

Jesus Raised Lazarus

Bible Passage: John 11

Story Point: Jesus has the power over death

Key Passage: Colossians 1:13-14

Big Picture Question: How does God care for His creation? God loves and rules over His creation according to His perfect plan.

Discussion & Bible skills

Younger Children

Distribute a Bible to each kid. Help kids find John 11. Select a strong reader to read John 11:25-26. Ask the kids which division of the New Testament John is in, and what that division tells us about. (*the Gospels; accounts of Jesus life, death, and resurrection*) Consider displaying the New Testament Israel Map to point out Bethany. (15)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

- How long had Lazarus been in the tomb when Jesus arrived in Bethany? (*four days, John 11:17*)
- Who did Martha say Jesus is? (*the Messiah, the Son of God; John 11:27*)
- What happened when Jesus told Lazarus to come out? (*Lazarus obeyed, John 11:44*)
- How can we know Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God? *Guide kids to think about what Jesus said about Himself, what others said about Jesus, and what Jesus' actions communicated. Remind the kids that only God has power over death. Jesus is God the Son, and we can trust what the Bible says about Him.*
- What does it mean to live even if you die? *Direct kids to think about the new life we receive through Jesus. Help the kids think through both the abundant life we receive as soon as we become Christians and the resurrection and eternal life we are promised in the future. Eternal life starts right away.*
- How do you feel when you think about death? *Help kids process the complexity of grief. Remind kids that sadness about death is normal and healthy. Explain that death was not part of God's original design for creation. Point out that Christians have hope even in sadness because we know that death is not the end for those in Christ. All believers who die are reunited with God and live in His perfect kingdom forever.*

Say • **Jesus has power over death.** Our bodies still get sick and die because we live in a world broken by sin. Someday, Jesus will fix all that sin has broken. We have hope even in sadness because of Jesus.

Older Children

Distribute Bibles. Guide boys and girls to open their Bibles to John 11.

Challenge kids to name the three New Testament books that come before John (*Matthew, Mark, Luke*) and the three books that follow John. (*Acts, Romans, 1 Corinthians*) Choose a volunteer to read aloud John 11:4.

Say • Lazarus was the brother of Mary and Martha. They lived in Bethany, about two miles away from Jerusalem. When Lazarus got sick, Jesus and His disciples were across the Jordan River—probably in a region called Batanea. (buh TAY nee uh) [*Point to Bethany (15) and the region near E7 on the New Testament Israel Map.*]

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

- Why did Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead? *Point out that Jesus could have healed Lazarus while he was sick. Instead, Jesus waited and Lazarus died. Jesus said Lazarus' sickness would end not in death but in God's glory. Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead to show His power over death. Help kids recognize that God sometimes allows bad things to happen so that His glory might be displayed.* (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Phil. 2:9-11.)
- Jesus said, "Everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die—ever." What did He mean? Do you believe this? *Invite kids to share their thoughts. Remind them that unless Jesus returns first, we will face physical death on earth. But Jesus gives us eternal life. Though our bodies may die, this physical death is temporary. When Jesus returns and sets up His kingdom, we will get new bodies and will live with Him forever.* (Option: Choose a kid to read 1 Thess. 4:13-14.)
- How do you think someone who comes back to life from the dead might live differently? How should we live differently as Christians who have been brought from death to life? *Allow kids to share their ideas. Emphasize that when God gives us new life in Jesus, we should turn from our evil ways of sin and live for Him. God created us to do good works and share the good news of Jesus with the world.* (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Eph 2:4-5.)