
“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??

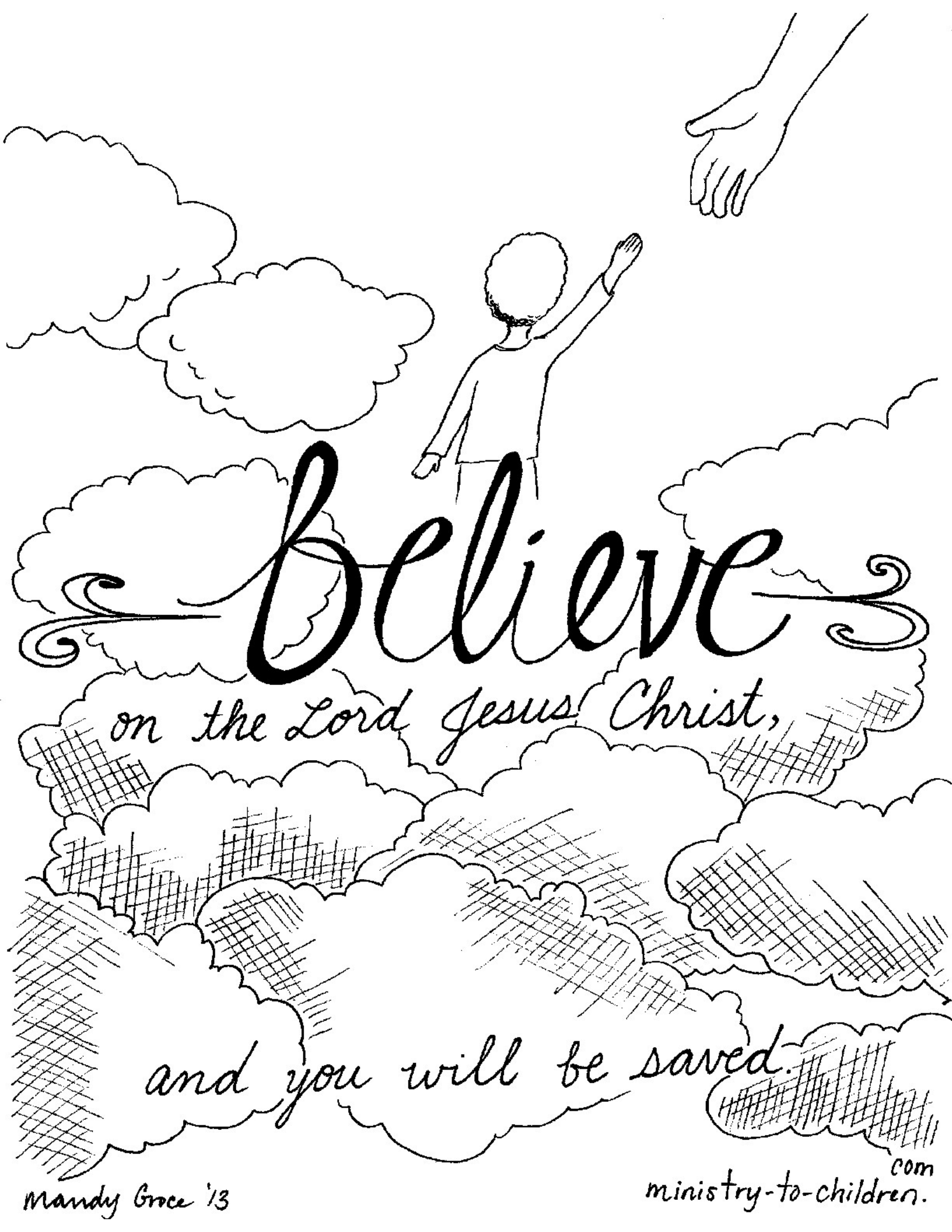


In the case of Lazarus or Jesus, pain and hardship, and even death, took place, but ultimately restoration came, too. What does this say about our lives? Things might be challenging, but one day God is going to bring all things together and make a whole new world for us. That is a promise we can believe 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

