

Jesus Raised Lazarus

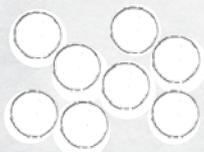
BIBLE PASSAGE: John 11:1-7,17-44

MAIN POINT: Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

KEY PASSAGE: Psalm 103:2-3

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did Jesus heal people from? Jesus healed people from sickness, sin, and death.

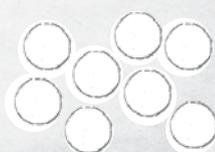
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Leader BIBLE STUDY

Jesus received word that His friend Lazarus was sick. Lazarus was the brother of Mary and Martha. They lived in the town of Bethany, which was about two miles away from Jerusalem. Mary and Martha sent a message to Jesus, likely expecting Him to come right away.

Jesus loved Mary, Martha, and Lazarus; yet He stayed where He was, and Lazarus died. Why would Jesus do such a thing? Jesus said that Lazarus' sickness was "for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it" (John 11:4). He said that He was glad He wasn't there when Lazarus died so that the disciples may believe. (John 11:15)

Jesus' timing is always perfect, and He acts or doesn't act so that God will be glorified.

By the time Jesus arrived in Bethany, Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days. Martha went to meet Jesus. She said to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother wouldn't have died." Jesus had shown His power to heal people who were sick. Even still, she believed He could do a miracle.

Jesus told Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25). Jesus is the source of life—eternal life that cannot be destroyed by death. Believers do not need to fear death because physical death is not the end. (See John 11:25-26.) Jesus endured death for us so that when we die and are absent from our physical bodies, our souls are with the Lord. (See 2 Cor. 5:8.)

Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. His messiahship was clearly on display, and it was Jesus' claims to be the Son of God that would lead to His death on the cross. Jesus interrupted Lazarus's funeral knowing His would soon follow.

Emphasize to kids that when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, He showed that He has power over death. Jesus died on the cross for our sin and rose from the dead. He gives eternal life to those who trust in Him.



The BIBLE STORY

Bible Storytelling Tips

Jesus Raised Lazarus

John 11:1-7,17-44

- **Act it out:** Take volunteers to act out the story. Assign parts for Jesus, a few disciples, Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. Use props and costumes to really make the story engaging.
- **Move with the story:** Start at one end of the room when you begin telling the story. When Jesus travels to Bethany, move to the other side of the room. Place props along the way that you can use to emphasize different parts of the story.

Jesus and Lazarus were friends. Lazarus lived in the town of Bethany, in Judea, with his sisters, Mary and Martha. **One day, Lazarus got sick. Mary and Martha sent a message to Jesus. “Lord, Your friend Lazarus is sick,” they said.**

Jesus told His disciples, “Lazarus’s sickness will not end in death. **This sickness will bring glory to God and to the Son of God.**” Jesus stayed where He was for two more days. Then Jesus said, “Let’s go back to Judea.”

By the time Jesus arrived in Bethany, Lazarus had been in a tomb for four days. Martha hurried to meet Jesus, but Mary stayed home.

Martha said, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother wouldn’t have died.” Martha knew Jesus could do a miracle, though. “I know God will give You whatever You ask,” she said.

Jesus replied, “Your brother will rise again.”

Martha believed that Lazarus would rise from the dead in the future—on the last day. But **Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in Me, even if he dies, will live. Everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die—ever. Do you believe this?”**

“Yes, Lord,” Martha said. “I believe You are the Messiah, the Son of God.”

Martha went back to her house. She told Mary that Jesus wanted to see her. So Mary left the house, and all the people who had come to comfort Mary and Martha followed her.

Mary fell at Jesus’ feet and said, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died!” Mary was

crying, and Jesus wept too.

Mary led Jesus to the tomb where Lazarus was buried.

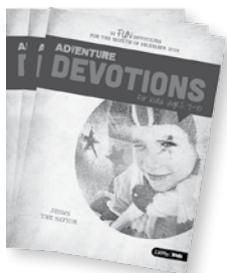
It was a cave, and a huge stone covered the opening.

“Remove the stone,” Jesus said.

So the stone was moved aside. Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank You that You heard Me.” Then Jesus shouted, “Lazarus, come out!”

Lazarus came out of the tomb, wrapped in linen and cloth. Jesus said, “Unwrap him and let him go.”

Christ Connection: When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, He showed that He has power over death. Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life.” Jesus died on the cross for our sin and rose from the dead. He gives eternal life to those who trust in Him.



**WANT TO
DISCOVER
GOD'S WORD?
GET
ADVENTURE!**

Invite kids to check out this week's devotionals to discover Mary and Martha waited for Jesus—but He arrived “too late.” Jesus reminds us that those who trust Him will live with Him forever, even if we die. (Isa. 41:10) Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out www.lifeway.com/devotionals.

Small Group OPENING

SESSION TITLE: Jesus Raised Lazarus

BIBLE PASSAGE: John 11:1-7,17-44

MAIN POINT: Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

KEY PASSAGE: Psalm 103:2-3

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did Jesus heal people from? Jesus healed people from sickness, sin, and death.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. As kids arrive, ask them about a time they cried. What caused them to cry? What helped them feel better?

SAY • In today's Bible story, we will hear about a time Jesus cried. Don't worry, though, our story has a happy ending. What do you think Jesus could do to give a sad event a happy ending?

Activity page (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete the "Miraculous Color" activity page. Kids will follow the color key to complete the picture.

SAY • In our story today, Jesus did something amazing! As you color in the different spaces with the correct colors, try to guess what the picture shows. What do you think Jesus did that was so amazing? We will find out soon.

- "Miraculous Color" activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Sad or happy?

Gather the kids to the center of the room. Read different scenarios and invite the kids to act out being happy or sad depending on the situation. Encourage them to ham it up and be silly.

Examples:

- You won first prize at a dance competition.
- Your baseball team lost every game.
- You skinned your knee while climbing a tree.
- You got invited to your friend's birthday party.

SAY • Our Bible story today starts with sad news and ends with a happy event. We'll learn more soon!

OPTION 2: What's that smell?

Post an allergy alert before class. Bring in multiple strongly scented items, like vanilla extract, lemon oil, or cocoa powder. Bring one stinky object, like pungent cheese, a dirty sock, or malt vinegar. Put each item in an opaque container with a lid. Allow kids to come up, put on a blindfold, and smell one of the items in question. If the kid cannot guess what it is, give other kids a chance to smell it. If she guesses it correctly, take it out and show everyone the item.

SAY • Smells can communicate different things to us.

Vanilla might make you think of cookies or ice cream. Something that stinks might warn you to stay away, like a skunk! In our Bible story today, we will learn about something people did not want to open because what was inside was stinky. What do you think it could be?



LOW PREP

- Allergy Alert download
- strongly scented items (vanilla extract, lemon oil, or cocoa powder)
- stinky item (pungent cheese, a dirty sock, or malt vinegar)
- blindfolds
- containers with lids

Transition to large group

Large Group LEADER

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Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as large group time begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

• leader attire

[Large Group Leader enters wearing white lab coat and stethoscope around his or her neck.]

LEADER • Hey, kids! I'm glad you are here. Sometimes being a doctor can make me feel pretty sad. I have to see a lot of sick people who are hurting. Sometimes I can help them, and sometimes I can't. Those times I can't help are always very sad for me. Having good friends around like each of you helps me feel better. Learning about Jesus and the amazing power He has to heal helps even more!

Today we have one more story to share about Jesus' power to heal. It's one of my favorites and always helps me trust Jesus more. Would you all like to hear it? *[Allow responses.]* Great to hear! I think it's going to blow your mind.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • Remember, we have been learning about Jesus' ministry on earth. We have been focusing on the times Jesus healed people. Does anyone remember the big picture question? [*Allow responses.*] Yep, that's right: ***What did Jesus heal people from?*** Who can tell me the answer? [*Allow responses.*] Right again! ***Jesus healed people from sickness, sin, and death.*** Great job.

Giant timeline (1 minute)

LEADER • Who can tell me the last few weeks of stories we've learned? What did Jesus do in the first story we learned? [*Allow responses.*] **Jesus healed a man and forgave his sins.** What did Jesus do in the story from the week after that? [*Allow responses.*] **Jesus healed a man with many evil spirits.** And what about the story we heard last week? **Jesus healed a bleeding woman and raised a girl from the dead.** This week we are learning a story called "Jesus Raised Lazarus."

- Giant Timeline
- Main Point Posters (optional)

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to John 11:1-7,17-44. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video "Jesus Raised Lazarus."

LEADER • Lazarus, Mary, and Martha were brother and sisters. Jesus was friends with all of them, but when He heard that Lazarus was sick, Jesus did not rush to go heal Lazarus. He had a different plan, so He waited two more days.

When Jesus did decide to go to Judea, where

- Bibles
- "Jesus Raised Lazarus" video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Lazarus and his sisters lived, His disciples were worried. They knew that the religious leaders in that area were still angry at Jesus. Jesus' disciples were afraid that if Jesus went back, the leaders might capture or hurt Him. But Jesus knew that Lazarus had died, and He had a plan to change that.

When Jesus and His disciples arrived, Lazarus had been buried four days. Martha, his sister, went out to greet Jesus. She was very sad about her brother's death. Jesus told her that Lazarus would rise again, but Martha didn't fully understand Jesus. Jesus told her that He was the resurrection and the life. He explained that those who believe in Him will live even if they die.

When Mary came out, Jesus cried with her and the people who were sad about Lazarus. Then Jesus told them to open the tomb that Lazarus was buried in. Martha thought that was a bad idea because the body would have smelled very bad. But Jesus insisted, and they obeyed. When the stone was moved, Jesus called into the grave, "Lazarus, come out." Lazarus obeyed! He came out of the tomb all wrapped up, just as he had been when they closed his body inside. Everyone was amazed. **Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.**

Note: You may use this opportunity to use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

Christ connection

LEADER • You see, Jesus knew that Lazarus was dying. He could have rushed to Bethany, the city where Lazarus lived, and healed him immediately. Jesus could have healed Lazarus just by thinking about it. But instead, Jesus allowed Lazarus to die so that Jesus could show His power and authority even over death. As a result,

not only was Lazarus raised to life, but many people saw Jesus' power and believed in Him.

God has a way of turning sad things into good things. The best example of this was Jesus' death. Jesus was perfect and did not deserve to die. When the people put Him on the cross, it was a very sad day. But what did God do? God raised Jesus from the grave and made the way for us to be forgiven and made new! When we believe in Jesus, He forgives our sin and gives us life forever with God.

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Psalm 103:2-3.

LEADER • King David understood the importance of praising God for the good things He does for us, like forgiving our sins and healing our sicknesses. We memorize key passages like this one to help us remember to praise God too.

Lead boys and girls in singing "My Soul, Praise the Lord."

- Key Passage Poster
- "My Soul, Praise the Lord" song

Discussion starter video (4 minutes)

LEADER • If you are watching a movie, how can you tell when the story is over? Think about that as you watch this video.

Show the "Unit 24, Session 4" discussion starter video. Discuss why the kid in the video was upset that the movie stopped. How did the kid know the movie wasn't actually over? When people die, what can give us hope for the future?

LEADER • Jesus told Martha that He is the resurrection and the life. He explained that those who believe in Him

- "Unit 24, Session 4" discussion starter video

will have life even through death. We trust Jesus and know that He will give us life when we believe in Him. Even after our physical bodies die, our spirit remains alive with God until Jesus returns to give us new, glorified bodies.

Sing (4 minutes)

• “Mighty Healer” song

LEADER • Let’s praise Jesus with a song.
Sing together “Mighty Healer.”

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to small groups.

LEADER • God, thank You for sending Jesus to be our Savior. He is all we need, and we know that we can live forever with You when we trust Him. Help us live lives that honor You. Amen.

Dismiss to small groups

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

Small Group LEADER

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Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- "My Soul, Praise the Lord" song

Allow each kid a chance to say the key passage from memory. Work with kids who have not memorized the verses, helping them recite them. Then sing the key passage song.

SAY • Like King David, we need to remind ourselves every day about what Jesus has done for us. We can get distracted by everything else going on in life that we forget the gospel. Memorizing God's Word can help us remember what is true about God and about ourselves. Use our key passage song to help you memorize our key passage.

Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Main Point Poster

Distribute a Bible to each kid and help them locate John 11:1-7,17-44. Form two teams of kids and alternate asking questions to each team. If a team is correct, they receive a point. If they are incorrect, the opposing team has a chance to answer the question to receive the point. The team with the most points after all questions have been asked wins.

Questions:

1. Which of Jesus' friends got sick? (*Lazarus, John 11:1*)
2. Who were Lazarus's sisters? (*Mary and Martha; John 11:1,21,32*)
3. How much longer did Jesus stay in the place where He was? (*two days, John 11:6*)
4. What happened to Lazarus while Jesus was away? (*Lazarus died, John 11:14*)
5. How long had Lazarus been in the tomb when Jesus arrived? (*four days, John 11:17*)
6. Which sister came to meet Jesus right away? (*Martha, John 11:20*)
7. Who did Jesus say He is? (*the resurrection and the life, John 11:25*)
8. What did Martha believe about Jesus? (*He is the Messiah, the Son of God; John 11:27*)
9. What did Jesus shout? (*"Lazarus, come out!" John 11:43*)
10. Why did Jesus raise people from the dead? (*Jesus raised people from the dead to show that He has power over death, John 11:4*)

SAY • When **Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead**, He showed that He has power over death. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life." Jesus died on the cross for our sin and rose from the dead. He gives eternal life to those who trust in Him. ***What did Jesus heal people from? Jesus healed people from sickness, sin, and death.***

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

Activity choice (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Just in time

Invite the kids to sit in a circle with their legs crossed. Each



Tip: Encourage kids who are “out” to continue clapping and chanting the rhyme so they are still included in the fun.

kid should rest his hands on his knees with his palms up. Each kid’s left hand will be under the right hand of the kid sitting to his left. Choose a kid to go first. She will use her right hand to gently clap the right hand of the kid to her left, while leading the kids to chant a rhyme. The clapping will pass around the circle in rhythm with the chant. When the last word, *out*, is spoken, the last kid will attempt to clap the hand of the kid to his left. If that kid pulls her hand away quickly enough, she is safe and he is out. If he claps her hand, she is out. Restart the game and play until there is only one kid remaining.

Rhyme:

“Down in the town of Bethany
Where Mary and Martha liked to be
Laz’rus’s death made people pout
‘Til Jesus said to him, ‘Come out!’”

SAY • In our game, you needed perfect timing to make sure your hand didn’t get slapped. In our story, Jesus displayed His perfect timing, but not by rushing to heal Lazarus. Jesus waited two more days before traveling to Bethany. When He arrived, He showed everyone His power and glory by raising Lazarus from the dead. Jesus’ timing is always perfect, even when we don’t understand it. Jesus died on the cross at just the right time to save people from sin.

OPTION 2: Talk about life

At the front of the room, draw a Venn diagram to compare signs of physical life with signs of spiritual life through Jesus. As you discuss the ways they are similar and different, invite kids to act out some of the signs they are suggesting.

SAY • Our Bible story does a good job of showing the

- chalkboard or white board
- chalk or markers

difference between physical life and spiritual life. Lazarus had died due to a physical sickness. **Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.** Jesus spoke to Martha and said that He is the resurrection and the life. He explained that people who believe in Him live even if they die. He was talking about spiritual life with God! When we trust Jesus, He takes away our sin and God gives us Jesus' righteousness. We are then spiritually alive with new hearts that love and want to obey Him. Physical life is a gift from God, but it eventually ends. Spiritual life is an even greater gift from God, and it never ends!

Tip: Help guide your group through the discussion using examples of physical life, such as breathing or needing to eat, and examples of spiritual life such as prayer or confessing sin.

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute each child's journal. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture of something they learned about Jesus from the stories of His healing people. Encourage them to share the stories with their friends and family.

SAY • Jesus died on the cross and rose again on the third day to provide the way for us to be forgiven and made new. This is the most important healing Jesus provides. ***Jesus healed people from sickness, sin, and death.***

Make sure each child secures this week's sheet in the journal, and then collect them. Keep the journals in the classroom so they will be available every week or as often as you wish to use them.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page provided with this session. Pray, asking God to help your group love Him and understand more about Him. Ask God to help the kids in your group trust Him to heal people in His perfect timing.

- markers or crayons
- Journal Page
- Bible story coloring page, 1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.