

LESSON 28

Lazarus

JOHN 11:1-53



BIBLE TRUTH

JESUS IS THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read John 11:17–45 from the Scriptures or read story 106, “Lazarus,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

3. OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Come Forth!

SUPPLIES

- ✓ a dead branch
- ✓ roll of gauze

4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

5. OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

Life and Death

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ a variety of things that are alive (hamster, butterfly, student from your class, potted plant, etc.)
- ✓ a variety of things that are dead (leather shoe, dried-up plant, animal pelt, dried up insect, etc.)

6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

7. ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Color a Picture

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 28—one for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

Remembering the Words of Jesus

TOTAL 75 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

God planned Lazarus' death for the glory of the Son—Jesus received word that his friend Lazarus was very ill. But rather than hurry, Jesus delayed his departure for Bethany for two more days, announcing that the sickness would not lead to death (John 11:4). After the delay, Jesus announced they would go see Lazarus, but the disciples objected because the Jews were threatening to stone him. Jesus remained steadfast and explained that Lazarus had died. This time there was no courier with the news—Jesus, the Son of God, simply knew. Again we see the Lord's power in knowing all things. No one had to tell Jesus that Lazarus had died; it was part of God's plan. Jesus also knew that Lazarus would not be dead for long.

Jesus is the resurrection and the life—When Jesus arrived, Martha went to meet him. She was upset and disappointed because Jesus had not arrived in time to save the life of her brother. Martha, like many of the Jews, believed in a future resurrection. So when Jesus said that Lazarus would rise again, she agreed, thinking Lazarus would rise on the final resurrection day. But Jesus meant he would rise that very day. In a vivid description of his divinity, Jesus tells Martha that he is the “resurrection and the life” (John 11:25). No mere man has control over life and no human has ever created life. Jesus, who was fully man, was also fully God, the creator of all that is (John 1:3–4). God was about to display the fullness of his power over death.

Jesus is Lord over death—When Jesus saw Mary and all the Jews weeping and thought about Lazarus' death, he also wept. Of all our actions in life as sinners, perhaps the purest of all our motives is grief. Death is such a wicked enemy of life that those who grieve are pitted resolutely against it. Life is so precious that when it is gone, those who are close can't help but suffer its loss. When our hatred for death and our love for life come together in grief, it is beautiful in the sight of the Lord. But the grief would not last for long. Jesus directed that the stone covering Lazarus' tomb be moved. He then called into the blackness of the tomb and commanded death to give up his friend with three short words, “Lazarus, come out!” (John 11:43). Death fled and Lazarus obeyed, the breath of life once again filling his lungs. Though many people believed Jesus was the Messiah, some were not so happy, taking word of the day's events to the religious rulers. While news of this great miracle spread quickly, the religious leaders began plotting how to kill Jesus (John 11:53).

Where Is the Gospel?

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

"I am the resurrection and the life." With these words, Jesus revealed that he is the author of life, God over all creation, and the object of our faith. He had already explained to the disciples that he was glad he was not in Bethany to heal Lazarus so that Lazarus might rise again. Now, Jesus declares that he is the one who rules over life itself. Martha, who had earlier complained that her sister, Mary, was wasting time at the feet of Jesus, declared her faith with two simple words: "I believe." These two simple words are all that God requires. "I believe" is the statement of faith that God requires of us all. It forces us to submit to God's Word and points us to his saving plan through the death of his Son. The raising of Lazarus is a picture of the gospel. Death looks to claim people, but the plan of God through Jesus conquers death and brings salvation from its grasp. Jesus told his disciples that he would lay down his own life that he might "take it up again" (John 10:17). Jesus would soon die, but like Lazarus, he would be raised again to new life.

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW **5 MIN**

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY **10 MIN**

Read John 11:17–45 from the Scriptures or read story 106, "Lazarus," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Come Forth!

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ a dead branch
- ✓ roll of gauze

After reading the story of Lazarus, explain to the class that you believe the power to bring life is found in Jesus’ words. Remind them of what Jesus said to Lazarus: “Lazarus, come out.”

Explain that you think the key to bringing Lazarus back to life was in the words Jesus used. Lay out the stick before them and start wrapping it in gauze. Explain to the class that the stick is dead and has been dead for days. Then say, “Now watch me bring the stick back to life. Stick, come out!”

Wait expectantly. When nothing happens, look confused. Review the steps you took. Suddenly realize that you are missing a tomb. Look around the room for something to cover the stick with and try your command again. When nothing happens, ask the class if they have any idea why it didn’t work. Explain that you said the very same words Jesus did.

The object is for you to help them see that while Jesus was an ordinary man, he was more than an ordinary man—Jesus was God.

TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

OBJECT LESON 2 10 MIN

Life and Death

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ a variety of things that are alive (hamster, butterfly, student from your class, potted plant, etc.)
- ✓ a variety of things that are dead (leather shoe, dried-up plant, animal pelt, dried-up insect, etc.)

Use this object lesson at the beginning of class in order to help the children marvel at life and to show them the glory of Christ in bringing the dead back to life.

Place the objects on a table in front of the class and ask for a volunteer. Ask the volunteer to tell you how you could sort these items into two opposite groups. After a number of guesses, tell them the answer: life and death. Have the student pick out all the objects that are dead. Then try to challenge the student to explain why a particular object is dead. Don't let them say "Because it is not alive." It is actually a difficult thing to explain life. If a student says "Because it doesn't move," ask him if the plant moves. If the student says "Because it doesn't breathe," ask him if the plant breathes. Have a little fun with this. Excuse the first volunteer and call a second.

Ask the second volunteer to come forward. Explain to the volunteer that his or her task is to bring the dead objects back to life. They will look at you like it is impossible, which, of course, it is. Excuse the second volunteer.

Then ask this question: "What would a person need to be able to do to bring back to life something that was dead?" The answer is not as important as the class seeing just what an amazing thing it is to bring something back from the dead.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Color a Picture

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 28—one for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

- **What is happening in the picture?**
(Lazarus is coming out of the tomb alive after Jesus brought him back from the dead.)
- **How are we who believe in Jesus going to be like Lazarus one day?**
(One day everyone who believes in Jesus will rise again from the dead. All believers know that after we die we will live again with Jesus.)

- **What do you think Lazarus thought as people began to explain to him all that took place?**

(Lazarus was certainly amazed and filled with joy.)

- **What other Bible story is this one most like?**

(This story is most like the story of Jesus' resurrection. Not only did Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead, he himself rose from the dead. That gives special meaning to his words to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life.")

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's Scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

Remembering the Words of Jesus

As a class, memorize Jesus' response to Martha in John 11:25–26. This is a wonderful and easy passage to memorize. It represents the central message of this entire chapter of John's gospel.

LESSON 28 - LAZARUS

