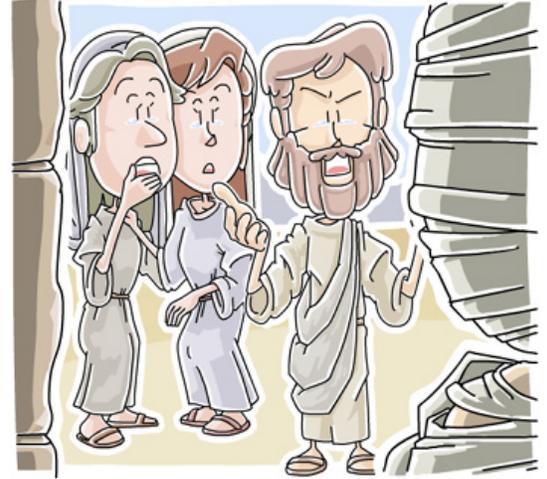

“Jesus Raised Lazarus”

Home Sunday School Lesson on John 11:1-45



God’s Plans Might Surprise Me...but HE is Working Things Out! Sunday School Suggestions to Study and Celebrate the Story of Lazarus (Home Edition)

This “special edition” Sunday school lesson contains adaptations that are geared to doing at home, if circumstances present you with the need to stay away from the larger group church. With a little creativity, you can still guide your child(ren) through a fun and meaningful Bible lesson!

This lesson surrounds the story of Lazarus, and reflects on the recognition that God is always working in our lives, even if we feel like we don’t understand what He is doing.

Lesson focus: Sometimes life feels challenging, and we may not always understand how God is working in us. His plans do not always follow our time table, but we can trust that He always has our best interests in mind, and that one day all things will be made new.

Passage: John 11:1-45

Target Audience: Kindergarten-6th grade (or whoever you might have at home!)

Materials Needed: Bed sheets, paper towel/toilet paper tubes, paper plates, cups, markers or crayons, wrapped straws.

More Teaching Ideas for John 11

- [Bible Lesson: The Resurrection of Lazarus for Kids](#)
- [Crafts on Jesus Raising Lazarus](#)
- [Sunday School Lesson \(John 11:38-44\) Lazarus is Raised by Jesus](#)
- [Jesus Raises Lazarus Lesson](#) (Mission Bible Class)
- [Jesus and Lazarus Science Lesson](#) (Future Flying Saucers)
- See our video playlist on [Jesus Raising Lazarus from the Dead](#)



Game & Lesson Introduction

Lesson Opening: If you are in the comfort of your home, or working with a small group, you have the blessing of flexibility with timing and activities. Feel free to kick things off and start conversation with any variety of openers. Additionally, you could sprinkle these throughout your “lesson” time, doing one in the beginning, one during the story, and one at the end. You might even want to extend an activity and do it at a later time in your day!

- Lazarus mummy wrap...if you wish to conserve toilet paper, you could still practice making a “mummy” by wrapping kids in large bedsheets. See how quickly they can be wrapped, how tight they can get, or how quickly they can unravel from the wrapping.
- Discuss ancient burial techniques. Take a look at things like ancient tombs, mummies, and what people did with their dead. What did this say about what they believed?
- The resurrection straw: this is a simple but fun activity to introduce the topic of resurrection. Take a paper-wrapped straw, and carefully remove the wrapping so that it bunches down into a small ball. Gently add water, a drop at a time, and watch the straw wrapper “come to life”!
- Tears...discuss reasons and circumstances that make us cry. Why do we cry? Did Jesus cry? In this story, He did in fact weep for His friend. Jesus had feelings, because He was human!
- Come out, Lazarus! If multiple kids can play, encourage them to build a fort “tomb” of sorts to hide in. When you call, have them carefully emerge from the tomb.
- Practice a “mummy walk”, with arms straight out and legs not bent at the knees.

After a couple of fun activities, begin to discuss how sometimes things in our lives can be challenging. There are hard things that happen all the time. Sometimes it might feel like God is far away in those times. Today, we will look at a Bible story that has another amazing miracle from Jesus, but also has some challenges for the people involved. It’s sort of like watching a movie where a lot of things go wrong, but there’s still a happy ending. We can know that our lives will ultimately end in victory, because Jesus has already won the victory. It doesn’t mean things will be easy, but we can trust God’s power.

Ask: When have you felt sad, or felt that something was especially difficult for you?



Bible Lesson: Jesus Raised Lazarus from the Dead (John 11)

How you choose to experience the story will vary according to the ages and abilities of your children (and how many are participating). For younger children, you may wish to use a children's or storybook version of the Bible, and explain details as you go. Older kids can take turns helping to read the story. You can also turn this into a skit and have children act out the various parts as you are reading the narrative. You might find a short video version to reinforce it. If your students have longer attention spans, feel free to read the whole story at once, and then discuss questions. If it works better, break things up into chunks and pause for questions as you go along.

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ² It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill. ³ So the sisters sent to him, saying, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." ⁴ But when Jesus heard it he said, "This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." -John 11:1-4

Pause and have kids predict what will happen next. Is Jesus going to heal Lazarus? What might it mean that an illness is for God's glory?

Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁶ So, when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. ⁷ Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." ⁸ The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone you, and are you going there again?" ⁹ Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. ¹⁰ But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." ¹¹ After saying these things, he said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him." ¹² The disciples said to him,



“Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover.”¹³ Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep.¹⁴ Then Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus has died,¹⁵ and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.”¹⁶ So Thomas, called the Twin,¹ said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”
-John 11:5-16

This is a tricky passage to swallow. Couldn't Jesus have healed His friend? Why would He let Lazarus die? It seems like He is taking this somewhat casually...why didn't He go right away when He found out His friend was sick?

These might be tough questions for children to understand...and sometimes it feels this way in our lives. We might think God is being silent, but really He has something better planned...

Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days.¹⁸ Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles¹ off,¹⁹ and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother.²⁰ So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house.²¹ Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.²² But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.”²³ Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”²⁴ Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.”²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life.¹ Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live,²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?”²⁷ She said to him, “Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.” -John 11:17-27

Pay close attention to the responses of Martha and Mary. They seem frustrated, and unsure of why Jesus didn't come right away to heal their brother. At the same time, though, they still trust Him. They still believe in His promises, even if they don't know what will happen.

When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in private, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.”²⁹ And when she heard it,



she rose quickly and went to him. 30 Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him. 31 When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. 32 Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." 33 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved] in his spirit and greatly troubled. 34 And he said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." 35 Jesus wept. 36 So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" 37 But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?" Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it.

39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days." 40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?" 41 So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. 42 I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me." 43 When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out." 44 The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go." -John 11:28-44

There are several significant things that happen here. We see that Jesus is "deeply moved." He loved Lazarus, and loved Martha and Mary. He wept, genuinely crying and grieving for His friend. We can know that Jesus loves us, too, and feels sad with us when we are sad. But Jesus does something else...He goes to the tomb, calls to Lazarus, and brings him back to life! He had clearly died and been buried, but through Christ he returned to life. How might this be something that would bring God's glory?

Also, who else do we know that spent time in a tomb, and came back to life??



In the case of Lazarus or Jesus, pain and hardship, and even death, took place, but ultimately restoration came, too. What does this say about our lives? Things might be challenging, but one day God is going to bring all things together and make a whole new world for us. That is a promise we can believe and take to heart. When we believe and trust God, we can be assured of eventual blessing. Life on Earth is still hard. It's a broken, sinful, messed-up world. But God is in control!

Craft: Lazarus mask, Lazarus out of the tomb

Close with prayer. Ask for God's help in trusting Him, even when we don't understand His ways. Acknowledge His presence and power, and thank Him for His love.





This lesson was prepared by [Kristin Schmidt](#), who serves at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, CO.

She has shared her teaching gifts through *Ministry-To-Children* since 2014 and now serves as our lead curriculum writer.

Kristin has a professional background in elementary and pre-school education. A graduate of Biola University, she holds a Master of Education and will receive the Master of Theology degree from Concordia University, Irvine, California, in May

2020. Kristin grew up in southern California and lived the past 10 years in Georgia. She is a long-distance runner and voracious reader.

We hope you enjoy this free resource. Everything from [Ministry-To-Children.com](#) is 100% free to copy & use in ministry. Since 2007, our website has equipped and encouraged churches from around the world. Our mission is simple.

Help you tell kids about Jesus!

Our team is honored that you choose our material. Thank you for ... serving where God has placed you - telling children about Jesus – and allowing us to be a part of your mission.

Our website now has over 4,000 free resources for your children's ministry. Each month we're adding even more! Here are a few popular sections:

- Over 300 Coloring Pages [Bible Coloring Pages](#).
- Over 700 [Bible Lessons](#) and Complete [Sunday School Curriculum](#)
- We post new [Children's Sermons Object Lessons](#) every week.
- [Sunday School Games](#), [Bible Crafts](#), and [Worship Songs for Kids](#)
- Don't miss our new sister site [Sunday School Works!](#)

