

## 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. (John 11:5) 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 would 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. Decay had set in, and Mary and Martha were grieving. 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.

## Older Kids BIBLE STUDY OVERVIEW

**Session Title:** Jesus Has Power Over Death

**Bible Passage:** John 11:1-44

**Big Picture Question:** Why did Jesus raise people from the dead? Jesus raised people from the dead to show that He has power over death.

**Key Passage:** John 11:25-26

**Unit Christ Connection:** Jesus demonstrated His power over the brokenness of the world caused by the fall.

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Additional suggestions for specific groups are available at [gospelproject.com/kids/additional-resources](http://gospelproject.com/kids/additional-resources).

For free online training on how to lead a group, visit [ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject](http://ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject).

# The BIBLE STORY

## Jesus Has Power Over Death

John 11:1-44

Jesus and Lazarus were friends. Lazarus lived in the town of Bethany, which was in the region of Judea. Lazarus had two sisters, Mary and Martha, and they lived there too. **One day, Lazarus got sick. Mary and Martha sent a message to Jesus. "Lord, Your friend Lazarus is sick," they said.**

**When Jesus heard the news about Lazarus, He said, "Lazarus's sickness will not end in death. This sickness will bring glory to God and to the Son of God." Jesus loved Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. He stayed where He was for two more days. Then Jesus told His disciples, "Let's go back to Judea."**

The disciples didn't think that was a very good idea. The Jews in that area did not like Jesus. They had even tried to kill Him! But Jesus said, "Lazarus is our friend. He has fallen asleep, but I'm going to go wake him up."

The disciples thought Lazarus was just resting, so Jesus explained what He meant. "Lazarus has died," Jesus said. "Let's go to him now."

**By the time Jesus arrived in Bethany, Lazarus had been in a tomb for four days.** Many people had come to comfort Mary and Martha since their brother had died. **When Martha heard Jesus was coming, she hurried to meet Him.** 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 to get Mary. 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.

**When Mary saw Jesus, she fell at His 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.**

Martha said, "Lord, it's been four days since Lazarus died. There will be a smell."

Jesus said, "Didn't I tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?"

**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 *Bible Express*!

Invite kids to check out today's devotional to discover more about Jesus being the way, the truth, and the life. Whoever believes in Jesus will one day live with Him forever! Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out [www.lifeway.com/devotionals](http://www.lifeway.com/devotionals).



## Small Group OPENING

**Session Title:** Jesus Has Power Over Death

**Bible Passage:** John 11:1-44

**Big Picture Question:** Why did Jesus raise people from the dead? Jesus raised people from the dead to show that He has power over death.

**Key Passage:** John 11:25-26

**Unit Christ Connection:** Jesus demonstrated His power over the brokenness of the world caused by the fall.

### Welcome time

Greet each kid as he arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group.

Choose a few volunteers to tell about how they feel at the end of something—the end of a movie, the end of a book, the end of a vacation, and so forth. What makes an ending a happy ending or a sad ending?

### Activity page (5 minutes)

- “Come Out!” activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils

Invite kids to work individually or in pairs to complete the activity page “Come Out!” Kids should use their Bibles and the clues given to solve the puzzle.

**Say** • What is the name of the man Jesus told to “Come out!”? (*Lazarus*) I wonder where Lazarus was and why Jesus said that to him. We’ll find out those answers and more when we hear today’s Bible story.

### Session starter (10 minutes)

**Option 1:** Wait for it

Instruct kids to be seated. Explain that you are going to set a timer for 10 seconds. Lead kids to count to 10 together



- stopwatch or timer

- beach ball
- “Something Beautiful” song

*Waiting*

while you run the timer. When kids finish counting, stop the timer. How accurate was their counting?

Explain that this time, kids should count silently to themselves. Set the timer for 15 seconds. When kids think 15 seconds have passed, they should stand. Note which kid stands closest to the 15-second time. Wait for several kids to stand, and then announce the winner. Play several rounds, varying the time kids should wait before they stand.

**Say** • Was it difficult to wait for the time to pass? How many times did you stand before the time was up? What types of things do you have to wait for in life? Why is waiting difficult?

