

Believing in the Son of God



Teacher's Guide

Surveying the Source

Matt. 16:24, 25; John 1:1–3; 3:36; 5:24; Rom. 6:1–6; Heb. 12:4; 1 John 5:1–12.

Plotting the Course

The students will:

- ▶ Discuss the nature of faith and what it means to live with and without faith.
- ▶ Explore the nature of biblical faith, specifically in the lives of various Bible

characters.

- ▶ Identify ways they can apply what they have learned about having faith to their own circumstances.

Preparing to Lead

While there are many definitions of faith, Patrick Overton states: “When you come to the edge of all the light you know, and are about to step off into the

darkness of the unknown, faith is knowing one of two things will happen: There will be something solid to stand on, or you will be taught how to fly.”

Getting Started

A. Brainstorm words that come to mind when you say the word *faith*, and have the class write down their definition of faith. Discuss some of the everyday activities in life that require us to have faith. (*Example:* When we sit on a chair, we have faith that it will hold us up.)

B. Have each class member (or invite six people if you have a large class) choose a random item from your paper bag and think about how this item could be connected to a biblical story of faith. (*Example:* a coat hanger—Joseph’s coat of many colors. Joseph had strong faith.)

Materials

pens; paper bag/box to put these items in: coat hanger, sock, nail, scissors, peg, envelope, ribbon, spoon; a CD player and some quiet, thought-provoking instrumental music

Delving Into the Word

A. Read in Hebrews 11 about the biblical characters who had great faith. Discuss each individual in relationship to the following: ● “What did the individual need to have faith about or in?” ● “How did God strengthen the individual’s faith?” ● “Other than having faith, what is the main lesson we can learn from each individual’s life?”

Have the class take turns reading Hebrews 11:13–17, 39, 40. *Say:* “These verses hit at the heart of Hebrews 11. How can we apply the message in these

verses to our lives?” Then ask class members to reflect on their lives and how they would answer questions one and two above. Ask if anyone is willing to share their answers. If no one is, perhaps you could share how you responded.

B. Have the class think about Jesus’ 12 disciples and their faith journeys. *Ask:* ● “Which disciple stands out as having the strongest faith?” ● “Which one, the weakest?” Have the class read the following passages to add to the discussion: Matthew 21:1–7; Mark 16:14; Luke 17:5,

6; 24:35–46; John 6:16–21; 20:24–29.

Ask: “Based on John 20:29, is it more or less difficult for us to have faith in Jesus than it was for the disciples?”

Have someone read Matthew 16:24. *Ask:* “What are some practical ways we can follow this very important piece of advice from Jesus?”

Discussing the Ideas

1. How would you describe faith to a child?
2. Is faith based on evidence, a feeling, or both? Explain your answer.
3. What is the difference between faith and hope?
4. What things in your life do you find hard to have faith in?
5. How does having faith change a person’s life?
6. Hebrews 11:2 refers to “God’s approval” (NLT). How important is it for you to have God’s approval in your life?
7. What questions do you have about the Christian faith that are still unanswered?

Closing the Activity

Distribute the reproducible activity (p. 39). Play some quiet music, and ask the class to individually write their responses

to the sentences. Then get them to share some of their responses with one other person and pray with that person.

Nina Atcheson, Scarborough, Queensland, Australia

The one gift I've always wanted but never received is. . .



This time last year I would never have thought God would. . .



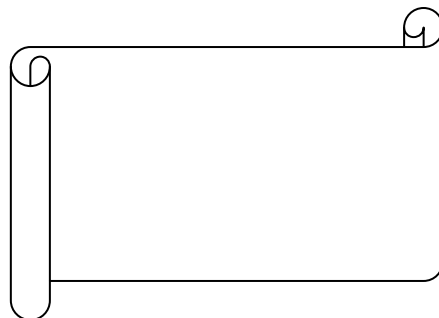
One of God's attributes that I most appreciate is. . .



One thing I find really hard to believe is. . .



The biggest choice I'm facing this week is. . .



Roadblocks keeping me from having greater faith are. . .