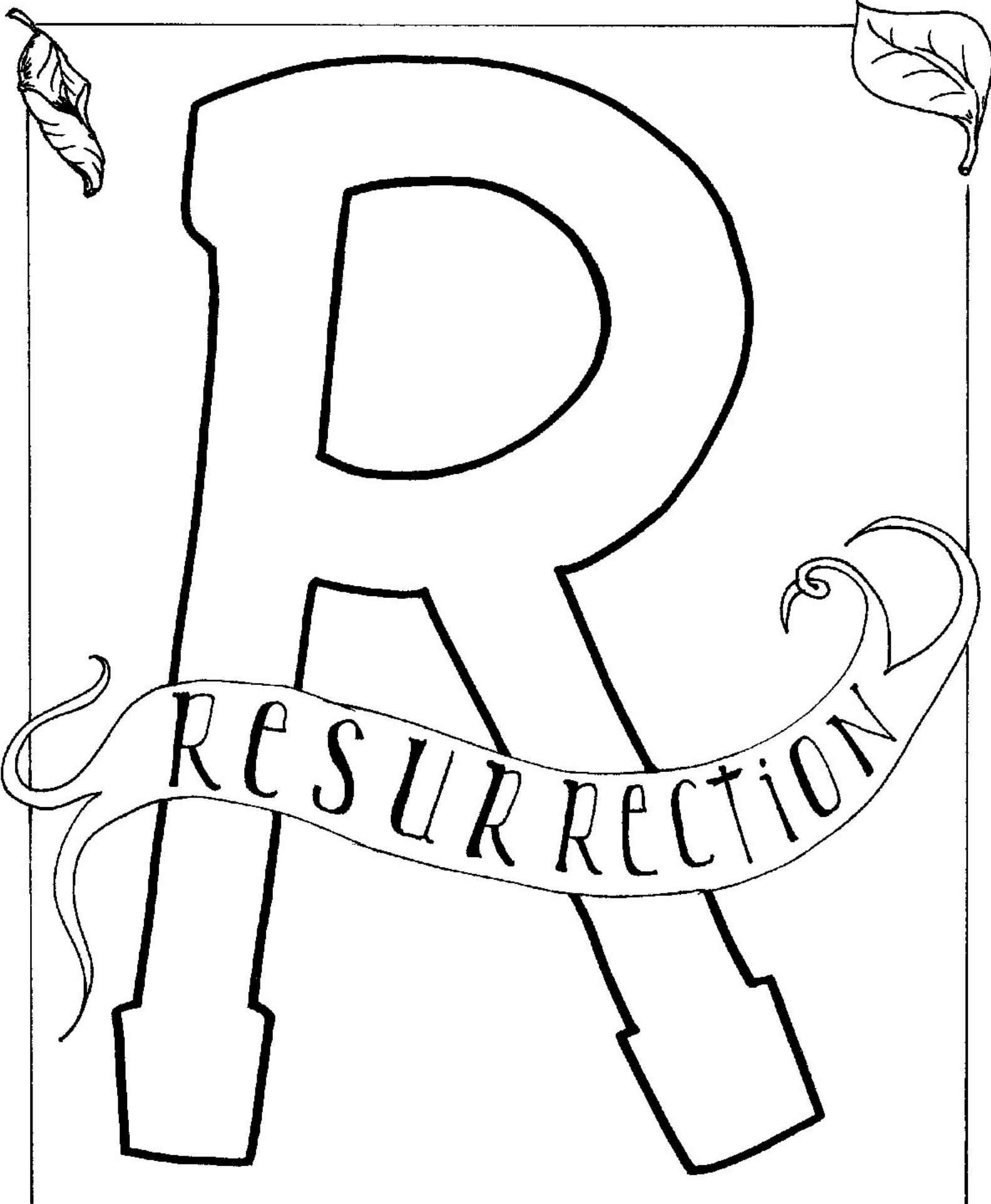
Close with prayer. Ask for God's help in trusting Him, even when we don't understand His ways. Acknowledge His presence and power, and thank Him for His love.





believe
on the Lord Jesus Christ,

and you will be saved.