• In today’s Bible story, Jesus was called to visit a friend. Jesus didn’t go right away; He waited. We’ll soon find out why.

### Option 2: Silly stunts

Lead kids to stand in a circle. Give one player a beach ball. Kids should pass the beach ball around the circle. Each player may pass the ball to the player standing next to him, or he may toss the ball across the circle.

As kids pass the ball, play the unit theme song. Pause the music and say, “Come out!” The player holding the ball should set down the ball and step out of the circle. Instruct him to do a silly stunt. (Suggestions: quack like a duck, spin around three times, whistle a familiar tune, walk around like a penguin, and so forth)

**Say** • Today we are going to hear a Bible story about a time Jesus shouted, “Come out!” to His friend who was buried in a tomb. We’ll find out what happened next.

### Transition to large group

# Large Group LEADER

**Session Title:** Jesus Has Power Over Death

**Bible Passage:** John 11:1-44

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**Unit Christ Connection:** Jesus demonstrated His power over the brokenness of the world caused by the fall.

## 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
- personal flotation device

[Large Group Leader enters wearing khaki shorts or pants and a colorful shirt. Leader is carrying a personal flotation device.]

**Leader** • Hello, hello! Welcome back! I'm [your name], and I'm sad to say that this is my family's last day at the swimming beach. I brought this life jacket because I might actually get in the water today. I'll have to wait a while, though. I just ate, and someone once told me you should wait an hour after eating before you swim.

That gives us plenty of time to hear our final Bible story about Jesus' power! All these Bible stories we've heard so far make me so glad that we serve a God who is powerful.

## Timeline map (1 minute)

- Timeline Map

Use the timeline map to point out and review the previous Bible stories, "Jesus Has Power Over Creation," "Jesus Has the Power to Provide," "Jesus Has Power Over Sickness,"

spirits to pigs  
and "Jesus Has Power Over Evil."

**Leader** • We know that Jesus is more powerful than anything and anyone. These Bible stories are just a few examples of ways Jesus showed His power.

Invite kids to share details they remember from previous Bible stories. Emphasize that Jesus can calm storms, provide for our needs, and heal people who are sick. Jesus also has power over evil, and one day He will take away evil once and for all. As time allows, review previous big picture questions and answers.

## Big picture question (1 minute)

**Leader** • Today's Bible story is called "Jesus Has Power Over Death." Now that's interesting. We are going to hear how Jesus helped His friend Lazarus by raising him from the dead. Listen closely to the Bible story to see if you can find the answer to our big picture question: Why did Jesus raise people from the dead?

## Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to John 11:1-44. Tell the Bible story in your own words, or show the Bible story video "Jesus Has Power Over Death."

**Leader** • Lazarus and his sisters, Mary and Martha, were Jesus' friends. When Lazarus got sick, Mary and Martha sent a message to Jesus. Now, when I hear that someone I love is sick, I want to go visit him or her right away! Did Jesus hurry to see Lazarus? No, but Jesus had a bigger plan. He waited two more days before He went to Judea where Lazarus, Mary, and Martha lived.

Jesus' disciples weren't sure if going to Judea was a good idea. Some of the Jews who lived there did not like Jesus. Jesus' disciples did not want Jesus to get hurt. But

- "Jesus Has Power Over Death" video
- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Bible Story Picture Slide or Poster
- Big Picture Question Slide or Poster

Note: For more on the final resurrection, see John 5:26-29; 6:39-40,44; and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17.

Jesus explained that Lazarus had died, and Jesus was going to wake him up.

By the time Jesus got to Bethany, the town where Mary and Martha lived, Lazarus had been buried in a tomb for four days. Martha hurried out to meet Jesus. She knew Jesus could have kept Lazarus from dying. Jesus said, "Your brother will rise again."

Now Martha thought Jesus was talking about the last day—a day in the future when Jesus will come back to earth and all believers will rise from the dead. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in Me, even if he dies, will live."

Martha's sister, Mary, came to meet Jesus too. She cried because her brother had died, and Jesus cried too. They went to the tomb where Lazarus was buried, and Jesus said, "Remove the stone." Martha objected. After four days, Lazarus' body would smell. But Jesus told her that if she believed, she would see how great God is.

