

'HE IS NOT HERE!'

THE AIM: To discover that Jesus is alive

The aim unpacked

Having been tried and brutally killed on Friday, Jesus rises from the dead on the Sunday. Sadness is turned to joy as the two men in shining clothes tell the women that Jesus is alive. Confusion turns to astonishment when Cleopas and his friend realise who the man walking with them on the road to Emmaus actually is – Jesus!

WAY IN



theGRID MAGAZINE

WHAT: quiz

WHY: to start thinking about seeing things from a different perspective

WITH: magazine page 308, pens

- 1 Give out copies of page 308 and ask the group to work through the 'A second look' activity. They could work in pairs or all together.
- 2 After about seven minutes go through the answers.
- 3 Ask the group how many times on average they had to look at each puzzle before they saw the answer.
- 4 Explain that sometimes we have to look at certain things a few times before we see them clearly. Throughout today's session you're going to be continuing the theme of learning to see things differently.



SCENE SETTER

WHAT: riddles and puzzles

WHY: to start thinking about seeing things from a different perspective

WITH: resource page 310, pens, paper, prize

- 1 Before the session, put up copies of the dot puzzle from page 310 and any other riddles or mind puzzles you can find on the internet. You will need to number them.
- 2 Give everyone a sheet of paper and a pen and challenge them to go around the room and complete as many of the riddles and puzzles as they can on their own. Make sure they write the puzzle number next to their answers.
- 3 After about ten minutes, go through the answers and give a prize to the winner, if you wish.
- 4 Explain that today's theme is linked to having to look at things from a different perspective, which is what they had to do to solve the riddles and puzzles.



THEMED GAME

WHAT: game

WHY: to introduce the idea of taking a repeated look at things

- 1 Play a version of Grandmother's footsteps. Start with a volunteer to stand at the front of the room, facing away from the group.
- 2 The group must try to slowly creep up on the volunteer without being seen to be moving. If the volunteer hears someone they must turn around; if they see someone moving, that person is out. Explain to the volunteer that they can't turn around every second.
- 3 If someone manages to touch the volunteer, they are the new volunteer and the game begins again. If everybody is out, start again with a new volunteer.
- 4 Say that sometimes we need to look again at situations or events to discover their true meaning.

BIBLE EXPERIENCE



LEVEL 1: CONNECT

WHAT: DVD and role play

WHY: to discover that Jesus is alive

WITH: *Champion's Challenge* video from the website, laptop and projector, any props needed

- 1 Gather the group together and show the video. It tells the story of the resurrection and the journey to Emmaus in the style of a sports' highlights programme.
- 2 When you have watched the clip, ask the group how they would have felt if they were in Cleopas' position.
- 3 Go on to talk about the women in verses 1 to 12, how they would have felt about what had gone on. Split the young people into groups of three or four and ask them to interview the women who went to the tomb, in the same style as the DVD. Give the group enough time to devise and practise their interview and then perform their role plays.
- 4 Discuss with the group what they think about Jesus being alive. If someone interviewed them, what would they say?



LEVEL 2: INTERFACE

WHAT: article

WHY: to discover that Jesus is alive

WITH: magazine page 309, pens, Bibles

- 1 Give everybody a copy of page 309.
- 2 Read, or ask a good reader to read, Luke 24:1–35. Begin to work through the article as a group, giving them background information if necessary. Discuss the questions.
- 3 For the last question, be prepared to explain why you are evidence that Jesus is alive, by explaining what he has done for you and in you. In addition, you could include examples of other Christians that the group may know.
- 4 Finish with these two questions:
 - Are you convinced that Jesus is alive?
 - What would it take to convince you?



LEVEL 3: SWITCH ON

WHAT: self-evaluation

WHY: to discover that Jesus is alive

WITH: copies of resource page 311 for each person, pens, Bibles

- 1 Briefly give some background to today's Bible passage (given in 'The aim unpacked'). Read Luke 24:1–35 as a group.
- 2 Ask the group to point out as many instances in the passage where Jesus' followers had an opportunity to believe that he was alive.
- 3 Hand out copies of the self-evaluation form. Divide the young people into pairs and encourage them to complete their forms.
- 4 Ask the group to share what symbol they think represents them and why. Make the point that it took Jesus to appear in physical form before his followers believed, so those who struggle to believe should not feel bad.
- 5 Finish by encouraging some of the young people to share their reasons for believing that Jesus is alive. If you need to, share why you believe.



MUSICAL

WHAT: sung worship

WHY: to help the group enter a state of thankfulness and to acknowledge that Jesus is alive

WITH: worship music, guitar or piano (optional)

- 1 Choose a worship song that talks of Jesus being alive or overcoming death and have copies of the words available for the young people.
- 2 Explain briefly what the song declares and how it should be sung, for example, with joy or thankfulness. Then play it (on guitar or piano if you have a musician).
- 3 Depending on your group, you may need to play the song through once and then get them to join in the second time.
- 4 Play another song if you have time.



PRACTICAL

WHAT: prayer

WHY: to reflect on your level of faith and pray in response

- 1 Get everyone to close their eyes and think about how big their faith is or how easy they find it to believe that Jesus is alive.
- 2 Ask them to get into pairs and talk about how much faith they think they have. Stress that being honest is important; this is not about trying to impress people.
- 3 Encourage them to pray for each other quietly.
- 4 Come back together and close in prayer.



CREATIVE

WHAT: collage or nature walk

WHY: to reflect on Jesus being alive

WITH: leaves, flowers and plants, A3 sheets, glue

- 1 Depending on your location, collect together as many living things from nature as you can, for example leaves, flowers and plants. Make sure you don't destroy any plants or gardens!
- 2 Get the group to creatively stick the objects on the sheets of paper to create something that illustrates 'life' or 'living', for example a tree, a river, a person, an angel.
- 3 Ask them to think about the fact that these objects are taken from living things which symbolise the living presence of Jesus.
- 4 Alternatively, if it's safe and won't cause too much disturbance, take the group outside and get them to quietly walk around and reflect on something that is alive, and think about how Jesus is as alive and real as the living things all around. (Ensure that you comply with your church's safeguarding policy if you go outside.)

MORE ON THIS THEME:

If you want to do a short series with your group, other sessions that work well with this one are:

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 50 | <i>Broken for you</i> | <i>Luke 19:28–40; 22:7–23</i> |
| 52 | <i>We are witnesses</i> | <i>Luke 24:36–49</i> |

'He is not here!'

Bible bit
Luke 24:1-35

The women on the way to the tomb saw Jesus die with their own eyes. The sadness as they went to put spices and perfume on Jesus' body must have been awful. But when

they get there, they find an empty tomb and two men in shining clothes, who say that Jesus is alive! Confused? Not really, the women tell everyone they know! And then, two people who heard their story actually meet Jesus on the way to Emmaus!


A second look

Some people see them instantly and others take their time. These puzzles are all about changing the way you see things. Work out what well-known phrases are being hinted at.



1


TAKE
TAKE



2

sense
sense
sense
sense
sense
sense
sense


→



3


LOOK

→ LOOK




4

DI E oo T k Ai ng L



5

reading



6


→ thinking

thinking



7

looking
looking
looking
looking
looking



Trying to figure out these puzzles is like trying to look again at the empty tomb story in Luke 24. So much of it can be familiar that it's easy to take one glance and miss the deeper meaning. So, as you start to explore the empty tomb story, begin to train yourself to take a second look and see the testimonies about Jesus from a new angle!

Answers on page 319.

Proof of life

Imagine you're a detective 2,000 years ago. You have been following the death of Jesus very closely. On Friday morning, Jesus was arrested by the authorities for reasons that most people still don't quite understand. By Friday afternoon, this seemingly innocent man is brutally tortured and crucified and his body laid to rest in a stone tomb. Unable to embalm his body on the Saturday due to religious regulations, some women, who were followers of Jesus, go to his tomb early Sunday morning to finish the rituals.

Read Luke 24:1-35 to find out what happened.

After an extensive investigation of the tomb, and after listening to all the accounts given by interested parties, you end up with the following evidence that something out of the ordinary has happened.



Evidence 1

You found the huge stone rolled away, which is, as yet, unexplained. Jesus' followers couldn't have done it because it was guarded by the authorities. The authorities are unlikely to have done it because they knew that some followers had claimed some time ago that Jesus would rise from the dead, so they would not want to help their story by removing the body.

Evidence 2

The women who went to Jesus' tomb have said that they saw men in shining clothes who told them that Jesus had risen from the dead. They also claimed that Jesus had told them while he was alive that he would be killed and then rise again on the third day.

Evidence 3

Two men who were travelling on the road to Emmaus have said that Jesus appeared to them as they were walking. They also claimed that he broke bread with them just like he had done a few days before and that they had felt their hearts 'burning' while he was talking to them.

Evidence 4

The linen that Jesus was wrapped in was left lying in the tomb. Again, if the authorities had taken Jesus' body they would not have left them, as this would ignite claims that he rose from the dead. And again, Jesus' followers could not have entered the tomb because of the guards.

Evidence 5

Jesus' eleven remaining disciples and others have also said that Jesus appeared to them, ate with them and was carried to heaven in front of them.

If each of these pieces of evidence was presented in court what kind of arguments would people raise against them? Which piece of evidence seems most likely to be true?

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If you were the detective, which of these pieces of evidence would be most likely to convince you that Jesus rose from the dead and is alive?

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If you were a neutral bystander, which of these pieces of evidence is most likely to convince you that Jesus rose from the dead and is alive?

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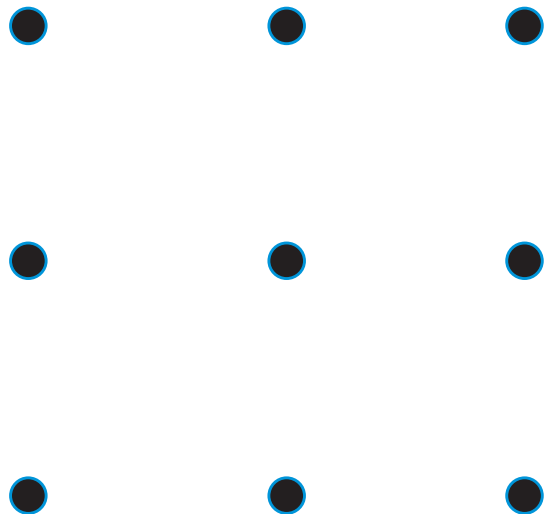
Can you think of any other evidence that proves Jesus rose from the dead and is still alive?

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RESOURCE PAGE

USE WITH SESSION 51 WAY IN 'SCENE SETTER'

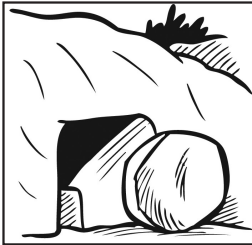
Using only four lines, try and draw through all nine dots without the pen lifting off the paper. You might have to think outside the box!



USE WITH SESSION 51 BIBLE EXPERIENCE 'LEVEL 3 SWITCH ON'

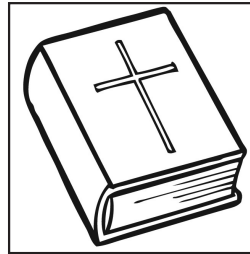
If you look back at Luke 24 you will note that there were five main instances of proof for Jesus' followers to believe that he was alive; the empty tomb (vs 2,3), the angels (vs 4–7), the Scriptures (v 27), Jesus' actions (v 30) and Jesus in physical form (v 40). Read the verses then decide which of these descriptions fits you best.

An empty tomb:



You are someone who doesn't need much convincing that Jesus is alive and answers prayer. You believe that Jesus is alive because you see God moving and answering prayers in most things.

The Scriptures:



You are someone who believes that Jesus is alive because it is written in the Bible. You very rarely question the reliability of the Bible even if you don't understand it.

Angels:



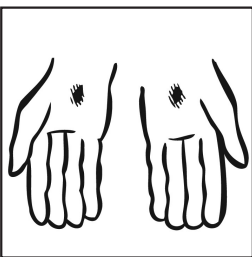
You are someone who is open to God's signs and wonders but it often takes something big to really convince you. You see most things of a supernatural nature as proof of God.

Jesus' actions:



You are someone who needs more obvious and direct miracles to believe. You can't help but be suspicious of most miracles and you have big questions about the reliability of the Bible.

Jesus in physical form:



It would take Jesus himself to appear in physical form and show you his hands for you to believe.

Think of some reasons why.

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