

**SUB TOPIC THEME:**

Everybody Lies

**LESSON OBJECTIVE:**

*Realizing how doubt comes into our hearts along with the pain and anger of being lied to by others. In order to bring about personal restoration and healing, as well as encourage students to follow Jesus' example of forgiveness, they must first understand what they are feeling right now and how it is affecting them. With that awareness and knowledge, the students must then*



*decide, and continue to decide, whether they will resolve things according to the world's standards or trust and obey the instruction given us by God. It is by creating a safe place to openly admit and analyze the doubt that pervades our hearts that we will begin to believe in the healing love and forgiveness of the Lord and know the impact it can have on ours and others lives.*

**Set Up Info:*****Supplies Needed:***

1. Copies of the Student Response sheet (printed below)
2. Bibles so you can look up the Scripture story (or copy the ones below)
3. A passion to see students transformed in their understanding of God's love and presence in their lives!

***Instructive Prep:***

Being lied about is horrible. It's awful. It strikes you right in the gut and cuts all the way down to the center. When you find out that someone you thought was a trusted and loving friend has betrayed you and slandered you, it is sickening. That's a universal feeling. Everyone experiences it when the people around us lie to us.

Jesus also experienced it. Like all of us, he knows what it feels like to find out you have been lied to and lied about. The rage and pain and complete disillusionment that happens is something he felt and experienced. Those emotions are natural. It's part of being human, unfortunately. What we see in Jesus' life though, is the choice he made to respond differently. His whole reason

for being on earth was to bring forgiveness and love to us by identifying with exactly the same things we do. It truly is “God with us!”. So when he was lied about, when his close friend let him down and even plotted to end his life, he made the decision, in the midst of all his doubt and anger and sadness, to extend grace and compassion. It’s that decision that we want to look at here today.

The progression of these studies is four-fold: *learn, feel, do and what next*. We want students to learn something new, connect at an emotional level to some degree, and participate in doing something during the study (like making a hand gesture as a tool/reminder). Finally, the *what next* focuses on a change in attitude and/or behavior, which you will find in the challenge of the Life Application section. Remember, the movement is toward spiritual and emotional transformation in kids’ lives, so the application section based on God’s truth is really the crux of the time together! Have fun and lead well.

## INTRO:

*Discovering that someone close to you has deceived and lied to you completely shatters your world – even more so if it is multiple people in your life! Going through that betrayal always brings extreme thoughts and feelings to the surface. Maybe you feel like an idiot or cheap somehow. Perhaps your only emotion is pure rage or absolute heartbreak. Sometimes our feelings go all over the place and we go from hating that person or people to feeling like we deserve it somehow, to wanting God and everyone else to go jump off a cliff. One of the biggest things we might feel, without even realizing it sometimes, is doubt. It sneaks in with all the other emotions and makes our whole world feel unbalanced. We look at things in a different light and question people we never doubted before. Now that lies have broken a part of your world, you wonder what else might be broken beneath the surface. These thoughts and feelings are completely normal, but in the midst of them is a choice we have to make – how will we respond?*

## INTRO STORY:

*The biggest and best guide we will ever have in our lives is Jesus. So what better story to take a look at today than a time when Jesus himself experienced the betrayal of having his closest friends lie to him and to others about him? Pay attention as you read to the way Jesus treats those he knows will betray him. Notice the gestures he makes to extend forgiveness and grace. And don’t be fooled into thinking that he was not feeling all those human emotions of fear, anger, sadness, and most of all doubt! (just wait until you get to verse 38!)*

## Matthew 26

### The Plot against Jesus

When Jesus had finished teaching all these things, he said to his disciples, <sup>2</sup>“In two days, as you know, it will be the Passover Festival, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.”

<sup>3</sup> Then the chief priests and the elders met together in the palace of Caiaphas, the High Priest, <sup>4</sup> and made plans to arrest Jesus secretly and put him to death. <sup>5</sup> “We must not do it during the festival,” they said, “or the people will riot.”

### Jesus Is Anointed at Bethany

<sup>6</sup> Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon, a man who had suffered from a dreaded skin disease. <sup>7</sup> While Jesus was eating, a woman came to him with an alabaster jar filled with an expensive perfume, which she poured on his head. <sup>8</sup> The disciples saw this and became angry. “Why all this waste?” they asked. <sup>9</sup> “This perfume could have been sold for a large amount and the money given to the poor!”