So the stone covering the entrance of the tomb was taken away, and Jesus said, "Lazarus, come out!" Lazarus came out of the tomb. He was wrapped in cloth, so Jesus said, "Unwrap him and let him go."

Wow! Do you think you know the answer to our big picture question? *Why did Jesus raise people from the dead?* If Jesus had healed Lazarus when he was sick, no one would have seen Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead. Jesus showed His power over death, and many people who saw what Jesus did believed in Him!

*Why did Jesus raise people from the dead? Jesus raised people from the dead to show that He has power over death.*

- Key Passage Slide or Poster
- "Everlasting Life" song

Gong

- Bible

- "Unit 29 Session 5" discussion starter video

## Key passage (5 minutes)

Ask for volunteers to recite the key passage. Show the key passage poster and lead the kids to read it aloud together.

**Leader** • Our key passage comes from today's Bible story!

Jesus told Martha that He is the resurrection and the life. Everyone will die a physical death unless Jesus comes back. For believers, physical death is not the end. Jesus has power over death. Jesus gives eternal life to those who trust in Him as Lord and Savior. They will be raised from the dead to live with God forever.

Guide boys and girls to sing "Everlasting Life."

## The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (optional)

Using Scripture and the guide provided, explain to boys and girls how to become a Christian. Tell kids how they can respond, and provide counselors to speak with each kid individually. Guide counselors to use open-ended questions to allow kids to determine the direction of the conversation.

Encourage boys and girls to ask their parents, small group leaders, or other adults any questions they may have about becoming a Christian.

## Discussion starter video (5 minutes)

**Leader** • *Why did Jesus raise people from the dead? Jesus raised people from the dead to show that He has power over death.* God's timing is always perfect. Think about that as you watch this video.

Show the "Unit 29 Session 5" video. Lead kids to discuss situations in which perfect timing is important. What happens if something happens too early or too late?

Think about what would happen if you arrived too early to school, and the doors were still locked. What if you arrived too late to a concert, and it was already over?

• "Something Beautiful" song

**Leader** • Jesus went to Lazarus at just the right time so He could show His power over death. The Bible says that God sent Jesus into the world at just the right moment to rescue people from the power of sin and death.

### Sing (3 minutes)

**Leader** • Sometimes we might worry about things like a storm or what we will eat or someone who is sick. Isn't it comforting to know that Jesus has power over all these things? He is in control, and everything He does is for His glory and our good. That makes me so happy. Let's sing! Lead boys and girls to sing the unit theme song,

"Something Beautiful."

### Prayer (2 minutes)

**Leader** • Thanks, everyone! I'm glad you joined me for these Bible stories. Jesus is powerful! Let's say our big picture question and answer it one more time: *Why did Jesus raise people from the dead? Jesus raised people from the dead to show that He has power over death.* Before dismissing to small groups, lead the kids in a time of prayer. Thank God for His perfect timing. Thank Him for sending Jesus, who has power over death. Emphasize that believers do not need to fear death because physical death is not the end. Believers will be raised from the dead to live with God forever.

### 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.

## Small Group LEADER

**Session Title:** Jesus Has Power Over Death

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**Key Passage:** John 11:25-26

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### Key passage activity (5 minutes)

Display the key passage poster and lead kids to read the key passage aloud together. Then remove or cover the poster and instruct kids to form a circle.

Give one kid a ball of yarn or string. He should say the first word of the key passage, hold on to the end of the string, and pass the ball of string to another kid. That kid should say the next word, hold on to the string, and pass the ball of string to a third kid. Repeat the key passage as time allows, forming an intricate web of string.

**Say** • Our key passage comes from today's Bible story. Do you remember who Jesus was talking to when He said these words? (*Martha*)

• **Jesus raised people from the dead to show that He has power over death.** For believers, physical death is not the end. Jesus gives eternal life to those who trust in Him, and they will live with Him forever.

### Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

Provide a Bible for each kid and instruct kids to stand. Guide them to find the Book of John in the Bible. When a kid has located the book, she may sit down. Assist any

- Key Passage Poster
- ball of yarn or string

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Small Group Visual Pack

kids who need help. Ask kids to identify what books come before and after the Book of John. (*Luke, Acts*)

Review the timeline in the small group visual pack. Retell or review the Bible story in your own words, or use the bolded text of the Bible story script.

Direct kids to turn to John 11:1-44 and use the Bible to answer the following questions about the Bible story. If kids struggle to find the answer to a review question, supply the verse reference.

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. **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*)
5. What happened to Lazarus while Jesus was away? (*Lazarus died, John 11:14*)
6. How long had Lazarus been in the tomb when Jesus arrived? (*four days, John 11:17*)
7. Which sister came to meet Jesus? (*Martha, John 11:20*)
8. Who did Jesus say He is? (*the resurrection and the life, John 11:25*)
9. What did Martha believe about Jesus? (*He is the Messiah, the Son of God; John 11:27*)
10. What did Jesus shout? (*"Lazarus, come out!" John 11:43*)

If you choose to review with boys and girls how to become a Christian, explain that kids are welcome to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions.

• **God rules.** God created and is in charge of

everything. (Gen. 1:1; Rev. 4:11; Col. 1:16-17)

- **We sinned.** Since Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Rom. 3:23; 6:23)
- **God provided.** God sent His Son, Jesus, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. (John 3:16; Eph. 2:8-9)
- **Jesus gives.** Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again so we can be welcomed into God's family. (Rom. 5:8; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 3:18)
- **We respond.** Believe that Jesus alone saves you. Repent. Tell God that your faith is in Jesus. (Rom. 10:9-10,13)



• name tags  
• marker

### Activity choice (10 minutes)

#### Option 1: Eyewitness interviews

Write the following names on separate name tags: *Mary*, *Martha*, *Lazarus*. Label additional name tags *Disciple 1*, *Disciple 2*, *Jewish friend 1*, *Jewish friend 2*, and so forth so every kid has a role. Lead kids to review the Bible story by asking the actors the following questions:

1. Disciples: Where did Jesus say He wanted to go?  
(*Judea, John 11:7*)
2. Mary: What did you do when Jesus came to town?  
(*stayed home, John 11:20*)
3. Martha: What did Jesus say your brother would do?  
(*rise again, John 11:23*)
4. Jewish friends: Where did you follow Mary? (*to the tomb, John 11:31*)
5. Lazarus: What command did Jesus give to you?  
(*"Come out!" John 11:43*)

**Say** • *Why did Jesus raise people from the dead? Jesus raised people from the dead to show that He has*

*power over death.*

- Jesus raised Lazarus from physical death. Our sin makes us spiritually dead, but Jesus can free us from the power of sin and death. When we trust in Him as Lord and Savior, He takes away our sin and we can live with Him forever.

#### Option 2: Bound for burial

Form two teams of kids. Instruct each team to choose a volunteer to be wrapped in cloth. At your signal to begin, teams will wrap the volunteer with crepe paper streamers. Ensure that kids wrap the volunteer loosely and do not cover his face with the paper.

As kids work, explain that in Bible times when a person died, his body would be washed, covered with good-smelling spices or oils, wrapped in linen cloth, and buried in a cave or tomb. After a few minutes, repeat Jesus' declaration: "Unwrap him [*her*] and let him [*her*] go."

**Say** • *Why did Jesus raise people from the dead? Jesus raised people from the dead to show that He has power over death.*

#### Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute pencils and journal pages to the kids. Prompt kids to draw a picture prayer, using few or no words. They could praise Jesus for His power or ask Him to help in a specific situation. Encourage them to pray silently as they draw.

Invite kids to share prayer requests. Close the group in prayer, or allow a couple volunteers to close the group in prayer. As time allows, lead kids to complete the activity page "Do You Believe This?" Kids will decode the message to reveal that Jesus is the *resurrection* and the *life*.

• white crepe paper  
streamers or bath  
tissue

• pencils  
• journals  
• Bibles  
• Journal Page, 1 per  
kid (enhanced CD)  
• "Do You Believe  
This?" activity page,  
1 per kid