

THE ISLAND

LEADER	DATE (am) 26 April 2009
HELPERS	TIME (mins) 40 minutes
PUPPETEER	No. of KIDS (m/f)

- **SERIES / LESSON:** Jesus is King! / Jesus goes back to heaven
- **SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:** Luke 24:36-53; John 14:1-7; 20:19-30;
Acts 1:1-11
- **CONCEPT:** Jesus is coming back!

GOALS:

- To encourage kids to engage in corporate praise and worship in the main church service through singing, the giving of tithes and offerings, and the family prayer time.
- To help kids realise that, even though we can't see Him, Jesus rose from the dead and went to His Father in heaven where He is alive today.
- To invite kids to be sure of their place in heaven by accepting Jesus as their King and Saviour.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- ✓ Laptop / projector / screen, etc.
- ✓ Actors (4 kids) – Thomas and 3 disciples
- ✓ Scripts for 3 disciples (included in materials)
- ✓ Puppet script (included in materials)
- ✓ Mobile phone
- ✓ Sheet of yellow card or paper
- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ Name tag box

A. Worship and Prayer ~30 minutes The praise band will lead the congregation in praise and worship – including: announcements, receiving of tithes and offerings, and the family prayer time around the altar.	You'll need ...
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B. Message 15 minutes 1. Recap <i>Invite kids to sit at the front of the church where you can address them, and the congregation, from the platform.</i> <i>Invite the kids playing Thomas and the three disciples to the platform.</i> - <i>Address Thomas:</i> "We have seen the Lord! Can you believe it? We have seen the Lord!" - <i>Address the congregation:</i> That's what the disciples, Jesus' friends, were shouting excitedly at Thomas. Amazed and wide-eyed, they were so eager to tell Thomas about what he had missed that night. They wanted to tell Thomas all the details – how Jesus had looked, what He had said to them, what He had eaten for supper, how frightened they had been when they had thought they had been looking at a ghost! "We have seen the Lord!" the disciples told Thomas. Actor 1: Thomas, we were all here in the house. The doors were locked. We were talking about what happened, about Mary's message that she has seen Jesus alive. We were wondering if it could be true ... when all of a sudden, we couldn't move or speak because we were so afraid! Actor 2: That's right! We thought there was a ghost in the room! Standing in the middle of us all! Actor 3: Then the ghost spoke. He said, "Peace be with you. Why are you frightened? Do you not believe what you see? Look! It's me! Look at my hands and my feet – do you see where the nails were? Touch me! A ghost doesn't have skin and bones. Shake my hand. I'm real! It's me!" Actor 2: We were so happy! This was no ghost, it was Jesus, our Jesus, our friend, our Lord. We looked at Jesus' hands and feet and were completely amazed. Jesus, who was dead, is alive! He got into our house through the locked doors and was standing there with us. Actor 3: We could hardly believe our eyes! Then Jesus asked us for something to eat. We gave Him a piece of fish and He stayed and ate it with us. He <i>seemed</i> to be real all right! He was hungry! Actor 1: We have seen the Lord, Thomas! We have seen Jesus! But Thomas looked serious. He didn't get excited. He didn't jump for joy. He didn't praise the Lord and join in the celebrations. Thomas said to his friends, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it." (John 20:25) "I will <i>not</i> believe it!" said Thomas.	You'll need ... <i>Display The Island background on screen</i> <i>Thomas and 3 disciples (child actors)</i> <i>Scripts for 3 disciples</i>
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The actors may sit down again.

A week later, the disciples were together in the house again, and this time Thomas was with them. Just like the week before, the doors were locked. And just like the week before, Jesus appeared in the room, walked to where the disciples were sitting and said, "Peace be with you!" The disciples looked at Him carefully. He looked just like He had looked the week before. They knew it wasn't a ghost; this was Jesus. Then their eyes shifted to Thomas. Thomas wasn't quite sure what to think at that moment, until Jesus said to him, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." Thomas got up with wonder and awe and amazement in his eyes and said to Jesus, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:26-28)

Jesus wasn't angry with Thomas for not believing that He had risen from the dead. You see, Thomas *wanted* to believe, he *wanted* his friend Jesus back again. But Thomas was doubtful. He doubted the truth. He just couldn't believe what the disciples were telling him until he saw it with his own eyes. Jesus said to Thomas, "Because you have seen me, you have believed ..." (John 20:29) When Thomas touched Jesus' hands, and could see and feel the marks that were made by the nails that had held Jesus onto the cross, Thomas believed that this was the risen Lord.