<sup>10</sup> Jesus knew what they were saying, and so he said to them, “Why are you bothering this woman? It is a fine and beautiful thing that she has done for me. <sup>11</sup> You will always have poor people with you, but you will not always have me. <sup>12</sup> What she did was to pour this perfume on my body to get me ready for burial. <sup>13</sup> Now, I assure you that wherever this gospel is preached all over the world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.”

### Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

<sup>14</sup> Then one of the twelve disciples—the one named Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priests <sup>15</sup> and asked, “What will you give me if I betray Jesus to you?” They counted out thirty silver coins and gave them to him. <sup>16</sup> From then on Judas was looking for a good chance to hand Jesus over to them.

### Jesus Eats the Passover Meal with His Disciples

<sup>17</sup> On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus and asked him, “Where do you want us to get the Passover meal ready for you?”

<sup>18</sup> “Go to a certain man in the city,” he said to them, “and tell him: ‘The Teacher says, My hour has come; my disciples and I will celebrate the Passover at your house.’”

<sup>19</sup> The disciples did as Jesus had told them and prepared the Passover meal.

<sup>20</sup> When it was evening, Jesus and the twelve disciples sat down to eat. <sup>21</sup> During the meal Jesus said, “I tell you, one of you will betray me.”

<sup>22</sup> The disciples were very upset and began to ask him, one after the other, “Surely, Lord, you don't mean me?”

<sup>23</sup> Jesus answered, “One who dips his bread in the dish with me will betray me. <sup>24</sup> The Son of Man will die as the Scriptures say he will, but how terrible for that man who will betray the Son of Man! It would have been better for that man if he had never been born!”

<sup>25</sup> Judas, the traitor, spoke up. “Surely, Teacher, you don't mean me?” he asked.

Jesus answered, "So you say."

### The Lord's Supper

<sup>26</sup> While they were eating, Jesus took a piece of bread, gave a prayer of thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples. "Take and eat it," he said; "this is my body."

<sup>27</sup> Then he took a cup, gave thanks to God, and gave it to them. "Drink it, all of you," he said; <sup>28</sup> "this is my blood, which seals God's covenant, my blood poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>29</sup> I tell you, I will never again drink this wine until the day I drink the new wine with you in my Father's Kingdom."

<sup>30</sup> Then they sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives.

### Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

<sup>31</sup> Then Jesus said to them, "This very night all of you will run away and leave me, for the scripture says, 'God will kill the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'

<sup>32</sup> But after I am raised to life, I will go to Galilee ahead of you."

<sup>33</sup> Peter spoke up and said to Jesus, "I will never leave you, even though all the rest do!"

<sup>34</sup> Jesus said to Peter, "I tell you that before the rooster crows tonight, you will say three times that you do not know me."

<sup>35</sup> Peter answered, "I will never say that, even if I have to die with you!"

And all the other disciples said the same thing.

### Jesus Prays in Gethsemane

<sup>36</sup> Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." <sup>37</sup> He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee. Grief and anguish came over him, <sup>38</sup> and he said to them, "The sorrow in my heart is so great that it almost crushes me. Stay here and keep watch with me."

<sup>39</sup> He went a little farther on, threw himself face downward on the ground, and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, take this cup of suffering from me! Yet not what I want, but what you want."

<sup>40</sup> Then he returned to the three disciples and found them asleep; and he said to Peter, "How is it that you three were not able to keep watch with me for even one hour? <sup>41</sup> Keep watch and pray that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

<sup>42</sup> Once more Jesus went away and prayed, "My Father, if this cup of suffering cannot be taken away unless I drink it, your will be done." <sup>43</sup> He returned once more and found the disciples asleep; they could not keep their eyes open.

<sup>44</sup> Again Jesus left them, went away, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

<sup>45</sup> Then he returned to the disciples and said, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Look! The hour has come for the Son of Man to be handed over to the power of sinners. <sup>46</sup> Get up, let us go. Look, here is the man who is betraying me!"

### The Arrest of Jesus

<sup>47</sup> Jesus was still speaking when Judas, one of the twelve disciples, arrived. With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs and sent by the chief priests and the elders.

<sup>48</sup> The traitor had given the crowd a signal: “The man I kiss is the one you want. Arrest him!”

<sup>49</sup> Judas went straight to Jesus and said, “Peace be with you, Teacher,” and kissed him.

<sup>50</sup> Jesus answered, “Be quick about it, friend!”

