

# Lazarus Comes Back to Life

(John 11:1-46)

## Introduction

What was the worst day of your life? [Teacher, let the children discuss.] Have you ever felt like giving up? Perhaps you hoped for the best, but things didn't work out as planned. Maybe you've wondered, "If God loved me so much, why would He let this happen?"

When things go wrong in your life, you may wonder why God doesn't seem to do anything about it. Sometimes He waits until you think it's too late. You can feel as if there's no hope, and you may want to give up. You might even feel that the Lord can't do anything to help you. But no matter how bad it looks, if you know the Lord Jesus as your Savior, you know that God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life.

The ladies in our Bible story today might have had those same thoughts of hopelessness as their sick brother was about to die!

## Opening Prayer

Lord, Thank You that You do love us and have a wonderful plan for our lives. Teach us this morning that we can trust You even the worst day of our lives. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

## Memory Verse

*He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. (1 John 5:12)*

## Lesson

Jesus had many friends. Mary, Martha, and their brother Lazarus were some of Jesus' special friends. Jesus liked to go to their house because He loved them very much.

One day Lazarus became very sick.

John 11:1

*A man named Lazarus was sick. He lived in Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha.*

[Teacher, point out Bethany on the map, about 2 miles east of Jerusalem on the way to Jericho.] When Lazarus became sick, his sisters sent for Jesus.

John 11:3

*So the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, "Lord, your dear friend is very sick."*

They believed that Jesus could make Lazarus well because they had seen His miracles. He had made the lame to walk and the blind to see.

John 11:4

*But when Jesus heard about it he said, "Lazarus's sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from this."*

**Ask:** How can an illness bring glory to God? [Let the children discuss.]

Jesus was explaining to His disciples that God had a purpose for Lazarus's illness. Any trial that you are facing can bring glory to God because He can bring good out of any bad situation. You should see your problems as opportunities for God to show His power and strength!

John 11:5-6

*So although Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, (6) he stayed where he was for the next two days.*

**Ask:** Why didn't the Lord Jesus go to Lazarus right away? Was it that He didn't know how serious the situation was or that He couldn't do anything about it? [Teacher, let the children respond.]

Jesus knew that Lazarus was about to die. And He knew He had the power to heal him! But Jesus had a very special reason for staying where He was. He wanted to prove He is God Almighty!

Finally, it was time to return to Judea.

John 11:7

*Finally, he said to his disciples, "Let's go back to Judea."*

Jesus waited until Lazarus was good and dead before he went to him.

John 11:11-13

*Then he said, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but now I will go and wake him up." (12) The disciples said, "Lord, if he is sleeping, he will soon get better!" (13) They thought Jesus meant Lazarus was simply sleeping, but Jesus meant Lazarus had died.*

The disciples didn't think that Jesus knew Lazarus was dead, but the Lord corrected them.

John 11:14-15

*So he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. (15) And for your sakes, I'm glad I wasn't there, for now you will really believe. Come, let's go see him."*

**Ask:** Why do you think that Jesus was glad He wasn't there?

He wanted to make sure there was no doubt in anybody's mind that Lazarus was really dead.

John 11:17

*When Jesus arrived at Bethany, he was told that Lazarus had already been in his grave for four days.*

When Jesus arrived at the house where Mary and Martha lived, He found many mourners there trying to comfort them.

John 11:19

*and many of the people had come to console Martha and Mary in their loss.*

When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she sneaked out of the house to meet Jesus on His way there.

John 11:20-22

*When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed in the house. (21) Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died. (22) But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask."*

Martha wished that Jesus had arrived earlier so He could have healed her brother. She knew Jesus had the power to heal her brother; she wondered why He would let this happen. But Jesus wanted to take her faith to a whole new level.

John 11:23-27

*Jesus told her, "Your brother will rise again." (24) "Yes," Martha said, "he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day." (25) Jesus told her, "**I am the resurrection and the life.** Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. (26) Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?" (27) "Yes, Lord," she told him. "I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God."*

Jesus wanted Martha to know that He was more than a great teacher and a healer. He wanted her to know that not only did He have the power to forgive our sins, but He has power over life and death because He is the creator of life.

When Jesus said, "*I am the resurrection and the life*", He was saying, "*Anyone who believes in Me has eternal life.*" Jesus was telling Martha that He is the source of life, the resurrection; that resurrection is a person, not an event. Anyone that has a personal relationship with Him has eternal life.

When you put your faith in Jesus, you not only receive His blessings now, you are also guaranteed a forever life with Him in heaven after you die here on earth.

Death is not final; it has no power over a believer. We *will* have eternal life after our physical body dies.

Jesus said, “*Because I live, you also will live.*” (John 14:19b)

John 11:28-30

*Then she returned to Mary. She called Mary aside from the mourners and told her, “The Teacher is here and wants to see you.” (29) So Mary immediately went to him. (30) Jesus had stayed outside the village, at the place where Martha met him.*

Although Martha secretly called Mary to come out to meet Jesus, her friends followed closely behind.

John 11:31-32

*When the people who were at the house consoling Mary saw her leave so hastily, they assumed she was going to Lazarus’s grave to weep. So they followed her there. (32) When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, “Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died.”*

Mary’s friends followed her and saw her meet Jesus and fall down on her knees and weep before him.