2. Set the scene

What about us? It's different for us, isn't it? We can't see Jesus. We can't touch Him and look at the marks in His hands like Thomas did, sure we can't? Sometimes it's difficult to believe in someone or something that we can't see, right?

So how come Thomas and the disciples saw Jesus but we don't? Where did He disappear to?

* * *

(Make sure the puppet has a script beforehand!)

(Hesitate, take a look around, you are puzzled) Boys and girls, I've just realised that Rocky isn't here! He should have been here well before now. I wonder if he has slept in. Before I go on with today's story, would you mind if I gave him a call to find out where he is? Just a minute ... *(Pretend to call Rocky on your mobile phone. Then follow the script. Change script as appropriate to you.)*

Rocky: *(answer your phone)* Hello?

Leader: Hi Rocky, it's me. I'm just wondering where you are? Today The Island is in church and the grown-ups were so excited about seeing you today! Did you sleep in again?

Rocky: Sleep in?! No! I've been up and awake since 8 o'clock this morning! I took Ringo to see that big castle down in Carrickfergus.

Leader: Ah I see! Well I'm glad you had a nice morning, but you were supposed to be here at 11:30. Did you not check the time?

Rocky: Uhh, yeah, I know what time it is ... it's just that ... uhh ... I'm a

Puppet script

Mobile phone

bit lost.

Leader: You're lost? Where are you now?

Rocky: I'm still at Carrickfergus Castle. I've been asking a scary-looking knight on a big horse for directions to church, but he won't talk to me. In fact, he won't even look at me! Even the horse doesn't move a muscle!

Leader: Well, that would be right, Rocky. That knight and horse in the castle aren't real. They are just there for decoration! ... Anyway, listen, what you need is directions to help you find your way from the castle to our church, right?

Rocky: Yes, please.

Leader: Okay kids, you heard what Rocky needs. He's at Carrickfergus Castle and he needs directions to get to our church. Who can help him? Who can tell him the right way to go? *(Allow kids to contribute until you have the right directions. You could show a map on screen if you like. Repeat kids' directions to Rocky.)* ... Did you get that Rocky? Hope you can make it before we finish!

Rocky: Okay, I'll swing through the trees as fast as I can! Bye!

Leader: See you soon! *(Pretend to end the call on your phone.)*

I hope he gets here before we leave church today!

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Now, let's get back to what we were talking about before. What happened after Thomas saw Jesus?

3. Tell the story

Well, Jesus appeared to lots of people over the next 40 days – that's just over a month. He talked to the people He met, taught them about God's Word, and proved to them that He was alive.

One day, Jesus was having lunch with His disciples in Jerusalem. He was talking to them about what had been written in the old scrolls many years earlier. You see, in the old scrolls, the Old Testament, everything that had happened to Jesus had already been written down. The old scrolls said that Jesus would suffer in pain and die, and that He would come back to life on the third day. And the disciples could see that that is exactly what had happened.

Jesus took the disciples outside the city and they climbed up onto a hill. Jesus had more news for the disciples. The old scrolls also said that the message of the forgiving of sin and God's plan to save the world would be told, first of all, to the people in Jerusalem, then to the rest of the country, then to the countries close by, until, eventually, the whole world would hear about Jesus! And Jesus told the disciples that it would be their job to spread the message! The disciples had seen everything, so it would be their job to tell other people the amazing things they had seen, helping more people to believe in Jesus Christ. But their job wouldn't start for a few more days ... Jesus told them they were to wait for a gift from heaven; a gift that would help them in their new job of telling the people

of the world about Jesus.

After Jesus had said these things, His feet left the ground. He was rising up into the air, floating, right in front of the disciples! They had seen Jesus do some amazing things over the last three years, but they hadn't seen this before! He just lifted off the ground, and He was getting farther away from them as He moved higher and higher into the sky. Up, up, up He rose until a cloud covered Him and the disciples couldn't see Him. He had gone, disappeared, left them. He had already left them when He died, and then they were so happy to have their Lord and friend back again. And now, He had left them again, gone and disappeared into the sky!

Suddenly, two angels dressed in white appeared and stood beside the disciples on the hilltop. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11)

"He's coming back! He's coming back!" The disciples looked at each other and their hearts started to beat a little faster. They left the hill, made the long walk back down to Jerusalem with excitement in their hearts, and they started to pray. They had a job to prepare for! They would soon start to tell people about Jesus and the good news of salvation. Jesus is coming back!

4. Explain

The thing is, the disciples didn't know when Jesus was going to come back. The angels hadn't told them. Neither had Jesus. Jesus had told them some time before He left that no one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven. In fact, Jesus himself didn't know when He would be coming back. Only God, His Father, knew about those things. Would the disciples see Him again in their lifetime?

It must have been really hard for the disciples to watch Jesus leave them. They didn't want Him to go. But they *knew* where He was going. They remembered that Jesus had already told them some time before He died about what was going to happen. Jesus had told them that He was going to His Father's house, in heaven. He was going there to prepare a place for each of them, to get the rooms ready for when they would arrive in heaven. Imagine having a place ready and waiting for you in heaven, the best city ever, where there is no sin, where there is no darkness, where no one gets sick and no one dies. For sure, the disciples wanted to go to God's house!

Thomas didn't understand. Where exactly was Jesus going? And how were the disciples supposed to follow and find Him? Thomas asked Jesus, "How can we know the way?"

Boys and girls, how can we know the way?

Grown-ups, how can we know the way?

- *Address congregation:* Where are you now, at this moment? For some reason, you came to church today – perhaps out of duty, because someone invited you, because you come here every week, because you're expected to be here. It doesn't matter *why* you're here. What

matters is *what you do* while you're here. Are you listening? Is your heart open? Do you hear the news that there is a place waiting for you, a wonderful place far away from this world? God gives us the gift of life. But very often life is tough. Where are you now in your life? Are you in pain, physical or emotional? Are you suffering an illness or an addiction? Are you lonely or misunderstood? Do you have family or relationship problems? Are you under stress or pressure at work? Are you under financial pressure in the current economic situation? Have you made mistakes? Do you look forward to your future, or is it difficult to imagine?

The Lord never promised that life would be easy. He *did* promise never to leave us. And He *did* promise that *nothing*, "neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38-39) I *can* imagine my future because I know the way!

I know the way to where Jesus was going! I know the way to heaven! Let me tell you.

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(Show a sheet of yellow paper or card to the congregation. See photos below for illustration of the folds.) Heaven is a beautiful place where the streets are made of pure gold. There's no darkness or sickness there. When I go to heaven, I will be with Jesus all day every day. It will be far better than you or I can even dream of!

(Fold down top third of the sheet. Fold each top corner into the centre to make a 'house' shape. Show the house to the congregation.) How can you be sure that you will go to heaven? Well, you won't get there with the things you have, like this nice big house. It doesn't matter what kind of house you live in, or how many clothes you have in your wardrobe, or how many toys you have, if you have a Nintendo or an XBox. It doesn't matter how much money you have ... those things won't help you get to heaven.

(Fold house in half down the centre, turn on its side and fold down each 'wing' to make an airplane.) How can you get to heaven? Well, you won't get there by the things you can do, like flying on this airplane. You could travel round the world five times on a plane, you could grow up to be a fantastic footballer, you might sing or play an instrument in a famous band, you might write a book and become a celebrity ... but none of those things will help you get to heaven.

(Take a pair of scissors and cut off the 'wings' of the plane to make a rocket.) How can you find the way to heaven? Well, you won't get there with the things you know, like rocket science. Maybe you will build a rocket some day, maybe you can speak two or three languages, maybe you're really clever at working out your sums and remembering your spellings ... but the things you know won't get you to heaven.

How can I show you the way to heaven? (Unfold the rocket and show the resulting cross to the congregation.)

