

Vacation Church School

Life of Christ #3

Jesus Raises Lazarus

“Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die...” John 11:26

Scripture Reference: John 11:1-46, John 12:1-9

Goals: By the end of the lesson the student will be able to:

1. Know the story is found in the Bible
2. Repeat the memory verse
3. Explain the events of the story
4. Understand why Jesus waited till Lazarus was dead to come to him and didn't heal him before
5. Explain how by believing in Christ and following His teachings we can live eternally with Him

Vocabulary:

miracle: an event that has no known natural cause, such an event is considered the work of God

Introduction:

Materials Needed:

- Board or large piece of paper with miracles performed by Jesus listed on it, but don't give the list a title (ex. Turned water into wine, caused blind to see, made lame walk, forgives sins, raised people from the dead, etc.)

1. Show children the list of miracles, read each aloud or ask them to take turns reading them. Ask them what these things all have in common. Guide the conversation to show they are all miracles. Explain the meaning of the word miracle.

2. Ask them who performed the miracles listed. Guide them to the fact that all were done by Jesus while He was living here on earth. Explain they are going to learn about one specific miracle and that is Jesus raising someone from the dead. Ask them if they know of any times in the Bible where that took place. Tell them they are going to learn about a good friend of Jesus' named Lazarus. The story is found in the Bible in the book of John.

3. They are going to learn about how Jesus raised his friend from the dead and also explained how we can have eternal life if we believe in Him and live our lives to show that belief.

Lesson:

Materials Needed:

- Copy of the story, or Bible if you choose to read the story from there and then explain in your own words
- Optional Materials: pictures of the story to show while you read, white cloths torn into strips to show what the dead were buried in at that time

Jesus Raises Lazarus

While Jesus was traveling throughout different towns and cities healing and teaching he heard news that a dear friend of his named Lazarus had become very sick. Even though His friend was very sick he stayed in the place where he was for two more days. He said that this sickness would not be unto death, but would be used to glorify God, and to glorify His son. After the two days had passed he told

his disciples they would go to Bethany where Lazarus was. He told them that Lazarus was asleep, but he would go to him that he might wake him up. The disciples did not understand Jesus. They thought if he was asleep then he would rest and be well. So then Jesus told them that Lazarus was not sleeping, but he was dead. By saying He was going there to wake Lazarus meant that Jesus was going to bring him to life again. Jesus then went on to say he was thankful that He was not there sooner to heal Lazarus. By waiting He would have a chance to work a mighty miracle before the people that they might believe in Him and in God His father that sent Him.

By the time Jesus and his disciples got to Bethany Lazarus had been in his grave for four days already. When they were almost to the home of Lazarus and his sisters, Mary and Martha, Martha ran to meet him just outside the town. She asked Him why he did not come sooner and heal her brother. She knew that if Jesus had been there her brother would not have died. Jesus told her not worry, her brother would rise again. Being a believer in Christ and his teachings Martha knew that one day everyone would rise again at the last day as part of the final resurrection. So, she told Jesus she understood that one day her brother would raise again at that time. Jesus said to her that He was the resurrection and the life and anyone who believed in Him would live, even though they were dead. And that whoever believed in Him would never die. He meant that anyone who lives their life according to God's commandments and follows after Him would live forever with Him in Heaven. He asked Martha if she believed his words. She told him she did and that she understood he was Christ, the son of God. She then went to tell her sister Mary that Jesus was there and wanted to see her.

When Mary heard Jesus was there she left her house quickly to go and meet him. There were many people there at their home to comfort Martha and Mary as they mourned the loss of their brother. When they saw Mary get up and leave quickly they assumed she was going to the grave of her brother Lazarus to grieve, so they followed her so she wouldn't be alone. When Mary found Jesus waiting for her He saw she had been crying and those who followed her had been crying as well. She fell at Jesus' feet and asked him why He had not come to heal her brother. Many of the others there wondered the same thing. They knew Jesus had healed the sick and given sight to the blind, but hadn't come to help his friends. Jesus was saddened by how much Mary missed her brother and cried with her as she sat at His feet. Even though He had a plan for Lazarus and his family, Jesus still felt pity on his dear friends who were so sad and didn't know their brother would soon be coming back to life.