John 11:33-34

*When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled. (34) “Where have you put him?” he asked them. They told him, “Lord, come and see.”*

When Jesus saw Mary crying, He was moved to tears Himself and asked to be taken to Lazarus’ tomb.

John 11:35-37

*Then Jesus wept. (36) The people who were standing nearby said, “See how much he loved him!” (37) But some said, “This man healed a blind man. Couldn’t he have kept Lazarus from dying?”*

**Ask:** Why did cry if He knew He was going to raise Lazarus from the dead?

Jesus was deeply moved because of the sorrow that sickness and death brought to his friends. God never intended for mankind to experience sickness or death. But after Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, we have been dealing with both ever since. But, one day we will be resurrected, brought into eternal life with God in heaven and we will never have to deal with sickness or death again!!!

John 11:38-39

*Jesus was still angry as he arrived at the tomb, a cave with a stone rolled across its entrance. (39) “Roll the stone aside,” Jesus told them. But Martha, the dead man’s sister, protested, “Lord, he has been dead for four days. The smell will be terrible.”*

Martha thought that it was too late to help Lazarus; it had been four days since her brother was buried! But Jesus wanted her to know that death has no power over Him because He is eternal life. And anyone that believes in Him has eternal life! He does more than give life; He *is* life because He is the creator of life, and therefore death has no power over Him.

With Christ, death is but “sleep”. [See verse 11.] Death has no power over anyone who has put their trust in Him. We don’t have to wait for the final resurrection at the end of time, we have resurrection life right now.

John 11:40

*Jesus responded, “Didn’t I tell you that you would see God’s glory if you believe?”*

“Trust Me, Martha,” Jesus was saying, “and you will see God’s power in a way you’ve never seen before!”

John 11:41-42

*So they rolled the stone aside. Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, "Father, thank you for hearing me. (42) You always hear me, but I said it out loud for the sake of all these people standing here, so that they will believe you sent me."*

Jesus didn't need to pray out loud, but He wanted the people to hear Him talking to God the Father.

John 11:43-44

*Then Jesus shouted, "Lazarus, come out!" (44) And the dead man came out, his hands and feet bound in graveclothes, his face wrapped in a headcloth. Jesus told them, "Unwrap him and let him go!"*

Notice that Jesus simply spoke life into the dead man just like He spoke creation into existence!

Only God can call the dead to life. This is a picture of us when we come to Him and confess our sins and become a follower of Jesus. He resurrects us from a life of sin and death to eternal life.

John 11:45-46

*Many of the people who were with Mary believed in Jesus when they saw this happen. (46) But some went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.*

Even when they saw the power of Jesus, some refused to believe; they rejected Jesus and plotted his murder. They were so full of pride they preferred to reject God the Son rather than admit that they were wrong.

## Closing Prayer

Jesus, You are the awesome God, full of power and might. You know all things and You can do all things. You have power over life and death. You simply spoke life into Lazarus because You are life! And we can have eternal life, too, right now by entering into a relationship

with You, our resurrected Savior. All we have to do is come to You and surrender our lives to You by confessing that You are the Savior of our souls. In Jesus name. Amen.

## Learning Activities

### Craft Corner

### Game Center

#### Wrap the Mummy

To play, first form four teams. Have each team stand in a circle and pick one person to be Lazarus. Have Lazarus stand in the middle of the circle.

On "go," have each team use one roll of toilet paper to wrap Lazarus. The first team to finish wrapping up Lazarus with the entire roll wins in round one. Have each Lazarus stand still until all four Lazaruses are wrapped up.

Then call out, "*Lazarus, come forth!*" The first Lazarus to free him- or herself of all the toilet paper is the winner in round two.

Or use the following review questions in another game of your choice:

1. What were Lazarus' sister's names? (Mary and Martha.)
2. Why did Mary and Martha think that Jesus could help their brother? (They believed that Jesus could make Lazarus well because they had seen His miracles.)
3. When Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick and dying why didn't He hurry over to his house to heal him? (Jesus wanted to prove that He is God and has power over life and death as well as power to forgive sins.)

4. Why can the trials and the hard times that we go through bring glory to God? (God can bring good out of any bad situation.)
5. Why was Jesus “glad” that Lazarus was dead (verse 15)? (He wanted to show God’s power!)
6. What did Martha do as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming? (She went out to meet Him.)
7. What did Jesus mean when He told Martha that He “*is the resurrection and the life*”? (“*Because I live, you also will live.*”)
8. What is the shortest verse in the whole Bible? (John 11:35, “*Jesus wept.*”)
9. Why did Jesus weep? (When Jesus saw Mary crying, He was moved to tears.)
10. What was in front of the tomb? (A stone.)
11. What did Jesus do when they took away the stone from the tomb? (He lifted up His eyes and prayed to the Father.)
12. How many days had Lazarus been in the tomb? (4)
13. How did Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead? What did He do? (He spoke. Just like He spoke the creation into being, He spoke life into the dead man.)
14. Why did some of the people that saw Jesus perform this miracle not believe that He was God? (They were so full of pride, they rejected Jesus rather than admit they were wrong.)

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