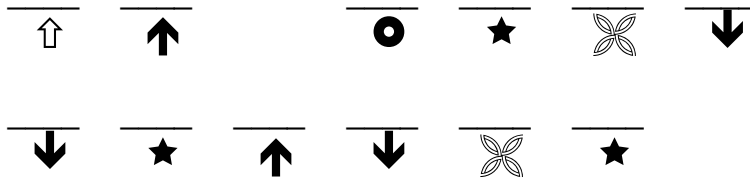


Learn About Miracles

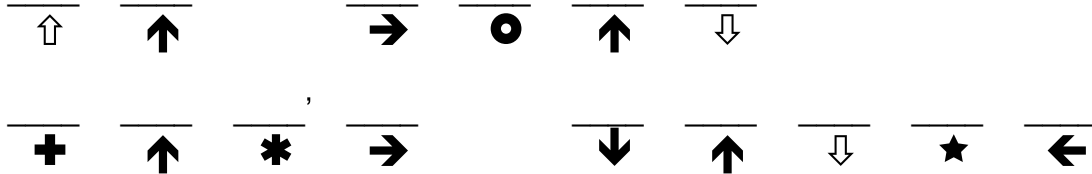
Miracles are supernatural acts that only God can do. Jesus is God, so he did miracles. He calmed a storm, provided food for many people, healed all kinds of sicknesses, and even made dead people alive again!

Why Did Jesus Do Miracles?

Reason 1:



Reason 2:



Code:



Lots of Problems

Jesus helped people with lots of different problems. Find these words in the puzzle.

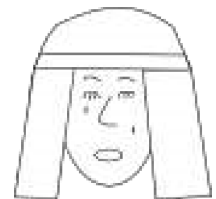
BLIND (can't see)
DEAF (can't hear)
HUNGRY

LAME (can't walk)
LEPER (skin disease)
MUTE (can't speak)

SAD
SCARED
SICK



A	H	U	N	G	R	Y	E	L	T
S	C	A	R	E	D	I	D	A	S
E	A	N	P	U	E	T	U	M	I
R	O	E	N	R	A	I	T	E	C
B	L	I	N	D	F	O	S	E	K



Jesus Stopped a Storm

Peter, Andrew, James, and John were fishermen. Sometimes Jesus and the other disciples went with them in the boat. One day a storm came, and Jesus' friends were scared. Jesus made the storm stop!

Read Mark 4:37.

Draw a picture of the boat in the storm.

Read Mark 4:39.

Draw a picture of the boat after the storm.

Someone to Help

Sometimes God doesn't make our problems go away, but he sends someone to help us. For each problem, draw a line to the person who might be able to help.

If this happens...

Your dad loses his job

A bully is mean to you

Your homework is really hard

God might send...

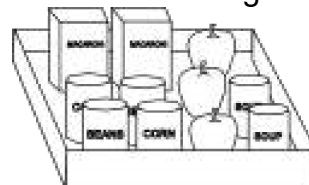
A new friend at school



A tutor to help with school work



A church friend with groceries



“Jesus Raises Lazarus”

Children’s Sermon Object from John 11:1-45

Children’s Message: New Life Will Come!

Jesus Works Things Out, Even When it’s Tough

Main Objective: The Lazarus story seems like an amazing success story. Jesus took someone who was dead, and brought him back to life! What could be more impressive than that, right? But what we sometimes forget in visiting this tale is how devastating things seemed prior to the miraculous resurrection. It looked like Jesus had failed. Lazarus was dead! Yet Jesus promised that all things would work out to glorify God, and so they did. The message for kids, then, is more than just an exciting death-to-life story. Sometimes things are challenging and uncertain. We may not like the answers God gives, but we can know that He is still in control, loves us, and will work things out for our good.