When Thomas asked Jesus how we could know the way to where Jesus was going, Jesus answered him, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6) That

Sheet of yellow paper
or card

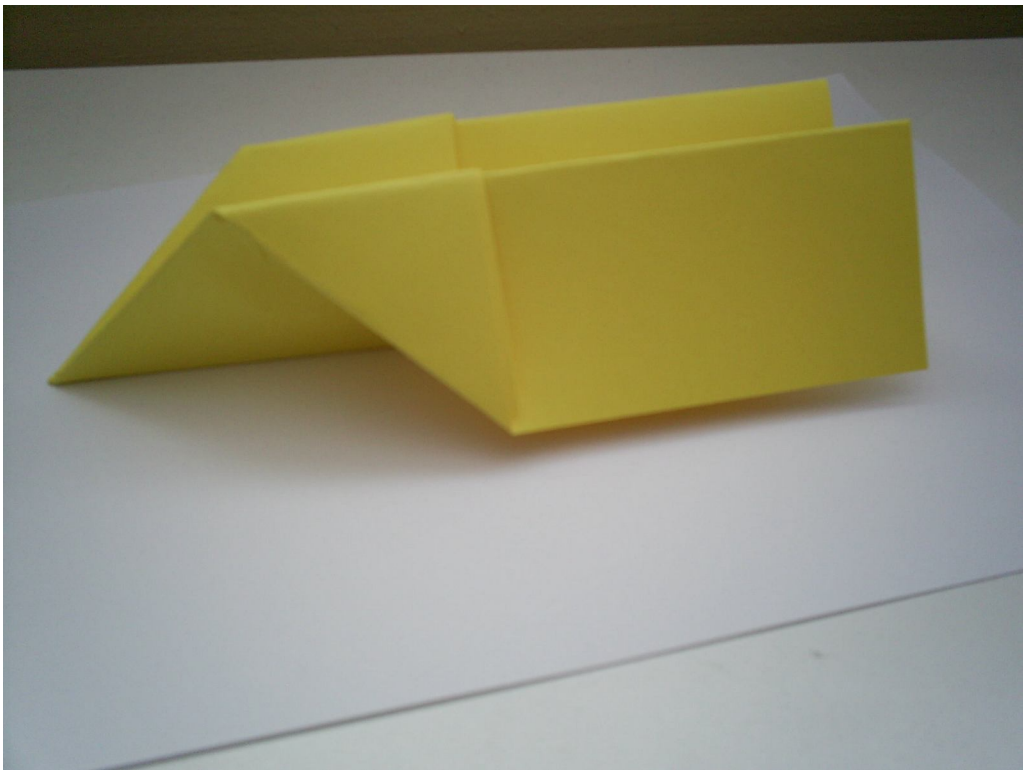
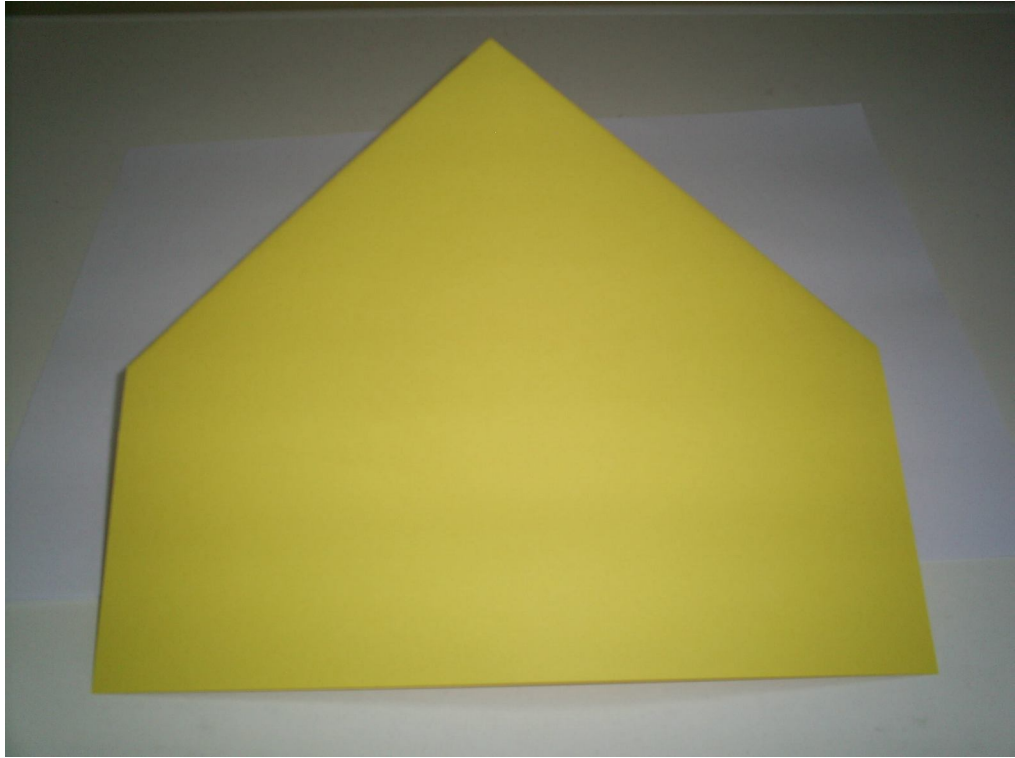
Scissors

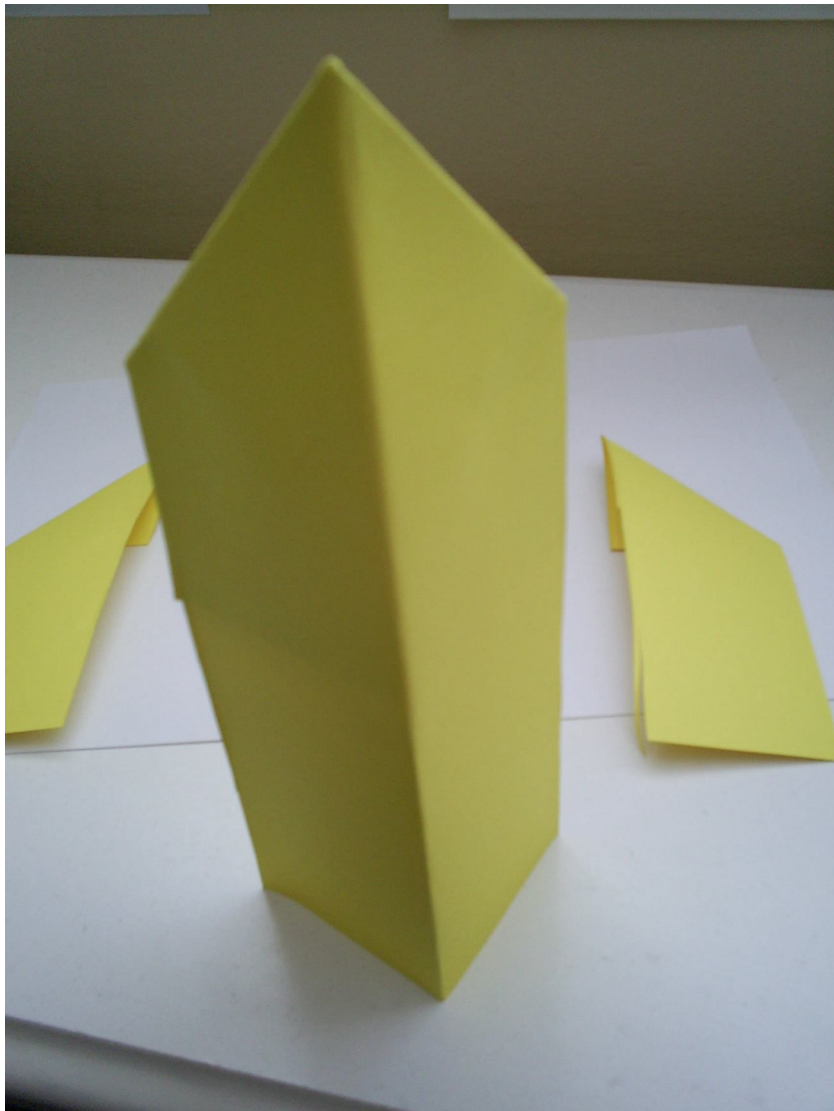
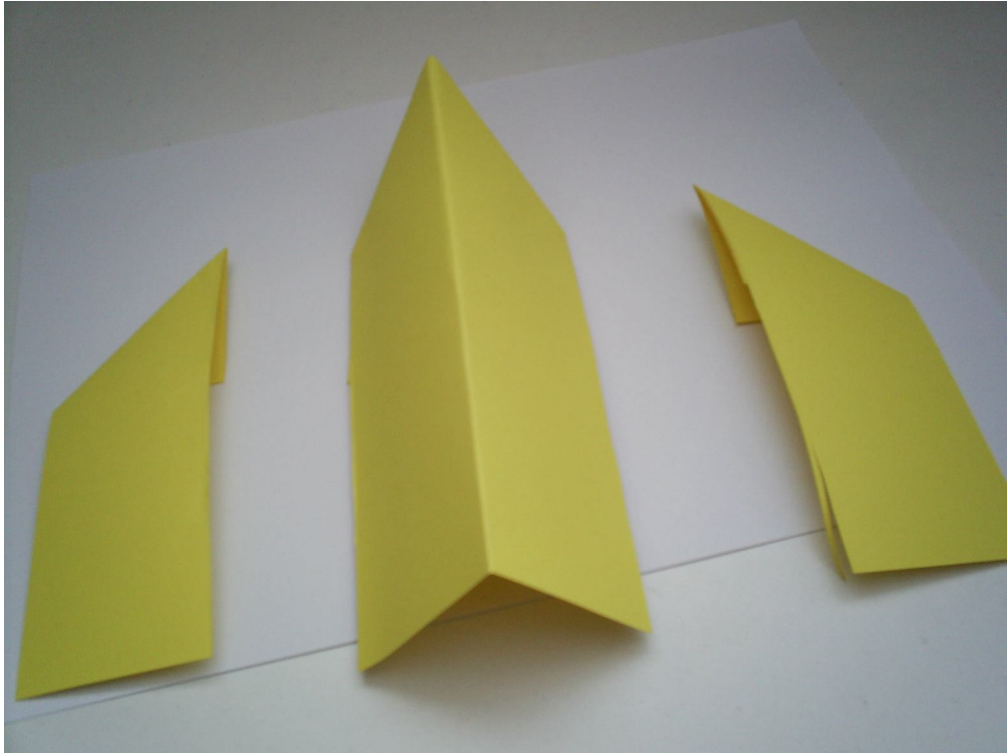
<p>means that Jesus is the way to heaven, and only boys and girls and men and women who put their trust and faith in Jesus, and who ask Him to forgive their sins, will be allowed into heaven – that beautiful, wonderful place, full of life, hope, love and joy forever and ever.</p> <p>The disciples didn't see Jesus on earth again during their lifetime, but you can be sure that they went to be with Him in heaven when they died. They did the job Jesus had given them – they spread the news of God's plan of salvation around the world, and we are still talking about it today! And the believers who are here today are still excited because Jesus hasn't come back yet. That means He could come back at any minute! Would you be ready to meet Him?</p> <p>Remember Thomas? Remember how he wouldn't believe Jesus was alive until He saw him, until he could touch the scars in Jesus' hands and feel the hole in His side? Jesus said to Thomas, "Because you have seen me, you have believed ..." (John 20:29). Sometimes it's difficult to believe in someone or something that we can't see. But Jesus also said to Thomas, "... blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." (John 20:29) Jesus says we are 'blessed' if we believe because we can't see Him. He knows it can be difficult, but He helps us to believe through these stories that were written down for us in the Bible.</p> <p>The message is the same today as it was 2000 years ago. Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Do you believe it? Do you believe that Jesus came to earth as a little baby, that He grew up to be a man, that He did many miracles, that He died on a cross to save all the people of the world from their sin ... and that He rose from the dead to make a way for you and me to be with Him in heaven? Jesus says the same thing to you as He did to Thomas that day – "Stop doubting and believe." (John 20:27) Just believe!</p>	
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C. Conclusion (with puppets)	5 minutes	You'll need ...
<p>1. <i>Let's all pray:</i> Dear Lord Jesus, we thank You for being with us today on The Island. We thank You for Your Word, the Bible, and for the lessons You teach us. We thank You for making a way for us to be saved from sin, a way for us to be best friends with You, a way for us to be with You in heaven. We thank You, Lord Jesus, for dying on the cross in our place, and we rejoice that You are alive today, taking care of us and leading and guiding our paths. Lord, I pray that You would continue to open the hearts of each boy and girl, and each grown-up, here today. I pray that You would help us to see You through Your Word, and that you would bring to each one of us the joy of Your salvation. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.</p> <p><i>(Rocky should appear in the puppet box after the prayer)</i></p> <p>Rocky: Hiya!</p> <p>Leader: Rocky! You made it in time for our song! You must have followed our directions!</p> <p>Rocky: Yes I did! I was lost, you told me the way, and I made it!</p> <p>Leader: I'm so glad you followed the directions and found your way</p>		

<p>home Rocky. Now you can help us sing.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Invite the band to lead the kids and the congregation in singing <i>Got a Reason for Living Again</i>.3. Invite the Senior Pastor to close the service in prayer.4. Remind kids to come back this evening.5. Ask kids to put their name tags in the box before they leave.	<p><i>Name tag box</i></p>
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THE ISLAND cont'd

LEADER	DATE (pm) 26 April 2009
HELPERS	TIME (mins) 45 minutes
PUPPETEER	No. of KIDS (m/f)

GOALS:

- To reinforce today's Bible concept by learning a related Scripture verse.
- To consolidate the Easter story and concepts by watching a DVD of the first Easter.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- ✓ Cinema tickets – these can be small pre-printed cards. On one side, e.g. *The Island Movie Night*, date and time, and on the other side, the memory verse (John 14:6) (template included in materials)
- ✓ Hole punch
- ✓ Cartons / cones of popcorn (one per child)
- ✓ Jugs of juice and plastic cups (one per child)
- ✓ Easter DVD that includes the Ascension (e.g. *He is Risen* (2006) Boulevard Entertainment Ltd. BLVDD0891. ISBN: 5-060092-908917)
- ✓ Song DVD (Hillsong Kids – Super Strong God)
- ✓ DVD player / projector / screen / sound system, etc.
- ✓ Name tag box

<p>E. Welcome & Memory Verse 10 minutes</p> <p><i>"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." John 14:6</i></p> <p><i>*Before the session begins, you should set out mats in rows on the floor for kids to sit on when they arrive.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As kids arrive to pick up their name tags, give each child a pre-printed cinema ticket. This can be a small card printed with <i>The Island Movie Night</i>, date and time on one side, and today's memory verse on the reverse side. As you give out these tickets, challenge kids to learn the verse before they go to The Island. 2. Station one adult helper at the door of your room. Make sure kids line up, one behind the other, as they come to <i>The Island</i> doors. Punch a hole or make a small tear in each child's ticket before allowing kids to enter the room. 3. Ask kids to choose a mat and sit down on it. 4. Welcome kids to <i>The Island Movie House</i>. Open in prayer. 5. <i>Explain:</i> Boys and girls, I hope you have learnt the verse on your tickets! You are going to need that verse to get your <i>Island Movie House popcorn!</i> 6. Ask each child to recite the memory verse without looking at their ticket. 7. <i>Explain:</i> We can't get to heaven by the things we have, by what we can do, or by the things we know. We can't pay to get there. We can't get there on an airplane. Jesus tells us that He is the only way we can get to heaven. That means we must believe in Him. Believe that He lived, died, and came back to life, and that He is now in heaven with God, His Father, watching over us and preparing a place for us when it's time for us to go up there. <p>Idea: After the session, you could write the memory verse onto a sheet of card to make a poster for your room. This will add to your decoration as well as reminding kids of the Bible concept. Then you can also refer to it next week and beyond.</p>	<p>You'll need ...</p> <p><i>Cinema tickets</i></p> <p><i>Hole punch</i></p>
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<p>F. Activity 30 minutes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Congratulate kids for having said the memory verse. Give each child a small carton or cone of popcorn. You may also want to give them each a cup of juice. 2. Show the DVD, or excerpts from it depending on how much time you have. 	<p>You'll need ...</p> <p><i>Cartons/cones of popcorn</i> <i>Cups of juice</i></p> <p><i>DVD player / projector / sound system / DVD</i></p>
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<p>G. Conclusion (with puppets) 5 minutes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask kids to recite the memory verse once more. 2. <i>Challenge kids:</i> Remember, boys and girls, that Jesus told the disciples to go and tell people about everything they had seen and heard, everything they had learnt from living with Jesus. 	<p>You'll need ...</p>
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<p>That was written in the Bible for us too – if we believe in Jesus then we are His disciples too, and it is our job to tell others the great news of how we can get to heaven. Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Close in prayer.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. If you have time, sing a song in closing. (One Way) 4. Remind kids to come back next week! 5. Ask kids to leave their name tags in the box before they leave. 	<p><i>DVD player / projector</i> <i>Song DVD (Hillsong Kids – Super Strong God)</i></p> <p><i>Name tag box</i></p>
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