Then they came up, arrested Jesus, and held him tight. <sup>51</sup> One of those who were with Jesus drew his sword and struck at the High Priest's slave, cutting off his ear. <sup>52</sup> “Put your sword back in its place,” Jesus said to him. “All who take the sword will die by the sword. <sup>53</sup> Don't you know that I could call on my Father for help, and at once he would send me more than twelve armies of angels? <sup>54</sup> But in that case, how could the Scriptures come true which say that this is what must happen?”

<sup>55</sup> Then Jesus spoke to the crowd, “Did you have to come with swords and clubs to capture me, as though I were an outlaw? Every day I sat down and taught in the Temple, and you did not arrest me. <sup>56</sup> But all this has happened in order to make come true what the prophets wrote in the Scriptures.”

Then all the disciples left him and ran away.

### Jesus before the Council

<sup>57</sup> Those who had arrested Jesus took him to the house of Caiaphas, the High Priest, where the teachers of the Law and the elders had gathered together. <sup>58</sup> Peter followed from a distance, as far as the courtyard of the High Priest's house. He went into the courtyard and sat down with the guards to see how it would all come out. <sup>59</sup> The chief priests and the whole Council tried to find some false evidence against Jesus to put him to death; <sup>60</sup> but they could not find any, even though many people came forward and told lies about him. Finally two men stepped up <sup>61</sup> and said, “This man said, ‘I am able to tear down God's Temple and three days later build it back up.’”

<sup>62</sup> The High Priest stood up and said to Jesus, “Have you no answer to give to this accusation against you?” <sup>63</sup> But Jesus kept quiet. Again the High Priest spoke to him, “In the name of the living God I now put you under oath: tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.”

<sup>64</sup> Jesus answered him, “So you say. But I tell all of you: from this time on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right side of the Almighty and coming on the clouds of heaven!”

<sup>65</sup> At this the High Priest tore his clothes and said, “Blasphemy! We don't need any more witnesses! You have just heard his blasphemy! <sup>66</sup> What do you think?”

They answered, “He is guilty and must die.”

<sup>67</sup> Then they spat in his face and beat him; and those who slapped him <sup>68</sup> said, “Prophecy for us, Messiah! Guess who hit you!”

### Peter Denies Jesus

<sup>69</sup> Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard when one of the High Priest's servant women came to him and said, “You, too, were with Jesus of Galilee.”

<sup>70</sup> But he denied it in front of them all. “I don't know what you are talking about,” he answered, <sup>71</sup> and went on out to the entrance of the courtyard. Another servant woman saw him and said to the men there, “He was with Jesus of Nazareth.”

<sup>72</sup> Again Peter denied it and answered, “I swear that I don’t know that man!”

<sup>73</sup> After a little while the men standing there came to Peter. “Of course you are one of them,” they said. “After all, the way you speak gives you away!”

<sup>74</sup> Then Peter said, “I swear that I am telling the truth! May God punish me if I am not! I do not know that man!”

Just then a rooster crowed, <sup>75</sup> and Peter remembered what Jesus had told him: “Before the rooster crows, you will say three times that you do not know me.” He went out and wept bitterly.

#### Intro Questions:

1. What expressions love and forgiveness did you see in the story?
2. Did you notice any specific emotions Jesus was feeling?

#### PERSONAL REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

*Hold your hands up to the people next to you and find the one with the smallest hands. Go from smallest to biggest. If it’s close, use the index finger as the tie-breaker!*

1. What act of forgiveness by Jesus impacted you the most? (use student response sheet)
2. What emotions that Jesus expressed, or you observed, stood out to you the most? (use student response sheet)
3. What situation in your life, where you are being called to forgive someone because of the lies they told, seems to be pressing on your heart right now? (use student response sheet)
4. Take a minute and share your answer from #3, if you feel comfortable. Include how you would like to handle it according to the world’s guidelines and how you think Jesus might encourage you to act. If you are not sure, ask you leader and other members of your small group for their perspective.
5. Each of you write your own question and take turns asking and answering them together as a group:

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**CENTRAL BIBLE PASSAGES**

It often feels difficult, or even impossible, to let go of that doubt in your heart and trust that God's way is the right way and will ultimately be more rewarding and restorative than something we can come up with. We think, "he just doesn't get it" or "they'll get away with it!" or even "by not doing something back, I'm sending the message that it is ok!" Wrestling with these thoughts is not sinful and doesn't make you weak or bad. Jesus also wrestled with how to respond to his doubt. Hopefully, what you come to see is that choosing to respond according to heaven's standards will always be more fulfilling than following the ways of this world. God reigns over everything; and by choosing to live our lives by responding to others' sins with grace, forgiveness, and love, we get to play a part in literally bringing heaven down to earth! That is amazing!! Take a look at these two Scriptures and notice how Hebrews 4 talks about the bigger picture and overarching truths and then Jesus gives us a clear example of how to live that out day to day in John 13.