Law/Gospel Theme: Jesus sort of foreshadows the miracle of the Resurrection in this story. He brings Lazarus to life, after he has died and been laid in the tomb. His ways are higher and greater than ours. As Lazarus came to life, so all will one day return and be with Christ. What a blessing that message is! It may not be within our timetable, but it will bring glory to God.

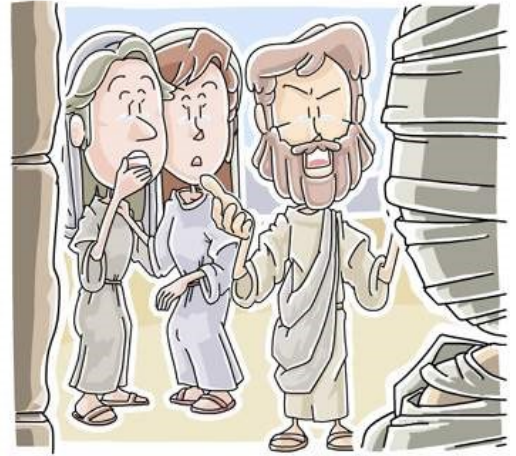
Optional Materials: Baked treat (or picture of one); optional ingredients or cooking tools/materials.

Bible Passage: John 11:1-45

More Sunday School ideas on Jesus Raising Lazarus back to life

- [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](#)

Message Note: As with most messages, the details of how you choose to communicate this are adaptable and should cater to timing as well as to your audience and student needs. Use your judgment and ideas to best serve students. You can use this message at home with one or two kids, or share it with a group!



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Children's Sermon: Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead (John 11:1-45)

Optional: bring along some cooking supplies for this one!

Open up the idea of going through challenges...

Hello, children of God! How are you?

Have you ever experienced something that was difficult? Maybe something bad happened at school, or someone said something mean, or perhaps you got sick or hurt in some way. It can be hard, and we might pray for it to get better, but seem to hear nothing from God. We don't always know what He's up to...

(Pull out a piece of cookie or cake dough/batter)

Do you know what this is? It kind of looks like a funny blob, doesn't it? Well, actually, this is the product of putting together several other ingredients, like eggs, oil, sugar, and flour (*hold ingredients up, if using*). And after I mix it together, I'll put this blob into a super hot oven...then, when I take it out of the oven (*hold up baked cookie*), I'll have one of these! You might recognize this a little bit more, right? It's a cookie!

Now, let's pretend this cookie could talk, and had feelings...do you think it would want to go into that hot oven, if I gave it a choice? Probably not. That doesn't sound too pleasant, does it? But only by going into the oven does it turn into something better than just a blob of dough. Going through hard things completes the cookie. Believe it or not, sometimes this happens to us. We might not like hard things, and we don't understand why they happen to us. But God is always working in our lives, even when we don't understand how. Sometimes we don't know what is coming up ahead. Sometimes we pray for things, and don't think God is answering. But He has His own plans, and they are usually better than our plans!

In the Bible, there's a neat story about a man named Lazarus. He was a friend of Jesus, and he had two sisters who were also friends with Jesus. Well, Lazarus got very sick. His sisters asked Jesus to come and see him, thinking surely this miracle-worker could heal their brother and make him better. But that didn't happen. By the time Jesus arrived, Lazarus had died. His sisters were very sad, and Jesus was sad, too. He had loved Lazarus. There was a lot of confusion. Surely Jesus could have healed His friend...why didn't He? Well, Jesus said that it was going to



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work out for the glory of God. He asked to go see the tomb where Lazarus was buried. When He got there, He asked for the big stone in front of the tomb to be rolled away. Some people thought this would be a bad idea, because the body would be pretty stinky. But they did it. Jesus called to Lazarus to come out of the tomb...and he did! He came out, still in his burial clothes, but alive!

So even though Jesus did not do what might have been expected at first, He did bring healing to Lazarus, and it was an amazing miracle. It wasn't what Lazarus preferred, probably, or his sisters. But it did bring glory to God. And a little while later, someone else faced death and burial in a tomb...Jesus Himself prayed that, if it was possible, He wouldn't have to die on the cross. It was not something He wanted to do. But because of enduring the cross, we have salvation and the chance to live after death!

