

Sunday School Lesson, August 2, 2026

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Lesson—I'll Believe It When I See It¹

Text: John 11:14-16; 14:5-8; 20:24-29; 21:1-2

I. Aim for Change/Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, we will...

1. Assess Thomas's role in the pattern of Christian discipleship that passes from one faithful witness to the next.
2. Consider the role of doubting and questioning for one's own faith.
3. Practice telling your testimony to others.

Why This Lesson Matters: In the face of doubts, many people will seek out solid evidence or proof. John indicated that after Thomas received evidence from Jesus, his doubts were relieved, and his faith was restored.

Key Verse: *“Then Seth he to Thomas, reach hit her thy finger, and behold my hands; And reach hit her thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.” (John 20:27, KJV).*

II. Topical Outline of the Lesson

1. Introduction
2. From Loyalty to Uncertainty (John 11:14-16; 14:5-8)
3. From Doubt to Belief (John 20:24-29; 21:1-2)

III. Prominent Character(s) in the Lesson

John: One of Jesus Christ's 12 disciples and a leader in the early Christian Church. He was among Jesus' closest confidants and appears in many biblical accounts.

Lazarus: A friend of Jesus and the brother of Mary and Martha. His story appears in John 11 when Jesus raised him from the dead after he had lain 4 days in the tomb. Lazarus lived in Bethany, a town near Jerusalem.

Nathaniel: One of the original 12 disciples of Jesus Christ. He is often remembered for his encounter with Jesus, where Jesus described him as “a true Israelite, in whom there is no deceit.” Nathaniel exhibited an honest and

¹ Outline Content courtesy of the Sunday School Publishing Board Teacher Manual, which should be purchased at www.sspbnbc.com

discerning nature, initially skeptical but open to investigating the claims about Jesus.

Peter: One of the 12 apostles of Jesus Christ and one of the first leaders of the early Christian Church. He was a fisherman by trade and was initially called Simon; However, Jesus gave him the name “Peter,” signifying that he would be an instrumental rock whose confession of Jesus as the Messiah was the foundation upon which the church would be built.

Thomas: Thomas was one of Jesus Christ's 12 apostles. Thomas was also called Didymus (John 11:16; 20:24), which is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew name *Thomas*, both meaning “twin.”

IV. *Key Terms in the Lesson (KJV)*

<i>Believe</i>	<i>Called</i>	<i>Dead</i>	<i>Life</i>
<i>Show</i>	<i>Truth</i>	<i>Way</i>	

V. *Historical/Biblical Background and Lesson Context*

Traditionally, the authorship of the gospel of John is attributed to the apostle John, Zebedee's son and one of Jesus 12 disciples. It was written between 85 and 95 AD, making it the last of the recognized gospels to be written. Theologically, John emphasizes Jesus' divinity and explores themes such as light versus darkness, truth, eternal life, belief, glory, and Jesus' “I am” statements.

Although John is one of the four gospels, he stands alone as his views vary from the synoptic gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. He does not record any of the parables of Jesus, and only 7 signs as opposed to the miracles recorded in the synoptics. John had it as a focus, the extensive treatments of the deity of Christ, and why Jesus came to earth.

This lesson spans 4 sections of scripture, all found in the book of John. The prevailing theme for each section of the printed scriptures is faith (belief). The word faith or belief is translated from the word *Pistis* in Greek. The book of John references faith, most commonly identified as belief, 98 times. The King James version of the chapters used for this study cites 23 references to the word believe. The immediate context of this lesson's selected passages is John's 7th sign, Jesus raising Lazarus in Bethany (John 11:1-44), his teaching on his departure in the upper room (John 13:31-14:31), and his appearances to his disciples without and with Thomas (John 20:19-29; 21:1-23).

Food for thought/question for consideration: (What have we learned, Charlie Brown?)

This lesson provides us with an opportunity to explore how doubt and questioning impact a believer's faith, using Thomas's experience as an example. The question for consideration would have us answer this: What do you believe about Jesus? Are there things that you have doubts about concerning Christ? If so,

then use your faith in God and his revealed word to satisfy any and all lingering doubts.

Closing Hymn: *Blessed be the tie that binds, our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.*

Sunday School Slogan: *To Sunday School to Sunday School, we all should go; we
have classes for all ages, help us to grow.*