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Jesus Raises Lazarus

Scripture: John 11:1-44

Theme: Jesus has power over death

4th-6th Grade (Ages 9-11)

Free curriculum for small and rural churches

Lesson Overview

Lesson Overview: "Jesus Has Power Over Death" (Based on John 11:1-44) Introduction (Engage): Start with a question like, "Have you ever seen someone who looked really sick, like they might not get better? Today, we're going to meet a man named Lazarus who was sick for very long, so long that even his friends thought he was dead. But Jesus had a big surprise for him! Let's see how God's love can bring someone back from the dead!" --- 1. Lazarus' Big Problem (Reading John 11:1-44) Tell the kids that Mary and Martha sent a message to Jesus: "Lazarus is sick, and he's been sick for two days!" (This was a big deal, it meant he was in a deep coma or close to death.) When Jesus got there, Lazarus had already been buried for four days, four whole days! (Pause here to let kids gasp or imagine how scary that would feel.) Jesus wept, then said, "Lazarus, come out!" And... he walked out! (Use dramatic voices for this part!) Key Point: Jesus didn't just wish Lazarus back to life, he touched the stone over his tomb and said, "Roll away!" Death doesn't scare Him! Even in hard times, God's love is stronger than sadness or sickness. --- Personal Connection: "What's something you've lost that feels really hard to get back, like a favorite toy, a friendship, or even a little piece of yourself because of a hard day? Jesus promises He can bring those things back too. Today, ask Him to help you trust Him, even when things feel scary." --- 2. Why Jesus Waited (John 11:6) Martha and Mary knew Jesus could heal Lazarus, but they also knew time. Jesus waited on purpose so we'd see how much He loves us! (Show a simple diagram of the timeline: "Day 0: Sick, Day 2: Messaged Jesus, Day 4: Buried.") Ask: "Why do you think Jesus waited? What does that teach us about trusting Him?" --- Deeper Question: "If you were one of Jesus' friends, what would you have done differently? Would you have rushed to the tomb like Martha and Mary did?" (Hint: They wanted to worship Jesus first, so even though Lazarus needed healing, they showed gratitude!) --- 3. Lazarus' Miracle (John 11:38-44) Jesus didn't just call Lazarus, He directed the stone away, letting light flood the tomb. Lazarus unwrapped his grave clothes (like old bandages) and walked out! (Show a clip of a kid jumping up and down or a "miracle" art activity.) Ask: "How would you feel if someone did something like that for you? What would you want to do next?" Encouragement: "Jesus doesn't just heal the body, He heals everything. When you feel like you're stuck in sadness or failure, He can roll away the darkness too. Try thanking Him today, even for small things!" --- Closing (Reflect &

Apply): End with a simple prayer or a "Jesus Has Power" song (e.g., "Jesus loves me, Jesus loves me" with a twist: "He can take my fears, He can take my tears..."). Share: "Tomorrow, we'll learn more about how Jesus shows us He's always with us. Remember: No matter how dark it feels, God's love is like the light in a tomb, it's always waiting to shine back!" --- Volunteer Tips: - Act it out! Have kids "weep" (pretend tears), then cheer when Lazarus "stands up." - Art activity: Draw Lazarus' tomb and Jesus' hand reaching out. - Discuss: "How does Jesus' love feel different from love we give to others?" (Hint: It's like a hug that lasts forever!) Prayer: "Dear God, thank You for Your big love that doesn't leave us. Help us trust You, even when things are hard. Amen." Optional reflection: children can draw a picture of Jesus helping their friends, then share one way they can help someone else this week. This extra activity supports the lesson's theme and gives teachers a simple, lowprep option for extending the discussion.

Bible Story

Jesus Raises Lazarus: A Story of Hope

One day, Jesus and His disciples traveled to a village called Bethany, near where Lazarus lived. His sisters, Martha and Mary, were very close friends of Jesus. But something sad happened: Lazarus became very ill, and his friends and family grew worried. They sent a message to Jesus, saying, "Lord, the one You love is sick." Jesus heard this and said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it will be for the glory of God so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." (John 11:4) Jesus knew that this was a chance to show His love and power, even though He didn't go immediately to Lazarus.

When Jesus finally arrived at Bethany, four days had passed since Lazarus became sick. His body had begun to smell bad because of how long he had been lying in the grave. Many people who had come to the funeral mourned with Martha and Mary, while Jesus stood quietly near. Martha went to Jesus and said, "If You had been here, my brother wouldn't have died." Jesus gently told her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha answered, "I know he will rise on the last day." (John 11:23-24) She understood that Jesus had spoken about the resurrection, but she didn't know yet that He would raise Lazarus right then.

Jesus then turned to Mary, who had been weeping near the tomb. He said, "Weep not." Then He told His disciples to roll away the stone covering the tomb. When they did, Jesus looked inside and said, "Take away the cloths from the face of Him whom you laid." He called out, "Lazarus, come out!" (John 11:42-43) At first, Lazarus didn't come out right away, he was still wrapped in cloths, but Jesus gave him one last command: "Unwrap him and let him go!" And there he was, alive and walking out of the tomb!

When Lazarus saw Jesus, he immediately recognized Him and went back to his home. But many people who had come to the funeral were shocked to see Jesus and the disciples there. Some even asked, "How could He have been here all this time?" (John 11:45) Jesus used this time to show everyone that He had the power to bring life back from death. The Pharisees later tried to kill Him because they didn't believe in His power, but Jesus knew their hearts and still let them live.

Why This Story Matters: This story teaches us that Jesus doesn't just help us when things are easy, He shows His love when we're hurting, even when things seem hopeless. When we feel lost or alone, like Lazarus was before Jesus found him, we can trust that God is still working in our lives. Just as Lazarus was given a second chance at life, we can find hope in Jesus, no matter what struggles we face.

Discussion Questions: 1. Why do you think Jesus waited four days before raising Lazarus? 2. What did Martha and Mary already believe about Jesus, even before He raised Lazarus? 3. How do you think Lazarus felt when Jesus called him back to life? 4. What does it mean to "weep not" when we're grieving? How can we find comfort in Jesus?

Personal Application: Jesus doesn't promise to take away all our pain, but He promises to be with us through it. Just like Lazarus, we can trust that God will give us a way to keep going, even when things seem dark. Today, ask God to help you believe that He can bring good out of even the hardest times.

Key Verse

John 11:25 , 'I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in Me will live, even though they die.'

The Power of Faith and Life God doesn't just give us a promise, He gives us power to believe in something bigger than ourselves. John 11:25 says, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in Me will live, even though they die." This means that even when we feel scared, tired, or like everything is ending, we can trust that God is there to help us. When we believe in Him, we can face hard times and still feel His love and strength inside us, just like Jesus did for Lazarus in the story from John 11. Sometimes, when we're really sick or something bad happens, it might feel like there's no way out. But Jesus says, "Even if you die, you'll live again because of what He did for you!" That's like a superpower, it means our hearts can keep going strong when our bodies are weak. Imagine if you had a superpower that let you bounce back from the toughest thing ever, like a giant fall or a scary dream. That's what believing in Jesus does for us! It helps us trust that He will help us rise again. But here's something important: this verse isn't just about what happens after we die, it's also about now! When we believe in Jesus, we get His life inside us, like a tiny spark that never goes out. That spark helps us get up after a fall, keeps us going through hard schoolwork, or makes us brave when we feel afraid. Jesus isn't just waiting for us to cross the finish line, He's right there with us, giving us the strength to start fresh every day. Think about something hard you've faced, like losing a friend, getting a bad grade, or feeling lonely. Even when it feels overwhelming, Jesus says, "I'm still here, and you don't have to carry it all alone." What if He wanted to remind you that He's in your struggles too? Maybe today, you can take a deep breath and say, "Lord, I believe in You, even when I don't feel strong." That's how we start living like Jesus, by trusting Him, even when we're scared. Deeper Questions: 1. What's one time you felt really tired or like giving up, but then you got up anyway? How did God help you? 2. If Jesus were in your room right now, what would He want to remind you about His power? 3. How can you be a light for someone else this week, just like Jesus did for Lazarus? Personal Application: Try this: Next time you're feeling down, close your eyes and whisper, "I believe in the resurrection and life, God is stronger than my fears!" Imagine His love wrapping around you like a hug. Then, open your heart to ask Him to help you trust Him more today. You don't have to do it alone!

Activities

Activity 1:

Students will write and illustrate "miracle signs" from Jesus' life, using Lazarus' story as a model to explore how God uses ordinary people to perform extraordinary faith.

1. Set the Scene (5 min): Read John 11:1-44 aloud, emphasizing how Jesus wept with Mary and Martha before calling Lazarus back from death. Ask: "How did Mary and Martha feel when Lazarus died? How do we respond when we fear the worst?"
2. Create the Tomb (8 min): Divide students into small groups. Give each group a paper plate to shape into a tomb (cut a hole for "gates," draw cracks, or glue cotton balls to mimic tomb walls). Discuss: "What does an empty tomb show us about God's power?"
3. Decorate & Reflect (5 min): Students decorate their tombs with markers. Share: "Jesus doesn't always fix problems right away, but He promises to work with us to overcome fear (2 Corinthians 1:3-4). How can we 'walk in faith' like Mary and Martha?"
4. Wrap-Up Discussion: Vote on the most creative tomb. Ask: "What's one fear you're carrying that God could use to grow your trust?"
5. "Faith Detectives: The Miracle Signs"
6. Introduce the Role (3 min): Explain they're "Faith Detectives" and ask: "When have you seen God work in a small way? How can we 'catch' His miracles?" Share Lazarus' healing as a starting point.
7. Brainstorm Miracles (5 min): Write key phrases from John 11:43-44 on the board ("He was dead but came back!"). Have students add their own miracle examples from scripture (e.g., Jesus walking on water).
8. Create Detective Cards (7 min): Each student picks a miracle to research (e.g., Lazarus' resurrection). Using index cards, they write:
9. What happened? (e.g., "Jesus called Lazarus by

