

Use Week of:

Unit 25 • Session 4

Jesus Raised Lazarus

BIBLE PASSAGE:

John 11

STORY POINT:

Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

KEY PASSAGE:

Colossians 1:13

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

How does God care for His creation?
God loves and rules over all He made.



INTRODUCE THE STORY
(15–20 MINUTES)
PAGE 46



TEACH THE STORY
(10–15 MINUTES)
PAGE 48



EXPERIENCE THE STORY
(20–25 MINUTES)
PAGE 50



Leaders, grow on the go! Listen to session-by-session training every week on Ministry Grid, Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or LifeWay's Digital Pass:
ministrygrid.com/gospelproject | gospelproject.com/podcasts

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

The BIBLE Story

Jesus Raised Lazarus

John 11

Lazarus and Jesus were friends. One day, Lazarus got sick. His sisters, Mary and Martha, sent a message to Jesus. “Lord, Your friend Lazarus is sick,” they said.

Jesus said to the disciples, “Lazarus’ sickness will not end in death. This sickness will show how great God is and how great the Son of God is.”

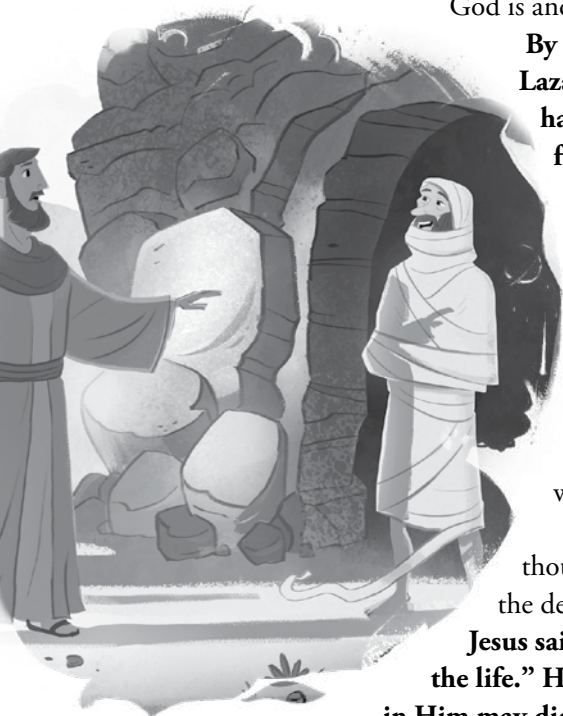
By the time Jesus got to the place Lazarus lived, he was dead and had been buried in a tomb for four days. Martha hurried to meet Jesus. “Lord, if You had been here, my brother Lazarus would not have died.” But Martha knew Jesus could do a miracle. “I know God will give You whatever You ask from Him,” she said.

Jesus said, “Your brother will rise again.”

Martha believed Jesus. 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 Messiah—the Son of God.”



Then Martha went home to get her sister, Mary. **Mary came and fell at Jesus' feet. She said, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother Lazarus would not have died!"**

Mary was crying. Jesus cried too.

Mary took Jesus to the cave where Lazarus was buried. A big stone covered the opening. Jesus told the people to move the stone.

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 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 sins and rose from the dead. Those who trust in Jesus will live forever with Him.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Play it out:** Invite four adults to read and play out being Jesus, Mary, Martha, and the narrator.
- **Travel around the room:** Begin telling the story on one end of the room. When you come to the part where Jesus reaches Lazarus' home, walk across the room to finish the Bible story.

INTRODUCE the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus Raised Lazarus

BIBLE PASSAGE: John 11

STORY POINT: Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

KEY PASSAGE: Colossians 1:13

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How does God care for His creation? God loves and rules over all He made.

Welcome time

- “Jesus Reigns Forever” song
- offering basket
- Allergy Alert
- favorite toys related to the Bible story theme

Play a 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 theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

Activity page

- “Find the Differences” activity page, 1 per child
- crayons or markers

Help preschoolers find and circle the five differences between the two pictures.

SAY • Good job finding the differences! Do you think this picture of living things came before or after this picture of dead things? We don’t usually see things come back to life after death, but Jesus can make that happen! He proves it in today’s Bible story.

LOW PREP

Stand up for siblings

Invite preschoolers to sit on the floor. Ask who has one sister, and invite those children to stand. Re-seat them, then ask for whoever has two brothers to stand. Continue with as many sibling combinations as needed to give everyone a chance to stand at least once. Remember to ask who does not have any brothers or sisters as well.

SAY • In our Bible story today, we will learn about a man

who had two sisters. When the man got sick, his sisters asked Jesus to come. Do you help take care of your family when someone is sick? Do you pray for God to help? That is one of the best ways you can show love for your family.

Match the preview

Print extra copies of Bible story pictures from previous or upcoming sessions. Cut a piece out of each one. Lay all the pictures out on a table, and give each child a piece. Challenge children to study their piece in order to find which picture it belongs to. Ask what they might expect to see in the bigger picture based on what they see in their smaller picture. Help preschoolers match all the previews to the pictures.

· Bible Story Pictures from previous or upcoming sessions
· scissors (adult use)

SAY • Good job figuring out how your little piece fit into the bigger picture! Noticing what was in your piece first helped because you knew that if there was some green grass in your piece, green grass was probably in the big picture too. Today we will learn about something amazing that Jesus did for one person, and one day, He will do the same thing for all who trust in Him. It was like Jesus gave people a little picture of the future!

Transition to teach the story

To gain the attention of all the preschoolers to move them to Bible study, show the countdown video, turn the lights off and on, or clap a simple rhythm for the children to copy. Alternate moving slowly or hurriedly to the Bible study area.

· countdown video (optional)

TEACH the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus Raised Lazarus

BIBLE PASSAGE: John 11

STORY POINT: Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

KEY PASSAGE: Colossians 1:13

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How does God care for His creation? God loves and rules over all He made.

Introduce the Bible story

- Bible
- bookmark
- Giant Timeline

Place a bookmark at John 11 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

SAY • Today's Bible story sounds impossible, but we know it really happened because it's in God's Word! This story is in the New Testament Book of John. John was one of Jesus' disciples and saw what happened.

Point to the Bible story picture on the giant timeline. Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

Watch or tell the Bible story

- Story Point Poster
- "Jesus Raised Lazarus" video (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Show the video or tell the Bible story using the provided storytelling tips. Use the bolded version of the Bible story for young preschoolers.

SAY • Jesus loved His friend Lazarus, but when Jesus heard Lazarus was sick, He didn't hurry to heal him. Why? Jesus said Lazarus' sickness would show how great God is. **Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.** Jesus showed that He has power over death. A little while later, Jesus died on the cross for our sins and rose from the dead. Those who trust in Jesus will live forever with Him even if we die.

Practice the key passage

Place the key passage marker at Colossians 1:13. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Read the key passage aloud. Repeat the key passage in a whisper, and then repeat it a little louder. Continue increasing your volume each time you repeat until shouting.

SAY • When Jesus shouted, “Lazarus, come out,” Lazarus came out of the tomb alive! Jesus showed that He has power over death. Jesus died on the cross for our sins and rose from the dead. Defeating death is how Jesus rescues us and brings us into His kingdom.

Sing the key passage song, “He Has Rescued Us,” and the theme song, “Jesus Reigns Forever.”

• Bible
• Key Passage Marker
• Key Passage Poster
• “He Has Rescued Us (Colossians 1:13)” song
• “Jesus Reigns Forever” song

Learn the big picture question

SAY • Our big picture question asks, *How does God care for His creation? God loves and rules over all He made.* The greatest way God showed His love and care for His creation was sending Jesus to die on the cross for our sins and come back to life. Those who trust in Jesus will live forever with Him!

• Big Picture Question Poster



Missions moment

Display the “Soto Family” photos. Ask preschoolers what they remember about the Soto family.

SAY • Luis and Betty Soto are from a place called Puerto Rico, but they live in Salt Lake City, Utah now. God uses them to tell people how they can have life forever because of Jesus. Most of the people in the Soto’s church speak Spanish.

• “Soto Family” printable

Pray and transition to experience the story

EXPERIENCE the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus Raised Lazarus

BIBLE PASSAGE: John 11

STORY POINT: Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

KEY PASSAGE: Colossians 1:13

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How does God care for His creation? God loves and rules over all He made.

LOW PREP

Pray for the sick

Lead a gospel-centered prayer for people who are sick. Then allow each child to share a prayer request. Invite the child who shared or another child to pray about the request. Close by demonstrating more gospel-centered prayer over all the requests shared.

SAY • When **Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead**, He showed that He has power over sickness and death. We should pray for people because only God has the power to save them! Only Jesus died on the cross for our sins and rose from the dead. So we should pray most of all that everyone would trust in Jesus. People who believe in Him may die in their bodies, but God will raise them from the dead to live forever with Him!

