

GOD'S BIG PLAN

Jesus Has Power Over Death

John 11:1-57

Supporting Scriptures: Luke 10: 38-42; John 12:1-11

Lesson Goals:

- To see that Jesus is powerful.
- To see that Jesus has power over death.
- To see that new life is available for all.

Scripture Memory

Anyone who belongs to Christ is a new person.
The past is forgotten, and everything is new. 2 Corinthians 5:17 (CEV)

NOTE: Familiarize yourself with this story. Don't read it. Tell it as a STORY. To reinforce that these ideas are not your own, hold your Bible as you tell the story.

The Lesson:

Let's review what we have learned so far. (Review the previous stories, focusing on the ones that specifically point to Christ's birth. Encourage more and more students to share.)

In the beginning, when we first began to study, we looked at God's amazing power as He created angels, the universe, and all that is in it. We also learned that, not only is Jesus God's Son, He is God. So, if God is powerful, Jesus is powerful. What did Jesus show He had power over when he sent demons out of the man who lived in the tombs? (Jesus has power over demons.) What did Jesus show His power over by multiplying food and walking on water? (Jesus showed that He has power over His own creation.) And when Jesus healed the blind man, He showed His power over what? (Jesus showed His power over sickness.) Jesus is very powerful! But that's not all. Let's see what else Jesus has power over!

READ: John 11:1-3, 5 (Hold your Bible open throughout the story.)

Martha, Mary, and Lazarus were good friends to Jesus. In fact, Jesus spent time in their home. He ate with them and talked with them. And when Lazarus got sick, naturally Martha and Mary wanted Jesus to know. They sent a message to Jesus, "Lord, your close friend, Lazarus, is sick." Martha and Mary also knew that Jesus had been healing sick people. Maybe He would heal Lazarus, as well.

But something strange happened. When Jesus received Martha and Mary's message, instead of rushing off to Bethany, Jesus stayed where He was for two more days. But, they were close friends. Why didn't Jesus rush off immediately? Well, Jesus had a plan. His plan was for God to get all the attention, the praise, and the honor. So, after two days, Jesus and His disciples headed toward Bethany.

As Jesus and His disciples got closer to the town of Bethany, someone told Martha and Mary, "Jesus is coming, Jesus is coming!" Martha ran out of the house and met Jesus on the road. "Oh, Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "I wish you had been here! If you had been, my brother wouldn't have died." "Your brother will live again," Jesus told her. "Lord, I know he will. It will happen in the last days, like you've told us," Martha answered Him. "I am the resurrection and the life," Jesus said. "Anyone who believes in me will live, even if he dies. And everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this, Martha?" Martha did believe. She believed that Jesus was the One God had promised so long ago. But Martha didn't completely understand it all, yet. Jesus had healed many sick people. Mary and Martha both knew that if Jesus had got-

ten to them sooner, he could have healed Lazarus, too. If Jesus had been there, Lazarus wouldn't have died. But Jesus waited two days for a reason. The people knew Jesus had power over sickness, but did they realize there was more?

Martha returned to her house and sent Mary to Jesus. Jesus saw Mary crying. The visitors who had followed Mary were also crying. They walked to the cave with the stone rolled in front of it, and when Jesus saw the place where they had buried Lazarus, He broke down and cried, too. The visitors around them saw Jesus sobbing and knew that He loved His friend Lazarus very much. They even said, "Jesus healed a blind man. Couldn't He have kept Lazarus from dying?" The answer to that question is "yes." But Jesus wanted them to see so much more. When Martha had come to the tomb, as well, Jesus asked them to take away the stone that was rolled across the opening in the cave. Martha told Jesus that it would smell bad; Lazarus had already been dead for four days. But Jesus wasn't worried about any of that. Jesus wanted God to be praised and lifted up. Jesus prayed to God and then, in a loud voice, Jesus said, 'LAZARUS, COME OUT!' And you know what? Lazarus, the man who had been dead for four days already, came out of the cave! Did you know Jesus could do that? Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead! Jesus brought Lazarus back to life! Jesus has power . . . even over death!

Review:

Let's review what you have learned. Who would like to retell the story? (Ask your group if anything was left out or told inaccurately.) Would anyone else like to retell the story?

The Bible tells us that, after Jesus raised Lazarus, many of the visitors that day saw what Jesus did and put their faith in Him. They, too, believed that Jesus was God's Promised One. But some of them were afraid. Some of them were powerful and they were afraid that they would lose that power if people kept following Jesus. One of them, without even knowing what he was predicting, said, "It's better if Jesus dies for all of us, so that we can still have our place and power." So from that day on, they planned to arrest Jesus and kill Him.