Jesus asked Mary where they had laid Lazarus and asked to be taken to him. The grave where he laid was a cave with a stone in front of it. Jesus told them to take the stone away from the entrance. Martha told him that Lazarus had been dead four days she did not understand why he wanted them to do this. Then Jesus told that he had already said if she would only believe she would see the glory of God. They moved the stone away and Jesus lifted his eyes and said "Father I thank thee that thou has heard me." He knew God always heard him, but said it aloud so everyone around would believe God had sent Him. Then he said in a loud voice, "Lazarus come forth." Suddenly Lazarus appeared in the entrance of the cave. He was covered in the wrappings they had covered him with to lay him in the grave. His entire body was covered including his face. Jesus told them to remove the covering and let Lazarus walk free. The people there that day had witnessed a mighty miracle performed by Jesus through the power of God His father. Many of the people there that day believed he truly was the son of God. For only one with the power of the Lord could raise someone from the dead. Jesus knew this miracle would cause many to believe. So even though the family didn't understand why Lazarus had to die in the beginning; they later saw he was part of God's wonderful plan.

Memory Verse Activity:

Materials Needed:

- Various colors of construction paper torn (don't use scissors, keep the rough edges) into small pieces (about 1x2 in), 10 per child, + 10 to use as an example
- Glue or glue sticks, 1 per child (or they can share)
- Larger strips of construction paper to glue the memory verse onto
- Pens/pencils, 1 per child
- Ahead of time write the memory verse on a board or large piece of paper and post in the room
- Optional materials: crayons, colored pencils, markers (if you want them to decorate)

1. Explain to the children they are going to do an activity to help them remember their memory verse. Read the verse aloud, or have them read it to you. Show an example of the finished activity and begin by passing out the torn pieces of construction paper. Have them write one word of the verse on each paper.

2. Pass out the larger strips of paper and glue. Have them glue the verse in order on the page. They can make the words go at different angles if they want to give it a different look, but be sure it's still readable.

3. If you choose have them decorate the memory verse.

4. Be sure to discuss the fact that Christ is the way to eternal life. He does not mean we will never die physically, but that we can live with him in heaven forever if we follow his commandments. If we truly believe in Christ then we believe all His words and live our lives as He would. It is not only believing in Christ that saves us but enduring to the end and following him through our entire life.

Story Craft: Lazarus Paper Dolls

Materials Needed:

- Heavy cardstock, enough to make one doll per child + 1 for an example (this can also be used as a prop when telling the story)
- Scissors
- Strips of white cloth, enough for each child to cover their doll
- Crayons, colored pencils, markers
- Glue
- Optional materials: yarn for hair, small google eyes, felt or cloth scraps for clothing

1. Prepare ahead by drawing an outline of a man on the cardstock. You can cut these out ahead of time or let the children cut out their own during class time. You may be able to find a free template online to use and print out on card stock if you do not wish to draw your own.

2. Have the children color the figure and draw a face if there is not already one there for them.

3. If you are using yarn or other materials have the children glue them on.
4. Carefully wrap and glue the strips of white cloth around the Lazarus figure. One option is to glue it completely around so it can't be removed. Another choice is to glue one end to the back and wrap the figure so it can be unwrapped after Jesus brings him back to life.
5. Remind children that this is how Lazarus looked when Jesus got there, but this is not how he stayed. Jesus was able to bring him back to life and these burial clothes were no longer needed.

Review Activity:

Materials Needed

- Several rolls of toilet paper

Unwrap Lazarus

1. Prepare ahead of time several questions about the story. (ex. How long did Jesus wait to go to Bethany after He heard Lazarus was sick? How many days had Lazarus been buried? How did Jesus say we could live and not die?)
2. Divide the class into two teams. Choose one person per team to be Lazarus and have the children help wrap him or her in the toilet paper.
3. Take turns asking the teams questions about the story. For each question they get right they can remove 10 squares of toilet paper. The team who finishes unwrapping Lazarus first wins.

Digging Deeper

Look up these scriptures in the Book of Mormon if time allows, reading how Jesus taught the same lessons about believing in Him to have eternal life in both the Bible and the Book of Mormon.

Mosiah 3:13-21 (King Benjamin tells his people to take upon them the name of Christ and remember Him that they may have eternal life.)

Alma 5:24-28 (Alma tells the people they must be baptized and keep the commandments of God from that time on to have eternal life.)