Discussion Questions

- Here are four open-ended discussion questions for upper elementary students (ages 9, 11) about Jesus raising Lazarus (John 11). These questions encourage reflection, deeper thinking, and personal application while tying the story to their lives:
- 1. How Does Jesus' Action Show Love?
 - In John 11, Jesus weeps over Lazarus' death and then brings him back to life. The disciples were shocked and afraid, why do you think Jesus chose to act this way? How does Jesus showing love in this way remind you of something he does in your own life? (Consider: Does he comfort you when you feel lost or sad? Does he help you trust him even when things are difficult?)
- 2. What Does It Mean to Trust God Even When We Don't Understand?
 - Lazarus' sisters Mary and Martha sent Jesus a message: "The Lord is coming." But by the time he arrived, Lazarus had already been in the grave for four days. Why do you think Jesus didn't act sooner? How might Mary and Martha have felt when Jesus finally arrived? What does this story teach us about trusting God when things seem unfair or impossible?
- 3. How Can We Follow Jesus' Example When We Face Loss?
 - Jesus didn't just bring Lazarus back, he showed compassion for the mourners (John 11:35). In our own lives, when someone we love passes away, we may feel sadness or anger. How could we, like Jesus, show love and hope to others during hard times? What small way can you share comfort with someone who is grieving?
- 4. Why Does Jesus Sometimes Ask Us to Do Hard Things?
 - In John 11:4, Jesus said, "This illness does not lead to death." But Lazarus eventually died. Later, Jesus says, "I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25). How do these two things connect? Why might Jesus allow suffering before bringing healing? What does this teach us about trusting God's plan, even when it's unclear?
 - These questions invite students to explore emotions, faith, and personal growth while connecting the story of Jesus raising Lazarus to their own experiences. Would you like any adjustments to better fit a specific lesson plan?

Prayer Focus

Prayer Focus for Upper Elementary: "Jesus Raises Lazarus" Closing Prayer (for the class to pray together): "Dear God, thank You for Your love and power, especially when we feel afraid or lost. Just like Lazarus, we sometimes feel tired or alone, but we know You hear our prayers and always bring us back to life. Help us trust in You, even when it's hard. Amen." --- Reflection & Personal Application: 1. Fear and Faith When Mary and Martha sent for Jesus after Lazarus had been sick for four days, that's three whole days without him! (John 11:17) How did their friends and family feel? What does it mean to have big fears, like not knowing if someone will get well again? How can we show kindness to others when we're scared too? Can we trust God, even when things look hopeless? 2. The Power of Prayer Lazarus wasn't raised from death immediately, he was buried first! (John 11:4) God often works in stages: first, He lets us feel the pain, then He restores us. How have you felt "buried" in a tough situation (like losing a friend or failing a test)? What's one small step you can take to trust God today to bring you back to life? 3. The Unanswered Wait Jesus wept when he heard Lazarus was sick (John 11:35). He didn't rush, He waited until it was time. What's a time you waited on God for an answer? How did it feel to wait? Can we be like Jesus and wait patiently, even when it's hard? 4. A Call to Action After Lazarus came back to life, people still doubted. (John 11:45, 46) How can we share Jesus' love with others, even when they don't understand? Maybe it's a kind word or showing up for someone who feels alone. Let's pray: Help us to trust You more than ever, Lord. --- Teacher's Note: Pause after each paragraph to ask: "Who can share one thing they learned about trusting God?" or "How can we pray for each other today?" This keeps the focus on community and personal growth!

>> Missions Spotlight

In Madagascar, the Famadihana ceremony involves exhuming the dead and celebrating their lives. The concept of resurrection is deeply embedded in the culture. Missionaries share that Jesus doesn't just remember the dead , He raises them to life.

-> To the Cross

Jesus wept at Lazarus' tomb , even though He knew He was about to raise him. Jesus felt the pain that death causes. Then He raised Lazarus, showing He has power over death. At the cross, Jesus Himself would die and rise again , conquering death forever.