

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 may believe. (John 11:15) Jesus' timing is always perfect, and He acts or doesn't act so that God will be glorified.

5 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.

Preschool BIBLE STUDY OVERVIEW

Session Title: Jesus Has Power Over Death

Bible Passage: John 11:1-44

Big Picture Question: Who raised people from the dead? Jesus raised people from the dead.

Key Passage: John 11:25

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

Small Group Opening

(15–20 minutes)Page 94

Large Group Bible Study

(10–15 minutes)Page 96

Small Group Activities

(20–25 minutes)Page 98

Snack and Transition

(20 minutes)Page 101

Additional suggestions for specific groups are available at gospelproject.com/kids/additional-resources. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject.

The BIBLE STORY

Jesus Has Power Over Death

John 11:1-44

A man named Lazarus lived in the land of Judea with his two sisters, Mary and Martha. Lazarus and Jesus were friends. One day, Lazarus got sick. Mary and Martha sent a message to Jesus. "Lord, Your friend Lazarus is sick," they said.

Jesus loved Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. When Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick, He said, "Lazarus's sickness will not end in death. This sickness will show how great God is and how great the Son of God is."

But Jesus did not go to see Lazarus right away. He stayed where He was for two more days. Then He told His friends, the disciples, "Let's go back to the land of Judea."

Jesus' friends did not think going to Judea was a very good idea. Some of the people who lived there did not like Jesus. They had tried to hurt Him. But Jesus said, "Lazarus is our friend. He has fallen asleep, but I am going to go wake him up."

Jesus' friends thought that Lazarus was just resting, but Jesus said, "Lazarus has died. Let's go to him now."

By the time Jesus got to the place where Lazarus had lived, Lazarus had been buried 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 Lazarus would not have died." But Martha knew Jesus could do a miracle. "I know God will give You whatever You ask from Him," she said.

Jesus said, "Your brother will rise again."

Martha believed Jesus was telling the truth. She thought Lazarus would rise from the dead at the end of time. But Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life." He said that people who believe in Him may die in their bodies, but God will raise them from the dead. "Do you believe this?" Jesus asked.

Martha said, "Yes, Lord. I believe You are the Son of God."

Then Martha went home to get her sister, Mary. Mary came and fell

at Jesus' feet. "Lord, if You had been here, my brother Lazarus would not have died!" she said. Mary was crying, and Jesus cried too.

Mary took Jesus to the place where Lazarus was buried. It was a cave, and a big stone covered the opening. Jesus told the people to move the stone.

The stone was moved out of the way. Jesus looked up to heaven and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me." Then Jesus shouted, "Lazarus, come out!"

Lazarus came out of the tomb, wrapped in linen and cloth. He was alive! Jesus said, "Unwrap him and let him go."

Christ Connection: 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. Those who trust in Jesus will live forever with Him.

Want to dig a little deeper? Get More!

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.



Small Group OPENING

Session Title: Jesus Has Power Over Death

Bible Passage: John 11:1-44

Big Picture Question: Who raised people from the dead? Jesus raised people from the dead.

Key Passage: John 11:25

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

- "Something Beautiful" song
- offering basket
- Allergy Alert (enhanced CD)
- favorite toys



- "Doctor's Office Search" activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or crayons

Welcome and Session Starter (15-20 minutes)

Play the unit theme song in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow your church's security procedures. Set an offering basket near the door to collect at an appropriate time. Post an allergy alert, if necessary. Set out a few favorite toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

Activity Page: Doctor's Office Search

Help kids complete the activity page by looking for the doctor's items hidden in the picture. Ask the kids if they know what the doctor uses each item for.

Say • Jesus' friend Lazarus was sick. Lazarus' sisters, Mary and Martha, wanted Jesus to come help him. Nowadays when we are sick, we sometimes go to see a doctor. God helps doctors know what is wrong so we can receive the right medicine or treatment. Jesus is better than a doctor; He is God's Son!

Powerful Jesus

Invite the children to think of things that are powerful, such as an airplane, a lion, a windstorm, and so forth. For each idea that the preschoolers come up with, invite them to play it out.

For example, once a child mentions that lions are powerful, encourage everyone to roar like a lion and walk around the room on all fours.

Say • Jesus is bigger and more powerful than everything that we came up with! Jesus is the most powerful because He is God's Son.

Show your emotions

Gather children together and ask them to use facial expressions to show you the emotions as you teach this rhythmic finger play:

"Let me see your happy face. Smile, smile, smile.
[Point to your smile.]

Let me see your angry face. Scowl, scowl, scowl.
[Frown and cross your arms.]

When you're confused, you ask, 'Why, why, why?'
[Shrug your shoulders.]

What do you do when you are sad? You cry, cry, cry."
[Rub your eyes with your fists.]

Say • In today's Bible story, Jesus and His friends were sad. Then Jesus showed His power by raising Lazarus from the dead, and they were happy again!

Transition to Bible study

Tell the children that before they go to the Bible study area, they are going to feel their own heartbeat. Explain that to feel your heartbeat, you must be very quiet and very still. Instruct everyone to put their hand on their heart, and once they feel their heartbeat to raise their other hand.

Say • One way we know that we are alive is that our heart is beating. In today's story, Jesus' friend Lazarus' had died. His heart stopped beating, which made his family and friends sad. Let's listen to hear how Jesus showed His power when His friend died.

Transition cue: Ring the bell, show the countdown video, flip the lights, or clap a simple rhythm for children to copy to gain attention.

Large Group BIBLE STUDY

Session Title: Jesus Has Power Over Death

Bible Passage: John 11:1-44

Big Picture Question: Who raised people from the dead? Jesus raised people from the dead.

Key Passage: John 11:25

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

Large Group Bible Study (10–15 minutes)

Introduce the Bible story

Once all of the children are seated, talk about how God gives life to each person—He has a plan for each person even before they are born! (See Psalm 139:16.)

Say • Did you know that God created each one of you?

God knew when He created you the exact moment you would be born, and He even knows the exact moment when each of us will die one day. It might be scary or sad when someone we love dies, but Jesus has power over everything—even death! Our key passage, John 11:25, says that those who trust in Jesus as their Savior will be with Him forever. Jesus told this verse to His friend Martha when her brother Lazarus died.

Say the key passage a few times using any hand motions you have created, then sing “Everlasting Life.”

Watch or tell the Bible story

Open your Bible to John 11. Explain that John, one of Jesus’ friends, wrote today’s Bible story. John saw what happened with his very own eyes!

Say • At the beginning of the story, Jesus learned that His

- Bible
- Key Passage Poster
- “Everlasting Life” song

Leader’s note: Jesus raised three people from the dead. (Luke 7; Luke 8; John 11). But they would each die again. When Jesus resurrected, He was glorified and lives forever in heaven. (Heb. 7:25)

- “Jesus Has Power Over Death” video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

- Timeline Map
- Big Picture Question Poster

friend Lazarus was very sick. Mary and Martha, Lazarus’s sisters, wanted Jesus to come right away and help Lazarus get better. What do you think Jesus did? Let’s look at our Bible story and see what happened.

Tell the Bible story in your own words using the script provided, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Has Power Over Death.”

Talk about the Bible story

Point to past Bible stories of Jesus’ power on the timeline map, then refer to the timeline map as you review the Bible story. Ask the following questions:

1. Who sent a message to Jesus that His friend Lazarus was sick? (*Mary and Martha*)
2. When Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick did He go see Lazarus right away? (*No, He stayed where He was for two more days.*)
3. Why did Jesus not go to see Lazarus right away? (*Jesus knew the sickness would show how great God is.*)
4. How long was Lazarus in the tomb by the time Jesus arrived? (*four days*)
5. What did Jesus say to Lazarus to bring him out of the tomb? (*“Lazarus, come out!”*)
6. *Who raised people from the dead? Jesus raised people from the dead.*

Say • 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. Those who trust in Jesus will live forever with Him.

Transition to small groups

- Tip: Do activities one of these ways:
- as a group, all at the same time
 - in small groups that rotate through each activity
 - set up as centers, allowing preschoolers to browse and choose

Small Group ACTIVITIES

Session Title: Jesus Has Power Over Death

Bible Passage: John 11:1-44

Big Picture Question: Who raised people from the dead? Jesus raised people from the dead.

Key Passage: John 11:25

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

Tip: Set up activities that work well for your kids and your budget.



Tip: You may need to help younger preschoolers think of opposites to play out.

Small Group Activities (20–25 minutes)

Talk about the big picture question and answer, Christ connection, or details from the Bible story in each activity to reinforce God's big story.

Play out opposites

Tell the children you will say a word, and they will play out that word. Then they will play out its opposite. Here are some suggestions:

- low (squat down) / high (jump up)
- near (kids move near to leader) / far (kids move away from the leader)
- happy (smile) / sad (frown)
- head (touch top of head) / toes (reach down and touch toes)
- loud (shout) / quiet (whisper)
- off (turn lights off) / on (turn lights on)
- move (wiggle and dance) / freeze (stand still)
- asleep (close eyes and pillow head) / awake (open eyes)
- dead (lie down) / alive (jump up)

Say • Jesus' friend Lazarus had died, but Jesus has power over everything, including death. *Who raised people from the dead? Jesus raised people from the dead.*

- "Lazarus," 1 per kid (enhanced CD)
- crayons and markers
- narrow strips of fabric, bath tissue, or ribbon strips
- tape

Wrap up Lazarus

Give a Lazarus figure to each child and invite them to decorate it. Provide narrow strips of fabric, bath tissue, or ¼-inch ribbon strips. Assist the children in wrapping Lazarus fully in the fabric. Secure the fabric on the paper cutouts with tape. As the children work, remind them that Lazarus was covered in cloth when he died and was still wrapped up when Jesus raised him from the dead. It may help to show younger preschoolers an example of a Lazarus you wrapped up before the session.