Call by name

Drape a blanket over a table to create a “tomb.” Invite one child to look away while you quietly invite another child to hide in the tomb. Explain that the first child may turn around when you say, “[*Child’s name*], if only you had been here!” She will then guess who is in the tomb by shouting, “[*Second child’s name*], come out!” If his name is called, he will come out, and new children may play each role.

- blanket
- table

SAY • **Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead** simply by calling for him! Even Mary and Martha did not expect Jesus to call their brother out of the tomb that day. That's why they were so disappointed that Jesus had not come to heal Lazarus while he was still alive. Jesus showed that He has power over death. Jesus Himself rose from the dead after dying on the cross for our sins. People who believe in Him may die, but God will call them by name to rise again and live forever with Him!

Paint stones

Gather enough stones for each child to have one. Put on smocks. Give each child a stone, foam plate, and a paintbrush. Squirt paint on additional foam plates. Set out cups of water. Invite preschoolers to paint their stones.

SAY • A big stone covered the opening to the cave where Lazarus was buried. Jesus told the people to move the stone. Then **Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead!** He showed that He has power over death. Jesus died on the cross for our sins and rose from the dead. Those who trust in Jesus will live forever with Him.

- stones, 1 per child
- smocks
- washable paint
- foam plates
- paintbrushes
- cups
- water

Study decay

If possible, prepare a sampling of fruit in various stages of decay for children to examine. Each day before the session, cut a small piece of fruit and place it in an empty, lidded, clear container at room temperature. Try to include a sample that will be four days old by the start of the session.

Invite children to look at or smell the fruit, but not to touch or taste. Challenge them to sort the samples by oldest to newest. If preparing decaying fruit is not possible, use the

- fruit (bananas, berries, apples) that has begun to rot
- lidded, clear containers
- "Fruit Decay" printable (optional)

“Fruit Decay” printable.

SAY • Fruit that has been picked off the plant doesn’t take long to start rotting. What did you think of the one that was cut four days ago? Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days before Jesus arrived, but then **Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead**. No one expected to see him alive and healthy again. Have you ever seen a brown banana turn back to yellow or green again? Only God can reverse death and give life! Jesus showed His power over death again when He rose from the dead Himself. Those who trust in Jesus will have new life forever with Him. Death and decay will be no more!



Sing “This Little Light of Mine”

Read Matthew 5:14-16 to preschoolers. Lead children in singing lyrics and doing the motions to “This Little Light of Mine.” If you are unfamiliar with the song or motions, look them up online before the session.

SAY • We want all the world to see the light of Jesus. Missionaries Luis and Betty Soto are shining the light of Jesus in Salt Lake City, Utah. Very few people in Salt Lake City believe the truth about Jesus according to the Bible. Luis and Betty started a church in Salt Lake City where people are hearing the good news that Jesus rescues people from sin. Let’s join Luis and Betty in praying that God would start more and more churches where the light of Jesus can shine.

Bible

Snack and review

Play the countdown video to signal the end of activities. Wash hands and gather preschoolers for snack time. Pray, thanking God for the snack.

Serve string cheese and crackers for snack. Invite preschoolers to pull strings off their cheese stick and wrap them over the cracker before eating. Talk about how Lazarus came out of the tomb wrapped in strips of cloth. **Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.** He showed that He has power over death. Jesus died on the cross for our sins and rose from the dead. Those who trust in Jesus will live forever with Him.

Show the Bible story picture as you ask the following questions. Retell parts of the Bible story as needed.

1. Which friend of Jesus got sick and died? (*Lazarus*)
2. How long was Lazarus in the tomb? (*four days*)
3. Did Martha believe Jesus could do a miracle? (*yes*)
4. What did Jesus do? (**Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.**)
5. Does Jesus have power over death? (*yes*)
6. ***How does God care for His creation? God loves and rules over all He made.***

Transition

When preschoolers finish their snack, they may color the Bible story coloring page, play a simple game to practice the key passage or big picture question, or sing along to the key passage or theme song.

If parents are picking up their children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Distribute the preschool big picture cards for families.

- countdown video (optional)
- Allergy Alert
- paper cups and napkins
- snack food
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster
- string cheese (optional)
- crackers (optional)

- Bible Story Coloring Page
- crayons
- Key Passage Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster
- "He Has Rescued Us (Colossians 1:13)" song
- "Jesus Reigns Forever" song
- Big Picture Cards for Families: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers