Preschool–Grade 6

Jesus Raises Lazarus

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: Jesus has power over death, and Jesus cares about us.
Bible passage: John 11:1–44. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:" *John 11:25 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible, 6 paper strips, a marker, tape, a paper heart for each child, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the 6 paper strips (see part 4). Put a bookmark in your Bible at John 11:35.

1. Opening game: Wake Up When I Call You (5 minutes)

Everyone lies down or puts their heads on the table and pretends to be asleep. Walk around the room. Call one child by name in a loud voice: "Sarah, wake up and come here!" Only that child gets up and comes to you. Keep going until everyone is awake. Ask: *How did you know it was your turn?* Say: "You heard your name! Today we will hear a true story about a man Jesus called by name with a loud voice."

2. Bible story: Lazarus, Come Forth! (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to John 11, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

In a town called **Bethany** lived two sisters, **Martha** and **Mary**, and their brother **Lazarus** (John 11:1). Jesus loved all three of them (11:5). One day Lazarus got very sick. His sisters sent a message to Jesus: "Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick" (11:3). Say: "**Behold** means look. They said: Lord, look, Your friend is sick!"

Jesus said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God" (11:4). Say: "That means people will see how great God is." Jesus stayed where He was two more days (11:6). Then He told His disciples, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep" (11:11). The disciples thought Lazarus was only resting, so Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead" (11:13–14). Say: "Jesus called it sleep, because He knew He was going to wake Lazarus up."

When Jesus came, Lazarus had been in the grave **four days** (11:17). Many people had come to comfort Martha and Mary (11:19). Martha went out to meet Jesus. She said, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died" (11:20–21). Jesus told her, "Thy brother shall rise again" (11:23). Then He said, **"I am the resurrection, and the life"** (11:25). Say: "**Resurrection** means coming back to life. Jesus has power over death!" Martha said, "Yea, Lord: I believe" (11:27).

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The story continues: Then Mary came. She fell down at Jesus' feet, crying (11:32–33). Jesus asked, "Where have ye laid him?" They said, "Lord, come and see" (11:34). **Read John 11:35 from your Bible:** "Jesus wept." Say: "**Wept** means cried. Jesus was sad with His friends." The people said, "Behold how he loved him!" (11:36). Say: "Jesus cares when we are sad."

The grave was a **cave**, and a **stone** lay on it (11:38). Jesus said, "Take ye away the stone." Martha said Lazarus had been dead four days (11:39). Jesus said that if she would believe, she would see the glory of God (11:40). So they took away the stone, and Jesus looked up and prayed, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me" (11:41).

Then Jesus cried with a loud voice, **"Lazarus, come forth"** (11:43). Say: "**Come forth** means come out!" And Lazarus came out, alive! He was **bound hand and foot with graveclothes**, wrapped up in strips of cloth, and his face was wrapped in a **napkin**, a cloth (11:44). Jesus said, **"Loose him, and let him go"** (11:44). Say: "**Loose him** means unwrap him. Lazarus was alive again!"

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. Who were Lazarus' two sisters? *(Martha and Mary, John 11:1)*
2. How many days had Lazarus been in the grave? *(Four days, 11:17)*
3. What did Jesus say to Martha? *("I am the resurrection, and the life," 11:25)*
4. What did Jesus do when He saw Mary crying? *(Jesus wept, 11:33–35)*
5. What did Jesus call out at the grave? *("Lazarus, come forth," 11:43)*

4. Memory verse: Six Strips game (5 minutes)

Tape the 6 strips up in order: *Jesus said unto her, / I am the resurrection, / and the life: / he that believeth in me, / though he were dead, / yet shall he live: John 11:25.* Explain the old words: **resurrection** means coming back to life, **believeth** means believes, and **though he were dead, yet shall he live** means even if a person dies, Jesus can give him life. Read the verse together. Then take down one strip and read it again. Keep taking down one strip each time until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "Jesus called Lazarus out of the grave, because Jesus is stronger than death. God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.
This week: when you are sad, tell Jesus about it. He cares. When a friend is sad, be kind and stay with them, like Jesus did.

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Lazarus word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/lazarus-word-search), crossword, maze or worksheet, the craft (vbshq.com/crafts/lazarus-craft), or **Jesus Cares Hearts:** give each child a paper heart. On it they draw someone they love, or someone who is sad and needs help. Then go around the circle: each child holds up their heart and says, "Jesus cares about ___." Pray together for the people on the hearts.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that Jesus loved Lazarus, Martha and Mary, and that He cares about us too. Thank You that Jesus is the resurrection and the life, stronger than death. Help us trust You when we are sad. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child is sad about someone who died: some children in your class may have lost someone they love. Let them talk, and tell them it is all right to be sad: Jesus wept with His friends (John 11:35), and He cares. Keep it simple, don't guess about any person, and let the child's parents know so they can talk about it at home.

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