Say • In Bible times, when people died, they were wrapped in cloth and placed in a cave with a stone in front, called a *tomb*. When Jesus shouted for Lazarus to come out of the tomb, Lazarus was still wrapped in cloth when he came back to life and came out! *Who raised people from the dead? Jesus raised people from the dead.*

Toss the review cube

Before the session, print the review cube pictures. If you have an inflatable game cube, place the pictures in the pockets. If you do not have an inflatable game cube, tape each of the pictures to the side of a lightweight box. Invite the children to line up and invite the first kid in line to toss the cube and describe what is going on in one of the pictures. Review the Bible stories as you toss the cube.

Say • In each of these stories, Jesus showed His power as God's Son. Jesus has power over creation, power to provide, power over sickness, power over evil, and power over death! When Jesus heard Lazarus was sick, what did He say? He said Lazarus' sickness will show how great the Son of God is. Who is the Son of God? (*Jesus!*) *Who raised people from the dead? Jesus raised people from the dead.*

- "Review Cube Pictures" (enhanced CD)
- lightweight, medium-sized box
- tape
- inflatable cube (optional)

Option: Once everyone's name has been sung, sing a final chorus naming Jesus as the good friend.

Sing a good friend song

Lead the children in singing this song. Repeat the song until each child has been named as a "good friend." Sing to the tune of the chorus of "Jesus Loves Me":

"I have a good friend [clap]

I have a good friend [clap]

I have a good friend, and his [her] name is _____

[point to the child named]!"

Say • Lazarus was Jesus' good friend. Since they were friends, Jesus was sad and cried when Lazarus died. Jesus is not only Lazarus' good friend, but He is also God's Son! Jesus is powerful and raised Lazarus from the dead because He is God's Son. *Who raised people from the dead? Jesus raised people from the dead.*

Come out of the tomb!

Cut a door-like opening out of a large cardboard appliance box to make Lazarus's "tomb." Invite the children to take turns going into the tomb and sitting down. Once one child is inside the tomb, the rest of the class says all together: "(Child's name), come out!" The child named will come out. Repeat until each child has a turn being called out of the tomb.

Say • Jesus is so powerful that He raised Lazarus from the dead by saying "Lazarus, come out!" Jesus is powerful because He is God's Son. *Who raised people from the dead? Jesus raised people from the dead.*

- large cardboard box (appliance size if possible)
- scissors or box-cutter (for adult use only)

Option: You may also drape a blanket over a table to create the "tomb," leaving one side open. Kids will crawl underneath the table when they go in the "tomb."

- countdown video (optional)
- Allergy Alert (enhanced CD)
- snack food
- paper cups and napkins

- Journal Page (enhanced CD)
- Bible Story Coloring Page
- books and puzzles
- crayons

Snack and Transition (20 minutes)

Play the countdown video to signal the end of activities time and gather for snack time. Take a restroom break and wash hands or use hand sanitizer. Choose volunteers to help set up for the snack; remind children during snack time to say please and thank you. Thank God for the snack.

Consider serving the children popcorn for today's snack. Talk about how popcorn kernels started out as the seeds of living corn plants. Then they were harvested by a farmer, dried, and prepared with special oils so they would pop when cooked. Remind kids that Jesus has power over death. Jesus raised people from the dead, and one day all the people who love and trust in Jesus will be with Him forever!

Transition

When a child finishes his snack and throws away any trash, he may select a puzzle or book to examine, or play quietly with play dough or a favorite toy.

Offer the journal page for him to draw a picture of Jesus, Mary and Martha, or even Lazarus after he came back to life. Offer to help kids print *John 11:25* or the words *Everlasting life* on their journal page. Remind kids of the key passage: Even if those who trust in Jesus die, they will be with Jesus in heaven. And one day, Jesus promises to raise them from the dead!

Pray over the children. Pray that God would show them how powerful He is. Pray that the children wouldn't be afraid of bad things because Jesus is more powerful than everyone and everything, even death.

Say • Lord Jesus, thank You for this wonderful and true story about Lazarus. Help us trust You as our Savior so that one day we will be with You in heaven! We love you, Jesus! Amen!