***Hebrews 4:12-16***

The word of God is alive and active, sharper than any double-edged sword. It cuts all the way through, to where soul and spirit meet, to where joints and marrow come together. It judges the desires and thoughts of the heart. There is nothing that can be hid from God; everything in all creation is exposed and lies open before his eyes. And it is to him that we must all give an account of ourselves.

***Jesus the Great High Priest***

Let us, then, hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we have a great High Priest who has gone into the very presence of God—Jesus, the Son of God. Our High Priest is not one who cannot feel sympathy for our weaknesses. On the contrary, we have a High Priest who was tempted in every way that we are, but did not sin. Let us have confidence, then, and approach God's throne, where there is grace. There we will receive mercy and find grace to help us just when we need it.

***John 13:1-20***

It was now the day before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. He had always loved those in the world who were his own, and he loved them to the very end.

Jesus and his disciples were at supper. The Devil had already put into the heart of Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, the thought of betraying Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had given him complete power; he knew that he had come from God and was going to God. So he rose from the table, took off his outer garment, and tied a towel around his waist. Then he poured some water into a washbasin and began to wash the disciples' feet and

dry them with the towel around his waist. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Are you going to wash my feet, Lord?”

Jesus answered him, “You do not understand now what I am doing, but you will understand later.”

Peter declared, “Never at any time will you wash my feet!”

“If I do not wash your feet,” Jesus answered, “you will no longer be my disciple.”

Simon Peter answered, “Lord, do not wash only my feet, then! Wash my hands and head, too!”

Jesus said, “Those who have taken a bath are completely clean and do not have to wash themselves, except for their feet. All of you are clean—all except one.” ( Jesus already knew who was going to betray him; that is why he said, “All of you, except one, are clean.”)

After Jesus had washed their feet, he put his outer garment back on and returned to his place at the table. “Do you understand what I have just done to you?” he asked. “You call me Teacher and Lord, and it is right that you do so, because that is what I am. I, your Lord and Teacher, have just washed your feet. You, then, should wash one another's feet. I have set an example for you, so that you will do just what I have done for you. I am telling you the truth: no slaves are greater than their master, and no messengers are greater than the one who sent them. Now that you know this truth, how happy you will be if you put it into practice!

“I am not talking about all of you; I know those I have chosen. But the scripture must come true that says, ‘The man who shared my food turned against me.’ I tell you this now before it happens, so that when it does happen, you will believe that ‘I Am Who I Am.’ I am telling you the truth: whoever receives anyone I send receives me also; and whoever receives me receives him who sent me.”

### LIFE APPLICATION:

1. List the ways that we can depend on God in these situations (use student response sheet)
2. Develop your own group list of the three best ways to express love and forgiveness in the face of doubt. Make sure to focus on realistic day-to-day actions that you can use to bring heaven to earth (use student response sheet)
3. Actively pray together for group members to have a chance to talk privately with those who have lied and that it be an opportunity for them to spread Jesus' message of grace and redemption. Make a commitment to pray for each other every day this week!
4. Write your own challenge:



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STUDENT RESPONSES:

1. WHAT ACT OF FORGIVENESS BY JESUS IMPACTED YOU THE MOST?

2. WHAT EMOTIONS, THAT JESUS EXPRESSED, OR YOU OBSERVED,  
STOOD OUT TO YOU THE MOST?

3. WHAT SITUATION IN YOUR LIFE, WHERE YOU ARE BEING CALLED TO FORGIVE SOMEONE BECAUSE OF THE LIES THEY TOLD, SEEMS TO BE PRESSING ON YOUR HEART RIGHT NOW?
4. EACH OF YOU WRITE YOUR OWN QUESTION AND TAKE TURNS ASKING AND ANSWERING THEM TOGETHER AS A GROUP:
5. LIST THE WAY THAT WE CAN DEPEND ON GOD IN THESE SITUATIONS.

6. DEVELOP YOUR OWN GROUP LIST OF THE THREE BEST WAYS TO EXPRESS LOVE AND FORGIVENESS IN THE FACE OF DOUBT. MAKE SURE TO FOCUS ON REALISTIC DAY-TO-DAY ACTIONS THAT YOU CAN USE TO BRING HEAVEN TO EARTH.

7. WRITE DOWN GROUP MEMBERS' PRAYER REQUESTS: