

Study Series: Chasing God

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 Lesson Title: “8 Days” (pp. 68-77)

Session 06

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The main point of this lesson is: Spiritual doubt is not resolved by convincing, logical proofs but by looking to Jesus.

Focus on this goal: To help adults identify ways they chase God but will look to Jesus instead.

Key Bible Passage: John 20:19-29

Before the Session

1. **Enlist** a learner to share a brief testimony about experiencing peace in a difficult circumstance. (Step 4)
2. **Make** bookmarks to **distribute** to participants. Bookmarks should state: Be still and know that I am God. Psalm 46:10. (Step 7)

During the Session

Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion

**Ask** participants if they had a nickname growing up and if they have one now.

**Ask:** How do those nicknames reflect who you were or who you are becoming?

**State** that this session focuses on Doubting Thomas and reminds us how to resolve spiritual doubts.

Step 2. Day 1 – Not Always a Doubter, Part 1

**Draw** four stick figures on a whiteboard.

**Ask** a volunteer to read John 20:19-29.

**Guide** participants to focus on Thomas’s words (v. 25) and to summarize his response.

**Write** this summary statement under the third stick figure.

**Ask** a volunteer to read John 11:16 and **guide** learners to summarize Thomas’s commitment to Jesus at that time.

**Write** this summary statement under the first stick figure.

**Ask:** Why do you think Thomas responded with doubt to Jesus’ post-resurrection appearance, especially when all the other disciples had testified that they had seen the Lord (20:25) and when he was willing to die with Jesus earlier in Jesus’ ministry?

**Discuss** that our faith can include moments of doubt and moments of great commitment and courage.

**Lead** learners to discuss how they identify with Thomas (Day One, activity 1, p. 69).

Step 3. Day 2 – Not Always a Doubter, Part 2

**Ask** a volunteer to read John 14:1-7 and **guide** learners to summarize Thomas’s response to Jesus at that time.

**Write** this summary statement under the second stick figure.

**State** that Thomas’s question in John 14 seems to be a legitimate question people might ask.

**Organize** learners into small groups and **tell** each group to create a one-minute role play of responding to someone who was asking how they can follow Jesus if they can’t see where He is going.

After a few minutes, **call on** groups to present their role plays (Day Two, activity 2, p 71).

Step 4. Day 3 – Confronting Doubt

**Invite** learners to circle the word “Peace” in their Bibles in John 20:21,26.

**Challenge** learners to define peace and **ask** a volunteer to find and read a definition of peace from their phone.

**Ask:** Why was peace such a vital message that Jesus needed to share with the disciples at this time?

**Follow up** by asking: How is it possible for Christians to experience peace when everything around them seems to be chaotic?

After brief response, **call on** a volunteer to read Philippians 4:6-7.

**State** that such peace is only possible when a person is in a close relationship with God.

**Call on** the person enlisted earlier to share a brief testimony about experiencing peace in a difficult circumstance. That person may want to discuss moments of doubt that may have preceded the peace of God.

**Guide** learners to share lessons learned about God’s peace during difficult experiences (Day Three, activity 2, p. 73).

Step 5. Day 4 – Doubt Dissolved

**State** that Thomas had put a “condition” on his belief in Jesus’ resurrection.

**Guide** learners to identify that condition.

**Ask:** How do we sometimes put if/then conditions on God?

**Write** the word doubt on a whiteboard and **write** Thomas’s words: “My Lord and my God!” under the fourth stick figure.

**Invite** learners to read Thomas’s words three times in unison, first quietly, then in a normal tone of voice, then loudly and enthusiastically.

As they are stating those words, **erase** the word doubt from the board.

**State** that Thomas’s doubt was erased as he recognized Jesus, even without touching Him.

**Discuss** how experiences of doubt can lead to strengthened faith, **pointing out** that Thomas’s proclamation was the first time in the New Testament that anyone called Jesus “God” (p. 74).

**Invite** learners to share when they have had “aha” moments with God, recognizing Him anew for who He is (Day Four, activity 2, p. 75).

Step 6. Day 5 – No More Chasing

**Challenge** learners to describe the difference between looking for God and looking at God.

**State** that as we expend energy “chasing God,” as the author writes, we may miss His presence in our lives.

**Read** Psalm 46:10.

**Guide** learners to list steps believers can take to stop chasing God and start communing with God (Day Five, activity 1, p. 76).

Step 7. Practical Application – Live Out the Lesson

**Distribute** bookmarks to participants.

**Close in prayer** that all participants can experience renewed faith as they learn to be still and know God.

After the Session

**Pray** for those in your class who may be struggling with doubt.