What they didn't realize is that this is why Jesus came. Jesus was born to die. Do you remember what He told Martha? "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even if he dies. And everyone who lives and believes in me will never die." If we choose to put our faith in Jesus, like many of Martha and Mary's visitors, God promises us eternal life. Our bodies will grow old and we'll die one day. But when we follow Jesus, we will live with Him forever after death.

The Bible also tells us something else about those who put their faith in Jesus. It says, "Anyone who belongs to Christ is a new person. The past is forgotten, and everything is new." When we trust Jesus and choose to follow Him, He forgets all about that old, yucky person we used to be. God makes us brand new. Have you ever seen a caterpillar spin it's cocoon and sleep for awhile? When it comes out, is it the same, old caterpillar? No! What comes out looks nothing like the wrinkly old worm that went in. The butterfly that emerges from the cocoon forgets its past and everything is new. That can be you! You get to choose. Which do you prefer: crawling around in an old body full of sin or soaring in a new body that has been forgiven? Will you give yourself to Jesus today?

Planning for Next Week
Lesson 39 • The Last Supper and Some Last Instructions
John 13-16

PRESCHOOL LESSON

SING: "Praise Him, Praise Him, All Ye Little Children"

SHARE: Martha, Mary, and Lazarus were good friends to Jesus. In fact, Jesus spent time in their home. He ate with them and talked with them. But one day, Lazarus got sick. (*Touch the back of your hand to your forehead.*) Martha and Mary wanted Jesus to know. They sent a message to Him, "Jesus, your close friend, Lazarus, is sick." Martha and Mary also knew that Jesus had been healing sick people. Maybe He would heal Lazarus, too.

But something strange happened. When Jesus received Martha and Mary's message, instead of running to Bethany, Jesus stayed where He was. He stayed there two more days. (*Count: One, Two.*) But, they were close friends. Why didn't Jesus run to them? Well, Jesus had a plan. His plan was for God to get all the attention, all the praise, and all the honor. So, after two days, (*"One, Two."*) Jesus and His disciples headed toward Bethany. (*Walk around your area and then sit down again.*)

As Jesus and His disciples got closer to the town of Bethany, someone told Martha and Mary, "Jesus is coming, Jesus is coming!" (*Shout this, cupping your hand to your mouth.*) Martha ran out of the house and met Jesus on the road. "Oh, Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "I wish you had been here! If you had been, my brother wouldn't have died." "Your brother will live again," Jesus told her. "Do you believe this, Martha?" Martha did believe. She believed that Jesus was the One God had promised so long ago. But Martha didn't completely understand it all, yet. Jesus had healed many sick people. Mary and Martha both knew that if Jesus had gotten to them sooner, he could have healed Lazarus, too. If Jesus had been there, Lazarus wouldn't have died. But Jesus waited two days for a reason. The people knew Jesus had power over sickness, but did they realize there was more?

Martha returned to her house and sent Mary to Jesus. Jesus saw Mary crying. (*Rub your eyes as if you were crying.*) The visitors who had followed Mary were also crying. (*Rub your eyes, again.*) They walked to the cave with the stone rolled in front of it, and when Jesus saw the place where they had buried Lazarus, He broke down and cried, too. (*Rub your eyes once again.*) The visitors around them saw Jesus sobbing and knew that He loved His friend Lazarus very much. They even said, "Jesus healed a blind man. Couldn't He have kept Lazarus from dying?" The answer to that question is "yes." But Jesus wanted them to see so much more. When Martha had come to the tomb, as well, Jesus asked them to take away the stone that was rolled across the opening in the cave. Jesus prayed to God, and then, in a loud voice, Jesus said, 'LAZARUS, COME OUT!' And you know what? Lazarus, the man who had been dead for four days already, came out of the cave! Did you know Jesus could do that? Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead! Jesus brought Lazarus back to life! Jesus has power . . . even over death!

PRAY: Thank you, God, for Jesus.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Memory Verse Activity - Print the memory verse with washable ink onto a long strip of light colored cloth. Practice the verse as you wrap it around your voluntary "Lazarus." Practice as you unwrap "Lazarus," as well.
- The name Lazarus means "God will help." Talk about how God helped Lazarus and his sisters. How can God help you?
- Make Bow Tie Pasta Salad for tasting. (Bow tie pasta resembles butterflies.) Talk about the new life we can have in Christ.
- Finger paint butterflies. Using the index finger and black or brown paint, mark the body of the butterfly. Using bright colors and small hand shapes, paint butterfly wings. Be sure to write the memory verse on each one.
- Make egg carton caterpillars and paper chain butterflies.
- Make miniature Lazarus dolls. Using wooden clothespins, wrap "Lazarus" with strips of cloth or gauze bandages. Paint a face and attach yarn hair.
- Discuss the process a caterpillar goes through to become a butterfly. Discuss, as well, the change that takes place in believers when we choose to put our faith in God.