Sometimes life is tough. Sometimes we wish things could happen differently, or we pray that things could be different. Our job is to trust God. God has promised that all things will work out for good, if we love Him and live by Him. This doesn't mean things will be easy. It does mean that one day, all will be made new and right again. Our lives may or may not improve on Earth, but when we are God's children, we can be certain He will take care of us. We can be assured of His love and power. He has already proven that through Jesus! Shall we thank God for those promises, and ask for His help to remember them?

Children's Prayer Moment

(Have kids repeat each line)

Dear God,

Thank you for your promises

We know that your words are true

Even though we don't always understand your ways

You tell us things will work for good

Thank you for your faithfulness

Thank you for your love

We love you, God!

In Jesus name, Amen!



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John 11:38-44 (NIV) Jesus Raises Lazarus From the Dead

³⁸ Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. ³⁹ “Take away the stone,” he said.

“But, Lord,” said Martha, the sister of the dead man, “by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days.”

⁴⁰ Then Jesus said, “Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?”

⁴¹ So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. ⁴² I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.”

⁴³ When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” ⁴⁴ The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.

Jesus said to them, “Take off the grave clothes and let him go.”

[John 11:38-44](#)



Craft Ideas for the Raising of Lazarus

God is Working...He Gives Life!

Craft Ideas for the Raising of Lazarus

The story of Lazarus ([John 11:38-42](#)) is an amazing miracle and can be a fun opportunity for games and crafts. Bringing the dead back to life is always sensational! There's a lot we can take away from this story, though, besides just the resurrection of a dead guy. We see a foreshadow of Jesus Himself, for one thing, buried in a tomb and brought back to life. In this story we also have a glimpse of Jesus weeping, demonstrating that He loved and cared for His friend Lazarus. Well, if that was true, why did he have to die? That demonstrates one of the most significant elements of this story: sometimes we don't understand what God is doing in our lives. Sometimes things are hard. But God is always at work, and promises that things will work out, if we trust Him.

Bible Verses or Craft Captions to Consider...

*Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?"
-John 11:40*

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life.^[d] Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live,²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. -John 11:25-26

He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away. -Revelation 21:4

All things are made new...Lazarus was raised and I will be, too!

Even when things are rocky...God is at work!

I may not understand...but God is in control!

More ideas on Jesus Raising Lazarus back to life

- [Bible Lesson: The Resurrection of Lazarus for Kids](#)
- [Children's Sermon: Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead](#)
- [Sunday School Lesson \(John 11:38-44\) Lazarus is Raised by Jesus](#)



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Craft one: “Lazarus out of the Tomb ”

You will need:

- Scissors
- Construction paper
- Paper or Styrofoam cups
- Markers or decorating materials
- Glue or tape
- Toilet Paper tube or popsicle stick
- Felt or cloth



Procedure:

1. Decorate the tube with a “face” like Lazarus.
2. Wrap the tube with cloth or paper strips, to be “mummified” and glue or tape them securely.
3. Decorate the cup with rock colors or “tomb-like” decorations. Cut a slit into it as a stone opening.
4. Place the “Lazarus” inside the cup “tomb.”
5. Add a verse caption, and enjoy making Lazarus come out of his tomb!



Craft Two: “Lazarus Mask”

You will need:

- Paper plates
- Glue, tape, or staples
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Popsicle stick
- Paper or felt



Procedure:

1. Cut two eye-holes out of the paper plate, so it can be a mask.
2. Decorate the plate with a mouth and nose, if desired.
3. On the side of the plate that does not have a mouth and nose, decorate with stone colors.
4. Cut strips of paper or cloth, and attach them over the plate to look like strips of linen. Secure with staples or tape/glue.
5. If desired, tape a stick to the back of the plate, so it can be held up like a mask. Add a verse caption and/or a caption over the eye holes.





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.

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