

Supplies

- Bible, paper, writing tools

Instruction and Application

- Stephen Baldwin is an actor, director, producer, and author. Early in his career, Stephen’s life was centered on money, fame, and worrying about himself. God had no place in his life. His life had no satisfaction, even though he had success.
- One day Stephen and his wife hired a housekeeper who not only cleaned their home, but also brought them a message that changed their lives! Stephen’s wife noticed her singing all the time about Jesus. The housekeeper told her that God sent her there to share about the love of Jesus with them. At first this seemed ridiculous, but when Stephen was finally willing to believe that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world, he asked God to show him what that truly means. Stephen began to read and understand the Bible. Loving Jesus is now the most important thing to Stephen! He asked Jesus to forgive his sins and become the Lord of his life. Stephen says, “My life is God’s life in me for Him to do with what He wants.” Since then, Stephen has been involved with numerous ministries, sharing the Gospel around the world.
- Stephen realized that he had wrong priorities in his life, and they had left him unsatisfied. He realized he was a sinner and needed Jesus to forgive his sins and be the Lord of his life. There is true joy and fulfillment only when God is the center of your life!
- Just like Stephen, we have all sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). The punishment for that sin is separation from God (Romans 6:23a). Use the “What’s the Problem?” Visual to review.
- Stephen chose to believe in Jesus and received forgiveness for his sin. He admitted what he had done wrong, he believed that Jesus died in his place, and he chose to make God the Lord of his life. We can make God the Lord of our lives as well! Use the “What’s Your Choice?” Visual to review.

Discussion

- Older Team: Have the children discuss things they make a priority in their lives. Where does God fit in their priorities?
- Younger Team: Have the children discuss the things they do wrong. Remind them that sin is anything we think, say, or do that breaks God’s Law.
- Quiet Team: Have the children write the word “priorities” and around it write the things that are a priority in their lives. Challenge them on where God is in their priorities.
- Active Team: Have the children race to look up the different Scriptures on the Foundational Gospel Truths Visuals that were used. Discuss what they mean.

Flashback (Review Questions)

Supplies

- Review Questions*

Large Group Review Questions

- What did Jesus tell the disciples would happen after He died? (He would rise from the dead on the third day.)
- Who did Jesus talk with on the road to Emmaus? (Two followers of Jesus)
- What town were the disciples in? (Jerusalem)
- Why were they locked in a room? (They were hiding from the Pharisees and the Jewish leaders.)
- What did the Roman guards say the disciples did? (They stole Jesus' body.)
- What really happened to Jesus' body? (He rose from the dead.)
- Did the disciples believe it was Jesus when He appeared to them? (No)
- Who did the disciples think appeared to them? (A ghost)
- How did Jesus show them that it was He? (He showed them His hands and feet.)
- What did the disciples give Jesus when He asked for something to eat? (Cooked fish)
- What did Jesus open their minds to understand? (The Scriptures)

Discussion Questions

- How has God shown you that He is real?
 - Have you ever questioned if God is real? Why or why not?
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Believe (Craft)

Visuals

- Craft sample*

Supplies

- Believe paper* (one per child), googly eyes (two per child), small red hearts (two per child), glue, coloring tools

Instruction and Application

- Give each child a Believe paper, two googly eyes, and two red hearts. Have children trace their hands on the paper and then color the hands and the face. Then have them glue the googly eyes on the face and the red hearts on the hands. Explain that we are using red hearts on the hands to remind us that Jesus died on the cross because of His great love for us.
 - We learned how the disciples didn't believe that Jesus was alive until they saw His hands and His feet. Jesus then said that those who believe in Him without seeing are blessed. We don't see Jesus today, but we can be blessed when we choose to believe He is real!
 - Review the Memory Verse together. John 20:29, "Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen Me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.'"
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What's the Point? (Application Activity)

Supplies

- Paper, writing tools, "What's the Point?" card*

Activity #1

- Give each child a "What's the Point?" card. Discuss the question in this lesson: Is God real? Have the children write down the different things that help them know that God is real. Then have them write their answer to this question and why they believe it. Encourage the children to put into action what they learned today. Maybe they can tell a friend or family member what they learned or research and learn more about the truth that God is real.

Activity #2

- Have the children take turns acting out different ways they can tell others that God is real. If you have a group that is quieter, you may choose to have them draw a picture or make a card for someone instead.
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Now What? (Additional Activity)

Supplies

- Additional Activity #1: Jesus Appears to the Disciples Coloring Page*
- Additional Activity #2: Jesus and the Disciples Word Search*
- Additional Activity #3: The Big Take Away Key Chain*

Instruction and Application

- These activities are to be used with your team as time fillers while reinforcing the lesson concepts. The children can take these home each week or do them while they are listening to you teach during Small Group. These activities require little to no explanation and can be great for moments when you are transitioning or don't have time to start another activity.
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